

Think Outside the Box: What You Can Do With Crafting

Topics Covered:

Crafting Community Bonds: Five Easy Ways to Donate Crafts to Nonprofits and Increase Your Public Presence

Create Crafting Parties for Kids: Five Marketing Ideas To Get You Started

Creative Outlets for Your Hand Made Craft Business: Five Great Places to Market

Kit and Caboodle: Creating and Selling Crafting Kits as Your Main Business

Research Crafting Opportunities: How to NOT Get Scammed

Craft Shows Tell a Tale of Success

Practice Makes Perfect When Participating in Craft Shows

Consign Yourself to Success with Your Hand Made Crafts

Think Outside the Box: What You Can Do With Crafting

Crafting Community Bonds – Five Easy Ways to Donate Crafts to Nonprofits and Increase Your Public Presence

Are you an experienced craftsperson who is looking to increase your public presence? Consider donating some of your crafts to a local nonprofit agency or local charity. Not only will this allow you to network and make important contacts, you'll also be making a difference where it really counts and strengthening your bonds to the community. Here are five easy ways to get involved:

1. Find a cause you have a passion for. Simply stated, passion cannot be faked. You must choose a nonprofit charity that you really care about, and for which you would be willing to work for with no thought of compensation. Perhaps you've always been touched by hospital-bound children stricken by illness. You happen to specialize in creating charming, old-fashioned rag dolls. Why not donate some of your best work to spread a bit of joy?

In this scenario, you would want to seek out a nonprofit organization or charity that works with young hospital patients. Speak to the outreach director or volunteer coordinator of the agency you're interested in. Tell them the ways you would like to help, and listen to their suggestions. They should be able to tell you about their current situation and needs. Hopefully, there will be a match, and you can begin to work together. Whatever you do, you should always check with the nonprofit agency before you simply start donating your crafts.

2. Offer to spearhead a charity event. If you specialize in kid's craft parties, offer to hold a craft party for a local nonprofit agency. Be aware that this sort of undertaking will demand a lot of your time and energy. You may work with the nonprofit agency to coordinate the event.

Strive to make this collaboration as smooth and pleasant as possible. Remember that the event you organize will be a show of your leadership and organization skills. You'll want to make a good impression as you connect with potential clients, and re-connect with previous customers. Most importantly, remember that the true goal of the event is to make a small difference in the lives of others.

3. Organize a charity crafts fair. Another way increase your public presence by donating your crafts is by organizing a charity craft fair. Consider setting up the crafts fair in conjunction with the nonprofit agency of your choice. Or you can hold the crafts fair on your own, and then donate the proceeds to a local charity.

Start by recruiting other experienced craftspeople for the fair. Advertise the event widely. Consider contacting your local media to raise awareness about the fair. Ask your local newspapers or television station to help advertise the event. The more exposure the crafts fair gets the more proceeds you'll be able to donate. And, your crafts and the work of your fellow craftspeople will gain much deserved exposure.

4. Hold a charity craft auction as part of a larger event. If the idea of organizing an entire crafts fair sounds a bit overwhelming to you, then consider holding a charity craft auction as part of a larger event. Find a group of interested and experienced craftspeople and put together a catalog of sale items, with all proceeds going to the nonprofit agency of your choice. You and your fellow craftspeople should donate some of your best work to ensure a successful auction.

If your crafts sell well at the charity auction, you can expect your reputation as a craftsperson to grow. Selling your work in this type of atmosphere demonstrates that your work has value, and that it can make a difference in the life of someone who needs a change.

5. Donate your crafts for use. If you create crafts that can be put to good use by individuals less fortunate than you, by all means work with the appropriate nonprofit agency to donate your work. For instance, nonprofit groups such as Wrap Them in Love and Knit for Kids provide needy individuals with warm quilts and much-needed sweaters.

If you specialize in such crafts, donating your work is a wonderful way to make a big difference in the life of someone who needs help. You'll gain experience in working with nonprofit agencies, make valuable contacts, gain resume experience, and gain confidence in your work.

