

# Ways To Market Your Crafting Business

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# Ways To Market Your Crafting Business

## Capturing Craft Concepts: How to Network in the Community to Broaden Your Contact Base

Making crafts can be a lot of fun. But there are some other areas that have to be covered if you plan on networking your item to people in your community. Explore your options when attempting to network. If you don't know where to begin, try reading plenty of books on the subject or talk to friends who may know a bit more about the subject.

When starting out, create a mailer to be sent out to people in the community. This can consist of a flyer, short glossy magazine or news article. Whatever you feel is best. You can have them sent out as a free mailer, or you may want to go with an opt-in mailing. This is where your customers sign up for a free mailer about your item. This is the best way to avoid wasting paper and stamps. But you may ask, "How do I get the addresses?" There are several avenues you can take.

1) Anytime someone makes a purchase, ask if they would like to be added to the free mailer. If they're impressed with your crafts, more than likely they'll sign up and before long, and your list will grow pretty quickly.

2) When attending a local craft show, have a clip board with pen that people can sign up for. They may not buy something right then, but if they're interested in your craft, they will sign up. Collect Name, address, city, state and zip code. You can even make room for an email address. On average, a mailer should be sent out twice a year. If you do send too much information, too often, it may end up in the trash.

Placing flyers around your community is also a good networking tool. Check with local businesses to see if it's ok to post a flyer in the window. You might want to stick with businesses that sell craft supplies, clothing or anything that can be connected with your item. When creating your flyer, put lots of color to catch people's attention. You can input pictures on the flyers as well as an average price.

Contact your Chambers of Commerce. They help promote businesses by having meetings and items displays. This is a good way to introduce your self to the community. You can also find out what's happening in your community such as local craft show days and times.

Stop by your local consignment store or boutique. These are great ways to get your craft out there. Generally, they will receive a percentage of the sales. Of course, this will be discussed before hand. When approaching the business owner, dress professional. Bring a sample of your item in with a list of prices. Also expect to sell in large quantities and for a discounted price. Storeowners generally don't pay full price for bulk items.

Come prepared to give a price to the owner, but make sure you're making a profit from it as well. If the storeowner isn't sold on your product, ask if it would be ok to leave business card or

flyers behind with a sample of your work. If potential buyers take an interest and ask about the craft enough times, the owner may see the want for it and will be contacting you.

If you're not one to get out there and start marketing your item, you can even hire a sales representative. They generally collect a percentage of what they sell. They can do it the old fashion way and walk door-to-door telling people of your product or they can visit local businesses and display your product. Make sure they are educated on your item. People make ask questions to the sales representative and you don't want them to reply with a blank stare.

Try your local church. Churches have many functions throughout the year. Some even hold small craft shows for the community. Word of mouth is also a great way to network in your church. Churches are small communities so once the word is out, it travels fast.

If you're selling an item that is wearable, wear it! Things like hair bows should be displayed in your daughter's hair. If they're unique, people will begin asking about them. If your selling handmade clothes, try making a holiday pattern and wear them before the season starts and see how many people want to know where you got it.

Whatever route you take, get out there. Even avenues you wouldn't think to explore, try it. You never know, you might just make a sale.

## **Craft-Only Garage Sales – How to Market for the Holidays**

The holiday season is the most popular time of the year to sell you crafts. It's cold outside, the shopping season is in full gear, and people are in the mood to buy and enjoy handcrafted items. Holding a craft-only garage sale is one of the easiest ways to attract a large number of interested customers. If you plan to organize one of these sales, however, be prepared for the work it will entail.

### **Not you're Average Garage Sale**

A craft-only garage sale is a wonderful idea because it allows potential customers to meet in one place specifically designated for showcasing the work of local craftspeople. You'll want to advertise your craft sale like you would a regular garage sale. Put up very nice, colorful flyers around your neighborhood two weeks before the date of the sale.

The appearance of your flyers is important. You'll want to convey the fact that your sale is not the normal garage sale. Don't use the standard red and black 'yard sale' signs. Make professional-looking signs that emphasize the variety of items that will be available for sale. Make it clear that you will be selling new items, suitable for holiday gift-giving.

