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## How to Attract Galleries to Your Website.

### Summary

For many artists, the primary purpose of their website is to attract the attention of art galleries and dealers. A well designed website showcasing quality art will get the attention of arts professionals when they see it. But how do they find you in the first place?

This article gives the scoop on some great basic techniques that work!

### Authors

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### 1. Send Letters

It sounds so obvious but many artists forget that galleries are accustomed to invitations and query letters by mail. In the past, we all sent packages of slides, bios, prints, press clippings, etc to galleries. Your website considerably simplifies the process: Simply send an invitation to the gallery to view your work on your website. Your website becomes your convenient, always-available-to-anybody portfolio. Be sure to include your site address (URL) and email address in the invitation.

Note: Before approaching galleries, be sure to do a little up-front research. Firstly, you should check that they sell the style of work that you create. Secondly, find out if the gallery is looking for new work – that will save you the bother of sending information when it will bring no results.

### 2. Add a Brochure or Postcard to your Letter

You can improve the results of your letter invitations by enclosing a brochure or postcard that showcases some of your work. You want to do everything you can to have the gallery director take the time to sit and visit your website, and adding a postcard or brochure will considerably improve your chances.

### 3. Send Email invitations and Queries

Galleries are quickly becoming much more comfortable with operating on the internet. Most have their own websites so it makes sense that they are willing to work with you online.

A very useful approach to a gallery is to email them to request their submission guidelines for new work. The guidelines will tell you if they will accept an invitation to visit your website, or if they instead prefer a more traditional approach such as a slide portfolio.

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The big advantage of email is that it allows you to approach a far greater number of galleries than you would be able to by regular snail mail. It is also much less expensive and time consuming. The down side is that your email will probably get less attention than a nicely crafted and presented letter.

#### *4. Maintain (and use) an Email list*

We all like to think that our query letters will arrive like silver bullets in the perfect gallery and bring us instant fame and success. The reality though is that repetition rules! There's a basic principle of marketing which says that a customer has to hear your pitch between 9 and 27 times before they will take action. The same applies to galleries and other arts professionals: They may not be ready for new work when you first present yourself, but at some point they will be looking. Make sure they remember you!

That doesn't mean that you should be a painful boor and call the gallery director every week. It simply means sending updates about new achievements and events as they happen in your career. Some arts professionals will watch an artist for a number of years before taking action to include them in their stable of artists.

A great way to do this is to use an automated email list management system. This allows you to send regular updates to your email list without the hassle of having to send individual emails. It also allows interested parties to sign up for your list on your website. Make use of all the 21st century tools you can to make your life easier!

#### *5. List your Art in Online Registries & Art Directories*

There are several online art registries where you can submit samples of your work including images, artist statements, bios, etc. Registries are used by museum and gallery curators when they are looking for new work. Think of them as the central libraries of emerging art in the online art world.

Some good examples of online registries are "Artists Space" ([www.artistspace.org](http://www.artistspace.org)) and "White Columns" ([registry.whitecolumns.org](http://registry.whitecolumns.org)). Both of these sites focus on emerging artists working in the contemporary style, so if you're more of a traditionalist, you might be better to look for other registries.

A little online searching, together with asking your artist friends will reveal a wealth of opportunities to submit your work to local, regional, and national registries. In Minnesota for example, artists can submit their work to [www.mnartists.org](http://www.mnartists.org). Similarly, Canadian artists have a great resource in "Artists in Canada" ([www.artistsincanada.com](http://www.artistsincanada.com)).

Note: Don't forget to include your website address (URL) when you submit your work to a registry! Remember the goal: You want the arts professional to come to your site where you have control over the presentation of your work and your image and vision.

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## *6. Advertise in Art Industry Publications*

If you are willing to spend a little money, you can promote yourself by advertising in art industry publications. A good example is ARTnews, which has a large, worldwide circulation, mainly read by collectors, dealers and professionals in the trade. You can select from either display or classified adds depending on your budget.

Don't forget to include your website URL in your add!

## *7. Optimize your Website For Search Engines*

Galleries and other Arts professionals do search for work on the internet so it makes sense to do as much as possible to help them find you. If you perform an online search on your name, even if your website is poorly optimized there is a good chance that your site will show in the results. But remember – if a gallery hasn't heard of you, how would they know to search on your name?

Your website needs to be optimized for search engines (google, MSN Search, yahoo, etc) so that it shows up in the results when a search is performed on the TYPE or STYLE of art that you create. For instance, a gallery specializing in Southwest Art might likely use a search term of "Southwest Art", "New Mexico Art, or "Desert Art" to look for new artists.

You and your website designer should discuss the search phrases that accurately reflect your style of work and medium and then ensure that these are used appropriately in the text and keywords of your website. This will go a long way to improving your rankings in search engine results.

## *Conclusion*

If you make use of a selection of the above techniques consistently you should quickly start to realize real results with exposing your work to arts professionals. The key is consistency: Like a snowball rolling down a mountain, every effort you make will add to your success as you build momentum with your marketing. Happy hunting!

## *About This Report*

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