Create Crafting Parties for Kids – Five Marketing Ideas To Get You Started

Are you a whiz at organizing fun and original kids craft parties? Do your parties tend to leave people talking for days? If you enjoy putting together crafting parties for kids, you might want to consider making a business of it. Kid's parties are some of the most common type of celebrations, and there is never a shortage of potential customers. Moreover, today's parents are often so busy that they would likely appreciate some help in planning memorable celebrations. Here are five ideas to help you market your burgeoning crafting party business.

1) Talk to other moms. If you're a mother, talking to other mothers probably comes naturally in the course of your everyday life. Whether you're at soccer practice or ballet rehearsal, don't be shy about talking to other mothers. Most people will express genuine interest when you mention that you have a business that specializes in creating crafting parties for kids. Tell them about some of the most memorable theme parties you have created. Emphasize how unique craft parties are in comparison to conventional birthday celebrations.

It's a good idea to be prepared for this type of encounter. You might consider carrying a portfolio with you so you can show potential customers pictures of the type of parties you have organized. Of course, you should have business cards that you carry with you at all times, as well. In this same vein, come up with a unique name for your craft party business—something that will prompt people to inquire more about it.

2) Host your own 'open house' kids craft party. Organize a craft party to launch your new business. This allows people to know what you are up to, and creates word of mouth. If

you're a mom, throw a craft party for your kids and have them invite their friends. If parents demonstrate interest in how you've organized the party, mention that you actually operate a business that specializes in such parties. Chances are children who attend the party will want to have a craft party of their own in the near future.

If you don't have children of your own, consider hosting a party for children at your local community center. Or plan a party for the children of friends or family.

3) Purchase or create a small and inexpensive party favor, and attach your business card to it. Pass out these party favors at craft parties, local carnivals and fair, or any place you might find potential customers. Making your business card more memorable increases your chances of getting contacted by potential clients. You might even consider printing up inexpensive notepads or calendars with your business' name and contact information.

4) Offer to host a charity event. One of the best ways to market your new craft party business is to offer to host a party for a local charity. Not only will you be doing well for a cause you care about, the party can allow you to develop your leadership skills, and show off your party planning skills. You will also be in a position to meet lots of new people and make contacts.

5) Work with local party supplies and craft businesses. If you're in the party planning business, you will likely be working closely with local crafts and party supplies stores. Get to know store personnel well. Remember that party supplies stores are party central—parents who are beginning to plan their children's parties will make these businesses their first stop.

Get permission to put up colorful, eye-catching flyers that showcase pictures of your crafts parties. Even if they decide not to hire a party planner for this party, they might contact you next time a celebration comes around. If possible, get permission from store management to leave party favors that have your business' name and contact information on it.

Also, if the idea of teaching intrigues you, you may want to consider speaking to your local craft or party supply store about teaching a class about organizing kids crafts parties. Not only is this a good way to strengthen your portfolio and resume, but is also an excellent way to make contact with a pool of potential clients. Teaching is a great way to spotlight your business.

Creative Outlets for Your Hand Made Craft Business - Five Great Places to Market

You've decided to start your own craft business. You've got a great product and lots of enthusiasm, but no clue of how and where to sell your product. If you have no business background, then it can be intimidating to start talking about markets and sales pitches and your target customer. In reality, marketing your hand made crafts is easier than you could ever imagine. Here's a quick overview of some of the best places to market your craft products.

Family and Friends

It sounds too obvious, right? In fact, your family and friends can be one of the most important tools in getting your new craft business off the ground. Your family and friends will probably be more than happy to buy your products, but also help you sell them. You will talk to your family and friends about your crafts and they in turn will tell their family and friends and it will continue to grow from there. Word of mouth is really important in the crafting industry.

Many businesses allow crafters to come in during the holiday season. Maybe one of your friends or relatives works for a company that does this. It is usually through personal connections like this that crafters end up at the businesses.