### **Target Other Craftspeople and Enthusiasts**

Of course, you'll want to market your craft-only garage sale to other crafts enthusiasts. Visit your local hobby shop and crafts stores and put up flyers. Stand outside the door and hand out flyers, if you really want to get the word out. You might also consider visiting local crafts

workshops and classes to inform students about the upcoming craft sale. Even easier, e-mail local crafts instructors and ask politely if they would be willing to make an announcement in class regarding the sale. If possible, deliver copies of your flyers to the instructor so he or she can pass them out in class.

Another easy way to reach your target audience is to advertise at craft fairs and shows. Again, pass out fliers and put up signs. People at craft sales are already in the mood to shop for crafts, so don't be shy about marketing your show at these types of fairs.

### **Participate in, or Consider Putting Together an Arts and Crafts Fair**

One of the easiest ways to ensure a steady stream of customers is by organizing an arts and crafts fair at a community meeting point. If you are a member of a local church or community organization, check to see if any arts and crafts shows are held on a regular basis. These types of shows are especially common during the holiday season, when people become particularly interested in handcrafted objects and crafts.

If your local school, church, or community center doesn't have hold any type of arts and crafts fair, offer to organize one. Be prepared, however, to commit and follow through with the amount of work this type of project entails. You'll need to recruit other craftspeople to display their work, and make sure the venue is available for the date you need it. Perhaps you'll also want to secure food or snack vendors.

One of the greatest benefits of holding your craft only sale at a community meeting point like a church or school is that the foot traffic is generally greater than it would be at a garage sale. Another nice benefit is that your event is easier to advertise. If, for instance, your craft-only sale is being held at a local church, you can ask that the sale is mentioned in the weekly announcements and published in the weekly newsletter. Holding your craft-only sale at a local school event also allows you to reach a much larger segment of the community.

### **Use Your Established Contact Base**

If you are an experienced craftsperson who already sells your crafts on a regular basis, market your upcoming craft only garage sale to those names on your list of contacts. If you have a website or newsletter, these are great places to advertise the upcoming sale. Most likely, these contacts already have more than a casual interest in your work and crafts in general, and will be interested in the event. You may even consider sending personalized invitations to your best customers.

### **EBay Your Way: How to be Profitable Selling Your Crafts Online**

Selling on EBay has become a popular phenomenon. Many a time I've heard people mention that they bought their latest gadget from no other than EBay. For the craft lover who doesn't know where to begin marketing their crafts, EBay would be a good start. It is the best way to get the broadest audience's attention.

EBay goes beyond your backyard and reaches people all over the world. With their advanced search engine, it allows someone who may be looking for a particular item to go straight to what their looking for.

For those who have heard of EBay but not actually gone searching, this is how it works. For a first time seller, you must create an EBay account, which includes your name, address and credit card number (secure site). Once you've filled in the online forms, you will have your own seller account, which will list your auctions. Each time you want to check your sales, you must log in with a screen name and password.

When selling an item, you will go through a series of pages describing your item for sale. To top it off, you will upload a picture onto the auction site for others to view your craft. When listing a craft, you will be charged an initial fee, which is a set amount for the listed price. For example: If you list a craft for .99 cent, your initial fee will be .25 cent. If you list an item from \$1.00-9.99, your initial fee will be .35 cent and so on.

Once your item has sold, you will also be charged a "final value fee." This is calculated by a percentage of what your craft actually sold for. If someone likes your craft they will put a bid on it. If someone else comes along and wants the same craft, they will put a higher bid on it. At the end of the auction, which is generally seven days, the highest bidder wins.

EBay also offers EBay stores, which allow you to sell many items in an online store. When listing an item, you usually list a BIN (Buy it Now) price. There is no auction involve. In your online store, you can list prices as well as pictures of the item. This is a good route to go if you plan on selling multiple items of different colors, shapes or use.