If you don't have enough money for a table at a local craft show, you can host one at your own home. If you know other crafters, you can include their items as well – for free or for a small fee. You can invite family, friends and neighbors. This is an excellent way to start selling your products with minimal cost to you.

When you do decide to do a local craft show, ask for help from your family and friends. While it is important that you spend a lot of time at your booth so you have a chance to interact with your customers, family and friends can offer a lot of support by taking turns manning the booth and helping with the set-up and tear-down of your display.

Local Craft Shows

Before you start traveling all around with your crafts, you should try displaying your products in a few local shows. With a crafting business, you should try to start small and gain as much experience and exposure in your local community as possible. These local shows also give you a can to work out all of the kinks in your display and sales pitch before investing all your money in traveling to out of area craft shows.

Crafters' Marketplaces and Local Gift Stores

Many gift stores will accept crafts from local artisans on consignment. This is a great way to get your craft products out into the community. Often times these sorts of displays will lead to greater exposure and custom orders. It is a good way of reaching people who do not attend craft shows. Many communities also have crafters' marketplaces where you can rent space on a monthly basis to display your crafts. The concept is similar to a craft show – you just don't have to be there to sell the products. The store looks after all of the selling for you. You do need to ensure that your stock remains high enough and that you have an attractive display that will help your crafts stand out from all of the others.

Magazines and other Publications

You can consider advertising your new business in a magazine or a newsletter. Even better, you could try to have yourself featured in an article in your local paper or a craft magazine. This way your potential customers will learn more about you and the back-story of your craft. With crafts, a lot of customers like to know the process and story behind its creation, so this is an excellent way to connect with them and generate more interest in your new venture.

Online

Just a few years ago, there were very few crafters online. Now, you can have a website devoted to marketing and selling your products. A website that displays your products and provides some background on you and your craft can be a really effective marketing tool. You can also sell your products directly online. This will allow you to sell your products to people all over the world with minimal advertising costs to you. Just think of the exposure!

Kit and Caboodle – Creating and Selling Crafting Kits as Your Main Business

Everyone likes to bring out their crafty side every once in a while and usually the first thing they look for is a craft kit. Craft kits are an easy and a fun way for a person to do craft, they have all the materials they need and the instructions to help them create work of their own. Crafting kits can be for people of any age and crafting experience, which is why so many people are getting in on the business. How do you make your craft business stand above the rest?

First you have to start with the right craft kit. You need to do this because there are so many crafting kits out there offering so many different projects. Before you delve into selling your craft kit, ask yourself some questions like:

- Who is my kit for, children, teenagers, adults or all of them?
- Does my craft kit offer something different than the rest on the market?
- If it is the same is there a new twist that I can put on my kit to make it sell better?
- Is there a way to make my crafting kit more enticing and fun?
- Are my instructions easy to understand and follow?
- Is the project kit itself easy to make?

Once you have created your craft kit you need to put a price it before you can sell it. All prices need to be taken into account like materials, labor and other initial costs before you can add a profit to the item. Most craft workers recommend that you multiply the production costs by three or four, for example if it cost you \$5 to make a craft kit you should sell it for \$15 or \$20. Many people also recommend children craft kits stay under the \$10 mark. In the end, what you price your craft kit is up to you and how much you want to make and sell.

Now that the pricing is out of the way you need to start selling your kits, there is a number of ways you can do this:

Craft shows are always a great place to start, though they take a lot of time in traveling and expenses. Craft shows are a great way to get your products to the consumers by interacting with them and answering any questions they may ask. You can also do live demonstrations on

your craft kit to show potential buyers how they work.

Go to the markets, or other places where you think your target consumer is and set up a stall. It is again a great way to interact with your customers and you can also do live demonstrations. It gives your customer the chance to get more information about the products and you the chance to answer any questions they may have.