Be sure to list pictures. People love to see pictures of the items their bidding on. You even have the option of placing multiple pictures on your auction site. Try to get different angles when taking pictures. Get close-ups of any detailed work. When taking the picture, be sure to get it in the right lighting and best background. Appearance sells!

When listing a price at auction, it's best to start low. This will attract more buyers to your item. If someone is interested in your craft and they want to watch it to see the bids being placed on it, they can put it in their "watch." You will know how many people are taking interest in your item because the number of watches shows up beside the item in your account.

When listing your craft, be sure to give plenty of detail. If there is a default in the craft, make sure you explain that in the description. Also describe the color and the size of the item. If you sell it in various colors, explain this to the potential buyer. Some people are looking for a certain color and you want to be open to them. If they like your item, they might come back for more in the future.

EBay isn't for everyone. Sales are made by PayPal, cashier's check or even personal checks; whatever you're willing to accept. And the only communication that generally transpires between the seller and buyers is through email.

The most important thing to remember when getting started is to be honest about the item, and explain the craft in detail. People want to know all there is about an item that they may

purchase. Explain the texture if you're selling something that is wearable. Let them know about the special detail you've put into a painting. And if your expertise is pottery, elaborate on the special colors used for the craft.

## **Lessons Learned – Supplement Crafting Business by Offering Craft Lessons**

Maybe you were lucky enough to find a way to make money out of your passion for crafts, and even launched your own crafting business. But now you find yourself wondering how to make extra money from your crafts. One of the best and easiest ways to supplement your crafting business is by offering craft lessons.

How can you start your own crafting classes? A good way to begin supplementing your crafting business is by organizing small home parties where you can invite friends, family members, and co-workers. This is a wonderful way to ease into teaching. If you're a little nervous about the idea of teaching, remember that a home party is basically just a small gathering of friends. Focus on your love for your craft, have confidence in your skills, and the rest will follow.

At your home party, ensure that your guests have a memorable experience by making the lesson as pleasurable as possible. Prepare well, provide light refreshments, and send your guests off with a completed craft, or if this is not possible, some sort of sample or party favor. You can bet that if your guests have a good time and enjoyed the experience of crafting with you, they will tell their friends, and positive word of mouth will begin to spread.

If you feel comfortable teaching at a professional level, you may want to seek out your local community college. Many community colleges offer non-credit crafts classes that are always in need of instructors. Teaching part-time is an excellent way to supplement your income. Be aware that to get this type of teaching position you will have to demonstrate significant knowledge and experience in your field. If you are a novice in your craft area, the chances of getting hired for this type of position is slim.

Teaching at a local college is not only a good way to make extra money, it also allows for an excellent opportunity to network and make contacts. When telling your students about your expertise and background, mention your crafting business. This type of exposure is invaluable because you are targeting a room full of individuals who have a deep interest in your craft.

Teaching at the college level will also force you to become better at your craft. This is a benefit of teaching that is invaluable. You will undoubtedly improve at your craft in the process of teaching. Teaching at a local community college may also serve to boost your crafting business by designating you with the unofficial title of 'expert' of your craft. Where do people often go to seek expert advice on a very specialized topic? Most people will seek out colleges, of course. People who are interested in the type of craft you specialize in may begin to seek you out because of your status as a professional college instructor.

Another way to supplement your crafting business by offering craft lessons is to visit your local crafts store or hobby shop. As a professional craftsperson, you are probably already very familiar with these types of businesses. If you haven't done so already, introduce yourself to

the store management. Explain that you operate your own crafting business. Be well prepared with professional business cards and, if possible, a portfolio or a sample of your work. The more professional your presentation is, the better your chances of landing an opportunity to teach.

If the store does not offer a class or workshop on your area of expertise, offer to design a workshop. Many of the workshops featured at local hobby shops are run by volunteers. If you are truly interested in using teaching as a valuable networking tool for your crafting business, you should be willing to volunteer your time. Most of these classes are run on a short-term basis (most only meeting once or twice), so you won't necessarily have to spend a great deal of time teaching these workshops. Remember to be prepared with business cards and your portfolio during these workshops.

### **Get Some Class – Conduct Crafting Classes for Business Exposure**

There are several marketing techniques available for building your crafting business. These include building websites, going to craft fairs, and finding the right potential market for your type of craft. Also there is the possibility of creating crafting classes. This will help others appreciate your crafts.

The first thing to keep in mind when deciding to do a crafting class is the market that you want to reach. If your crafts are directed more towards children, it would be best to give your class as a program at a school. If it is for families or older people, it is best to find a local area that will allow you to conduct the class. Libraries, nursing homes, public venues, etc. are all good places to offer your class. When deciding on your crafting class, finding the right place and the right audience to conduct it for will help with your success for business exposure.

One place that can be considered for offering the class is at a craft or trade show. Many different workshops are usually available during the shows. If you decide to teach a class in this area, then you should also have a booth. The class will then expose your different types of items, which many will go to see after the class is over.

The second thing to keep in mind when conducting a craft class is the topic that you want to speak about. Many times, a crafting class will include how to make things. While this will provide for a stronger attraction towards the class, as well as allow you the room to be a master in your craft, you should also keep in mind that giving too many insights into your craft will not help you to sell your own items. With this in mind, it is best to offer the class with either a smaller item or one that is not as important for you to sell as others. At the same time, you want to make sure that everyone leaves the class feeling like they have learned part of your craft.

Teaching craft classes can also help with your business exposure by building your credentials. If you are beginning your business, or do not have a paid position, teaching the class on a volunteer basis will give you leverage later on if someone is looking for a craft teacher for a class or even a workshop.

When you go in to teach your class, come prepared with several items in order to better teach your class. The more information you provide about your craft business, the more likely people will be to look into what you have to offer. First, you should have all of the items available that you will be teaching with. Allowing the workshop or class to run smoothly will help you to build credentials among the others that are attending the class. The second thing to provide is either a portfolio of your crafts, or to bring in some of the items that you sell. This will allow the people attending the class to understand more of the crafts that you make, and will peak their interest in your craft.

If your class is advertised, it will also peak interest in who you are and what you are doing. This can help with local exposure to your crafts, as it is a way to advertise your name in association with your business. You can do things such as advertise in the newspaper or in local listings to let people know what you can offer.

Another concept to keep in mind is offering more than one class or workshop. This will help to get your name into the public more than one time and will help to build your reputation as a craft business. If the class is only one session, then you might want to consider offering a second part or a completely different workshop soon after the first one is over. This builds a network for your business as well as for the class and selling your crafts.

These techniques, the way that you choose to conduct your class, and deciding the right places for your class are all low budget ways to offer exposure for your craft business. Teaching classes and workshops are used not only to offer knowledge to the community, but also to help in building your credentials for your business of craft making.

### **It's All About the Looks – How to Create Nifty Packaging for Your Hand Crafted Items**

Part of the attractiveness of making your own crafts will be in the material that you choose to send it in. This is the first impression that the customer will have of your product, making it essential to have the right packaging to give or send the craft in. One of the options in packaging, if you decide not to buy the packaging, is to make your own packages that are unique to your crafting business and items.

There are several different options that you can use when creating your own packaging for handcrafted items. The first thing to consider is what type of packaging you will be using. This can be a box, bag, or any other creative item that will hold whatever it is that you are selling. Many times, you can cut or design a box to reflect your business. It is easy to find boxes and containers that are in different shapes with different cuts.

You can also take your own regular box or cardboard and design it with putting the slots into different places to fold into a different shape. If you are shipping the box, you can also use different types of cardboard or plastic to send the craft in. As well as these different packages being folded, they can easily be designed with your own made stamps or designs. If you decide to use a bag, you can create your own using white bags and different types of stenciling, paints, etc. You can also have these custom designed by a company.

The labels that you are using for your packaging can be creative, with a logo or some type of picture to represent the item they are getting or your craft business. One of the ways that you can decorate your package labeling is by using silkscreen printing. This is a common form of decoration. This usually will put one to two different colors on your design and package. If you would like more colors, then printing your logo or information with a hot stamp can be considered. This will also leave a shine and somewhat gold design on the package.