Launch your business on the web; you can reach millions of people and potential buyers with the right marketing strategies. By making your website interactive with users you can do video tutorials for people who buy your products, to help take it through them step by step.

If you don't want to launch a store or website straight away until you are sure people want your products, you could go through craft store outlets. Many craft stores are happy to take new merchandise and will even let you do in store demonstrations as it boosts business for both them and you. If you are looking to have your business online you could consider going through auctions websites like EBay. On EBay you can run a mini shop stall and sell your products to a wide range of shoppers for a small fee.

Some things you should take into account when you launch your craft kit:

- Always take twice as much stock than you think you will sell.
- Be prepared if someone asks for bulk orders, it is common in the craft business as many people use them for workshops and child activities.
- Ask people for comments or their opinions on your craft kit and if anything, what you could do to better the kit.
- Don't forget to make a marketing strategy as they can help boost your business once you have it up and running. Give out flyers, press releases, go through radio stations, magazines and other related advertising revenues to help get you started.

Having your own craft business takes a lot of work to get started but once you get the ball rolling you will be on your way to being a successful business owner

Research Crafting Opportunities – How to NOT Get Scammed

No matter where you turn or where you look there is always a scam going on. Business opportunities are one of the most abundant of all scams. One of the biggest types of work opportunity that is going around is craft making scams. Many people fall into this type of scam because they want to work at home and spend more time with their families. Learn how to notice and avoid falling victim to such scammers.

Work at home assembly and craft scams are abundant, even though they usually sound real and completely legit. Here is how they work:

These types of scams usually are advertised through window ads, bulletin boards, local magazines and papers and widely on the Internet. They claim that they need workers to fulfill a part or full time position in creating craft or assembling items such as envelopes, dolls, toys, clothing, cards and other related items, stating that they will pay you top dollar per each item. These scam companies usually work in one of two ways.

The first one is that they will send you all the materials and instructions you need to create or assemble the items they ask.

The second of these types of scams is when they ask you to pay for the materials, which can usually go into the hundreds of dollars. After they have received your payment they will send you the materials and the instructions you need. Most of the times the materials you receive or there lack of, will be shoddy and usually impossible to make anything decent from.

In both versions of this scam, once you have finished making the products you will send them back to the company and wait for a check in the mail. Most times you will not receive a check but instead a letter stating that your craftsmanship did not pass their quality checking test and therefore they can not sell the items.

In the first scam they will sell your items, the ones that weren't good enough to sell, and make a tidy profit on them.

In the second scam, they are not interested in selling your items in the first place, hence the shoddy materials. Their only interest is in getting your payment for the materials.

Scams such as these, you can usually smell a mile away. Here are some things to look for and do to make sure that you don't fall victim to them.

Beware of any business opportunities that ask for lots of money up front, even if it is refundable.

The above also applies for opportunities that state that you can make a lot of money and start you business for free.

Don't go with companies that say you can make a lot of money in a very short period of time.

If something sounds too good to be true, then more often then not, they probably are.

If you do think a company is legit but want to make sure, do a little bit of research. Check with your state to see if they are registered. Check on the Internet to see what others who have worked for them say.

If you have crafts that you want to sell, there are plenty of ways that you can it yourself.

Talk to local craft outlets and see if they would like to buy your crafts from you or will display them in their store.

Set up a stall at the markets or a craft show and sell them yourself.

Start your own business from home and do all the set up yourself.

Taking steps to do it yourself is the best way to starting your own home business. This way you will know that everything is legit and that the money is going in your pocket. If you don't have the resources to start your own home business and want to use a business opportunity to help get you started, there are a lot of legit ones out there. Sometimes they are hard to find beneath all the scams, but they are out there. While looking for such a business opportunity take all the precautions, keep an eye out and know all of the latest scams to keep your self from falling victim to them.

Craft Shows Tell a Tale of Success

One of the most successful ways to sell hand made crafts is through the use of local and regional craft shows that are in your area. Craft shows will not only boost your business, but will also allow a place where you can find networks for future business. Because of the nature of hand made crafts, most that are in the crafting business use the craft shows as a major way to sell their product.