You can also custom label just about any type of packaging that you are using with either your own techniques or through the help of other businesses. If you have the right tools on your computer, you can design and create your own logos, etc. on a regular application and print it through special paper, then attach it as a label on your package.

You can also decorate the protective paper that you are wrapping the craft in. You can make a custom label with this or make your own paper by simply getting regular tissue or wrapping paper and decorating it with cheaper items such as stamps, your logo, etc. It is possible to do this with any part of the packaging that you are sending an item in.

Another option to look into is packaging the craft with an inner box or container, as well as an outer box. With this, possibilities are endless. You can put your craft in a can, bottle, jar, pottery, seashell, basket, or anything that will hold the craft and be reflective of what it is. Smaller purses or bags that are sewn, etc. can also be used to provide an extra something that the customer gets with their purchased craft.

These containers not only are creative, but can be decorated with your logo, or any other type of paints, to add onto the craft. You can also decorate it by putting a certain cloth around the box, bag, jar or whatever you decide to use. This will make the container look more professional.

If you do not want to make your packaging completely from scratch, there are several places that make custom packaging for you to use when sending something to customers. These places can also simply provide ideas for your packaging needs.

While there are endless possibilities with decorating and making your own packaging, it is important to keep in mind that the packaging should look professional and be a part of your business. One way to help in deciding what to do with the packaging is by making sure that it is a reflection of the craft and the business that you are a part of.

### **Know Your Audience - Five Ways to Choose What Crafts Will Sell**

It's happened to many a self-employed entrepreneur – even to big corporations. You come up with a fantastic new product idea. You mass-produce it, certain that demand will be high and that it will simply fly off the shelves. But when it comes time to sell it, no one is buying. Businesses have been lost over mistakes like this. How could they have got it so wrong?

It is a situation that can happen to anyone, and as a crafter who has decided to sell your products, you face the same challenges as any other business. The success of your hand made craft business really depends on knowing your audience and reaching them with your products.

Here are five things to keep in mind when deciding what crafts you are going to produce.

### **1. Research Current Trends**

The craft industry, like other industries, has its current fads and trends. When thinking about the long term, you don't want to develop a product that fits into a specific trend or faze, because odds are that product will not be popular for the long haul. That being said, you do still want to know what people are buying. You want to keep on top of new techniques and products being used in your crafting field. You want to have the flexibility to create some products that fit with what people are buying, without just giving in to a current craze.

### **2. Research Your Target Audience**

Right from the start, you might have a clear idea of who will buy your product. If you don't, you need to try and figure out who your craft will appeal to. What gender and age are your main buyers? What kinds of crafts do they buy now? What price range do those purchases fall in to? Once you know your audience, you need to decide where they buy their crafts. You need to know what areas they live in and what shows or stores they buy crafts at. It is no good having a clear picture of your ideal buyer and then selling your crafts places that he or she does not go to. You need to figure out the best way (and the best place) to reach your target buyers.

### **3. Find Your Niche**

Having a really unique product will set you apart from other crafters in your area. Often people who buy crafts are looking for something new and different for their homes or for gifts for family and friends. They buy crafts because they want to find something really unique and know that it is one of a kind. This is what your customers want so be sure to give it to them. Don't copy crafts and techniques that ten other crafters in your area are using. You need to work on developing a reputation for unique and one of a kind products.

### **4. Seasonal Suitability**

Work in the craft industry is often seasonal. November and December are often really busy months, when customers are trying to find gifts for the holidays. Be prepared for this and try to manage your time so you have enough products to meet demand. It is also good to have a seasonal product that will appeal to your customers. For example, many people are looking for interesting little knick knacks that can send in place of the standard holiday greeting card. Designing little ornaments that capture the spirit of the season will really pay off. Similarly, it would be silly to have a lot of holiday ornaments for sale at a show in April when holiday gift giving is the last thing on your customers' minds. Try for a diverse range of products that are not always season specific in you are showing your work at craft shows year round.

## **5. Price, Price, Price!**

Nothing will kill your hand made craft business quicker than overpriced products. Customers are often willing to pay more for something that is hand made, but there is a limit. When pricing your product, you must be realistic. For example, a product that is priced below \$20 will probably sell better than something that is priced at \$22. Why? It may seem very little to you, but in your customer's mind that \$2 difference crosses some kind of line. While it is understandable to want to be paid decently for your work, you won't make any money at all if your price point is too high for your customers' tastes.

## **Learn the Local Language – Know the Rules on Setting up a Business in Your Home**

Starting your own home business is a giant step for anyone to take and it's not something for everyone. When starting your home business there are many different details that you need to take into account and take care of before you delve into such a commitment. Below are some things that you should follow when starting your very own business in your home.

### **1.) Know Your Financial Situation.**

This would have to be one of the most important rules to follow whilst setting up your business. You need to take into account everything, from your current living expenses to all the set up and preparation costs involved in your business.

Ask yourself these questions and any others that come to mind concerning your finances:

1. How you are going to finance your business while it is in the early stages?
2. Is the money coming from your pocket or are you borrowing it from someone?
3. Will you have to continue with your job until you business starts paying for yourself?
4. Are you going to have enough money if something goes wrong with the set up and you have to take another avenue or take steps to correct the problem?
5. Will you have enough money for any unforeseen expenses?

Before you take any farther steps into setting up your home business, make sure you have the funds to cover everything you will need to and then some.

### **2.) Registration, Insurance and Legal.**

Once you know you have the funds to finance your business, the next step you need to take is getting all the necessary registrations, licenses, insurances and other legal matters taken care of. Make sure you have all appropriate zoning permits and insurance to cover you if anything goes wrong at your home, like client injuries. Your typical home insurance usually doesn't cover

business related accidents. There are three types of insurance you should take out, these are:

1. Business insurance, in case clients get hurt while on your property.
2. Public risk insurance, so you will be covered against negligence.
3. Income protection insurance is another you should take out. This insurance will cover you for disability and other related factors if you cannot work.

Other insurances that you should consider taking out are health insurances, especially if you have left your job.

### **3.) Taxes and Accounting Advice.**

Seek this advice before starting your business so you can find the best and tax friendly plan for your business. Your accountant will be able to tell you what you can claim on your taxes from your business income, and other related information that you may not be aware of.

### **4.) The Home Business Front.**

Once you have followed all the rules and regulations to legally set up your business in your home, next you have to think about space. Find a room, garage, shed, or wherever you want to set up your office that you will be comfortable working in. Make sure that the area you choose is designated for your business and only your business. Having a space solely for business will help you keep everything work related in one place and orderly. It will also aid you in keeping work and home time separated.

Another thing to take into account when choosing an office space in your home are your clients. Will the space be big enough and comfortable enough to accommodate them?

### **5.) Office Hours.**

Last but definitely not least you have to work out your work hours. Making a set time when you start work and when you will finish is a necessity need, especially when you have a family to look after as well. Organize your time wisely. You will want to set a time for lunch and other needed breaks. If you have a set time it will help you coordinate everything better. Once you have set your working times make sure you don't skimp on them but make sure that you leave yourself enough time to enjoy and spend quality time with your family. Working at home means you have to have good discipline but don't overwork yourself.

There are many rules that you should follow when you start your very own business at home, these are just the main ones. Working at home is a lot of hard work to start off but it should also be an enjoyable time as well, after all it is your dream.

## **Market Yourself-Five Tips to Selling Your Crafts in Your Own Backyard**

Selling crafts isn't like selling something that every body can use. It's a specialty item. Only certain people will buy them. Therefore you need to know how to reach the right audience.

The first most important tip is to do something you love. If you have a passion for what you're doing, then you will do a better job at it. When starting up a craft business, it has to be for the love it and not just for making money. Loving what you're doing will give you endurance to endure even through drought times.