Because of the wide variety of craft shows that are available, there is a certain amount of research and preparation that you can take in order to ensure that you will be successful. The first thing is to find the craft shows that will fit with the types of things that you are making. If, for example, your crafts center on Christmas gifts and items, it would most likely not be logical to rent a booth or space at a summer festival.

You can find the right craft show by networking with other crafters or looking for magazines and online publications that will host events and are looking for crafters. There are not only local and regional shows available, but also international and national events that you can take part in when looking for the right place to sell your craft.

The second thing to keep in mind for a craft show is to make sure that there is enough of what you are selling. Often times, someone will buy a craft from you, which will then begin to move around the space where you are selling. Others see the craft and want the same thing. It is best to come with plenty of stock. This always makes happier customers and will help you to look more professional.

When setting up your booth at a craft show you should find a way to make your booth and the product stand out. This is simply by decorating your area, and making your products look professional, while organizing them in ways that are catchy to the customer. Another way to stand out is through the actual craft that you are selling. By having unique colors and style, you will be differentiated from the rest of the crowd.

In the booth that is set up for your hand made crafts, you should also carry business cards and more information about the business that you are in. This is not only to look more professional,

but also to gain more potential customers. Sometimes, a customer will want to revisit your craft outside of the craft show. If you are prepared, even if the sales are not outstanding at the particular show, you are building networks with potential customers and target markets with all who stop to look at the product you are selling.

One technique that is important to keep in mind and will also help you to stand out is when you are able to tell the customers about the craft, how you make it, why it is unique, etc. This strategy will help to build on the uniqueness of your product as well as making you seem like a true crafter who really enjoys the craft that is being made. This is often times, appealing to the customer.

Craft shows have been rated to be the best way to sell crafts. The nature of hand made crafts is different than most businesses. Customers like to see the craft in person, feel the material that you use, and understand the different parts of the craft. This gives them a good sense of the quality that is in the handmade craft. It is also important because they often times like to get to know the crafter, as it can be a part of the product that they are buying.

Most customers, even if they shop online, will often use craft shows to find exactly the right fit for the item that they need. There are several factors to this type of market and why this is successful. Because of this, if you are making hand made crafts, it is always important to be prepared with enough inventories, go to the right craft shows, and make sure to make the booth you have to stand out. This will guarantee you the success that you need to begin or continue in the hand made craft business.

Practice Makes Perfect When Participating in Craft Shows

When beginning your craft business, it is often times hard to anticipate how sales will go and what you need to do in order to reach your target market with your crafts. Because of this, it is best to try a few different types of craft marketing things that will help you to expand and grow with your business later on. One of the most popular ways to expand your crafting business is through craft shows.

Because of this, it is best to practice selling your things at craft shows. Craft shows also require learning the different parts and rules that will be used for a short amount of time. There are several ways to do this and continue to look professional with the beginning of your business. When first beginning, it is important to learn how to speak to others about your craft, as well as learn about what things you need to be prepared with during the show.

The first technique that you can use with your practice shows is to find local shows that are smaller. You can find events and craft shows that are local that will be easy to participate in without having to have too much inventory or experience. It is best to be able to find the shows that you are somewhat familiar with, so that you are able to predict what type of crowd will be there, how much inventory to bring, and where your target market will be.

When you are able to find one of these shows, it will become easier for you to practice your

selling techniques, as well as become more familiar with new pricings that you may have and the niches that seem to sell best for you. With smaller shows, you don't have to have as wide as an inventory, and you can practice the best selling techniques for your certain products. Eventually, these will become second nature. By starting smaller, you can prepare for bigger craft shows and know exactly what to expect and how to respond to customers as a professional business.