Coming up with a business plan is essential. Before starting a craft selling business, you must come up with a business plan. A business plan may sound intimidating at first, but it's a good idea to lay one out. A business plan can consist of deciding how much money you want to spend on supplies, how much money you plan to sell your crafts for, how much time you can spend in your business and how big you want your business to be. When selling your crafts close to home, you may want to start small. This way you can see what kind of demand there is for your type of craft.

Once you've perfected your craft making abilities, try throwing a home party. This is the route a lot of home décor business travel. It's less expense than renting a booth or having a store. This is a good way to market your items. Start by making a lot of your items and displaying them in your living room or special room you have set aside for your crafts. Make sure the atmosphere is relaxed and inviting. Offer beverages and snacks. People will feel more relaxed and want to observe what you have to offer if they feel comfortable.

You might want to offer prizes or a free giveaway of one of your items to the person who brings the most people or buys the most stuff. This is a good motivator. There are a few ways you can market your items once guests have arrived. You can have an introduction and tell them who you are and what you are about. Let them know why you got started in the craft making business. There's a story behind every great idea. Then you can proceed to explain the craft items and allow them to look around at the displays.

The good thing about displays is people can see what they're getting. Unlike magazines, they don't have to look at a picture and hope it looks like how it is explained. Although more than likely, someone may want to order more from you later. At the end of the party, ask for volunteers who may want to hold a party in their home. They may have a group of people that have not been exposed to your crafts yet.

The next tip is to offer business cards. A business card is probably the simplest way to market your items. When designing your card, make sure the picture on the card matches the theme of your business. I can't tell you how many times I've picked up a business card and couldn't tell what they were selling because there was no picture or the title just wasn't clear enough. Make sure it's obvious. Also, make sure you have plenty on hand. It's the best way for people to contact you in the future. Putting an email address on it is also convenient.

Another idea for the more dedicated, would be to have a small craft store in your house. Of course you would have to check with the city and make sure zoning allows this. You could have certain days picked out and advertise in the paper. People will get familiar with your times, and come regularly to check out new items. If you choose to go this way, you will probably have to write a proposed plan for the zoning board.

Getting approval from your neighbors may help in their decision as well. Selling crafts from home is low maintenance and gives you the freedom of staying home as well. Mothers with small children may find this the most convenient way to go. Be sure to have an OPEN and CLOSED sign if your craft room has a separate door from the house. Don't feel rude if someone comes knocking after closing time and you send them away.

## **Niche Marketing, Crafting Style – Five Ways to Find Your Target Audience**

When finding a way to promote your crafts, it is important to find a target audience and niche that will be interested in your materials. This will eliminate time and energy when trying to find the right places to go.

The first thing to look at when deciding who will be interested in your crafts is which audience to focus on and how to keep the new customers that are coming to your site. This is one of the most important factors, which will help with the success of your crafting business. By finding a specific topic and market that will be drawn to your particular type of craft, you will be successful both in the online market as well as through craft shows. Following are the top five ways in which you can find your target audience.

Market research. This means figuring out which customers would be most drawn to your crafts. It also means finding which other crafts are similar to yours, either on the web or in craft shows. These will be the competitors, which you will have to differ from in order to succeed. Market research also means finding the different attributes of the group of people who would become your target audience.

It is important to understand what their needs will be and how your craft will fit into this. Another part to this market research is making sure that your target audience is big enough to sustain the income you will make through your crafts, but not too large, as you will not be able to keep up with the supply and demand of the craft.

Advertising. Many times, money and time can be wasted on trying to find the right place to advertise, either on the web or in person. Search engines and providing links to certain websites can help to direct your niche market to your website. Providing keywords and phrases will catch the attention of your niche market and allow them to move into your website for more information.

Once you have defined who will be attracted to your crafts, you can cater to their needs through using the web. If you are advertising in person, you can use the same techniques of providing your unique style with your crafts or putting parts of the defined target market into the different advertising techniques.

Offer something different. Most consumers and potential target market customers can find basic goods and crafts from larger businesses for cheaper, or from other websites. When doing your market research and when advertising to your potential customers, make sure that you provide something that is unique and not offered anywhere else on the web or in your community. This will not only build your potential market, but will allow you room to not have

to be competitive with a larger market.

Through providing unique crafts and offers, you will be able to not only attract different people, but will also be able to offer the prices that you want to sell your crafts at, instead of what others are selling theirs at. This is often times as simple as adding one different product or using a different material in your craft to make it unique.

Define The Target Market by Demographics. There are several things to look at when finding those who would be interested in your craft. The first is the age that would be attracted to buying what you have to offer. The second is the gender, which will be attracted to your product. Education, income, marital status, ethnicity, and family definitions should all be taken into consideration.

You should also look into their lifestyle, social class, and activities and interests. By defining all of these different areas, you will be able to determine what part of your craft will work best with it's uniqueness and where these types of people are most likely to look if on the internet or in your community. By defining your ideal customer, you will be able to build your craft business easily.

Costs and Providing Information. The information that you provide after knowing all of the different factors of your niche market and potential customers is what will cause your craft business to either fail or succeed. The more you let people know about your craft product, the better of a chance you will have at selling things. The cost is also important information to keep in mind.

This will partly have to do with your target market, but it will also depend on finding the right balance for not advertising your craft as a cheap product, while keeping it cheap enough to not turn customers away. One way in which defining your product cost can help is by also giving information about the product so that you can sell it for the proper value.

No matter what type of craft you are selling, it is always important to research and know the different factors that should be included when selling your craft. This will ensure success from your online business or through your local craft selling areas.

### **Where The Profits Are – Sell What Sells**

Many who are involved in a home business of any sort know that trends and popularity changes quickly, which causes the profits to thrive or to fail. The focus of your marketing plan and your crafts does not necessarily have to be with a certain item or items. What makes something profitable is not necessarily what you are selling. Rather, it depends on how you market it and how you decide to sell the product or craft.

One way to focus on your crafts with what sells is by custom making crafts. You can offer certain items, but then allow the customer to create their own version of it. This allows you more room to use your own creativity, and lets the customer have a say in the item that they are paying for. Custom crafts and products are a popular way to know what you should be

selling. You can charge slightly more for custom making a craft. As long as you set your prices and your guidelines for timing, etc. this is an easy way to make things that will sell.

Another way to sell certain crafts and products is by focusing on a theme or a certain time of year. For instance, during a season such as Christmas, themes and styles that has to do with Christmas will be able to sell easier. If you want to sell your crafts more at another time of year, you can easily tap into different holidays around that time, or make your own theme to attract attention to your products.

Another thing to look into when trying to figure out what is going to sell is to understand who you are trying to sell to. If you have crafts, but they are in the wrong market, or the wrong types of people are in the area, you will most likely not sell anything. It is best to see where your product or craft fits into. By creating a certain market for yourself, you can sell almost anything that you make.

In the business of crafts and arts, you don't want to be selling the same things that others are selling. Then, you will be competing with prices and whoever markets to more people. If you can create things that are completely unique to your business, you will be able to sell much more than you would have expected without having to be involved in the larger market. The profits are not in creating what others have created, but in making what you like to make, then finding a market that is receptive to that certain craft. Most consumers are interested in finding things that are unique in the market.

Another thing to keep in mind when finding the things that sell is to make sure that you are ensuring the best quality of craft or product to your consumer. This means advertising the product as hand-made, with the best material that can be used. Letting the larger market know how much time is put into your product, as well as making it a high-quality product will allow you the possibility of offering higher prices as well as attract more business.

Another way to sell something profitably is to make sure that it is of practical use. By creating a need for the customer, as well as a desire for them to have your product, it will be easier for you to make a product that has demand to it. The first thing that a customer usually looks at when determining whether to buy something or not, is whether they have a use or a need for it. The next step that they will question is whether they actually want the product. Whether the need is for decoration in the home, or for a more practical use, this will help to sell whatever your item is. A product will sell if you create both the need and the desire for the customer.

By keeping these several different techniques and ideas in mind, one will be able to sell whatever it is that they like to make. If, in creating their product or craft, they find a need in it, or like what the product becomes, then they will be able to profit off of it for other people.