Another part of the practice that you can begin in is always being prepared when you go to craft shows. Over time, you will be able to create your own kit of what you need and don't need when attending certain shows. A 'first aid kit' for your booth, crafts and table space is always something to build on. This may include tools, tape, extra parts for crafts, and repair things for your booth.

Becoming organized is something that you should have in mind from the very beginning, but will learn over time. Most craft fairs have places just in case you need help with your booth. As you go along and practice with smaller craft shows that are closer to home, you can begin to build a list of things that are essential to bring so that you can prevent things from falling apart or your booth not looking its best.

Learning the rules is another part of a craft show to constantly be aware of and to continue learning from. Craft shows usually all have similar rules in relation to your booth and what you can and can not do at the show. Over time, these will become easier to remember, but it is always good to start out on the right foot and begin following the rules right away. Over time, the rules will also become second nature and easier to follow.

Craft shows can often be stressful by nature. The days are usually long, often times you will have to travel to another area, and you will be caught having to give information out to different customers and trying to find their needs. It is always best to start small and to practice what works best for you.

By learning through trial and error of your marketing technique at craft shows, you can become an expert at marketing and selling your products. You will also be able to learn how to avoid or work with the problems that may arise while you are at a craft show. As time goes on, these techniques will become like second nature to you in selling your hand made craft.

Consign Yourself to Success with Your Hand Made Crafts

If you have a love for making hand made crafts, there are several ways to become successful at what you do through creating your own business. However, when beginning this business, the first steps that should be taken will be what ensures either your achievement of the business, or its failure.

The first thing that you should keep in mind when you decide to start selling your hand made crafts is to make sure that you enjoy what you are doing. If making craft items seems tedious to you, then it is probably not a good way to try to make an extra income. Even if it is only a

part time hobby that you are doing, if you begin to prepare and find a niche, the business will eventually grow and find new customers. Always be prepared for what you are getting into.

The second thing that you should do when starting with your hand made crafts is to find a certain niche. This will draw new customers to you, as well as allow older customers to return. The niche can include anything from what types of crafts you make, to the materials and colors that you use for your craft. It also includes finding the right type of people who will naturally be drawn to your craft. This part of the sale usually requires some research and understanding of different demographic factors, such as age of those who will be interested in your product.

By understanding the market in which you will be selling your crafts to, there will be more room for your success, with less energy spent in order to find the right crafts and how they fit with the right target market. This is the most essential thing to set up before you start your business, and to continue setting up as you progress and grow with your craft sales.

One thing that you will want to do when starting a craft business is to write a business plan. This will allow you to see where the problems with the business will be so that you can find the solutions to before you invest too much time and money into it.

Writing a business plan should cover everything from naming your business, the amount of finances and investments needed, time spent on making and selling your craft, to how you will begin to advertise your product and to whom you will be selling it to. It also includes finding how your niche will fit in, as well as the customers' needs and wants in relation to the craft and finances. There are several ways to find the proper information and guidelines that can help you to understand the different parts of a business plan and how to be successful with this planning in the selling of your crafts.

The next step that you can take is setting yourself up as a business. This means filling out the paperwork and making your self look professional. You can begin to do this by filling out tax forms that states that you are a craft business. This will cover you legally for anything that you sell. There are often times different types of paperwork that you will have to fill out, depending on the approach that you are taking for your craft business. The next set up is creating things for advertising and marketing, such as a website, brochures and business cards. The more professional you look from the beginning, the more likely you will be able to find the customers that you need.

Once you have done the preparation work, and have begun to invest time into your craft business, then you can find ways to sell your work. This includes everything from tagging onto a wholesaler or gallery, building a website, and renting a booth or space at the craft shows that are offered in your locality at different times of the year. Depending on the niche you have decided to take, and your target market, you can sell your crafts at any of the places that you have found will be successful for you.

By following simple steps and using guidelines for your hand made craft business, you can be ensured success. The most essential aspect of starting a handcraft business is planning and preparing to make the rest of the business fall into place and becoming a simple way of making a profit.