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6 Steps to Make Your Artist Website Sell

SUMMARY

This article shows you how to use your website to build a solid foundation and system for art sales that will leave you more freedom to actually be an artist! Lets get started.....

Step 1. Showcase Your Work Professionally

More and more galleries are looking to the internet to review the work of emerging and mid-career artists because it is simpler than dealing with large volumes of paper-portfolios. So, what is important in a website? What do arts professionals look for?

Designers and curators know this from years of training and experience. Here are some points to consider when you are planning the visual design of your website.

- Keep the website simple and elegant with the focus on the art itself
- Use neutral background colors that compliment the work. Good choices are black, charcoal, white, and off-white shades. Avoid bright colors.
- Don't overpower the look of the art or distract with a site that looks too "busy" and don't have ads in your site – remember to let the art speak.
- We often recommend against having large numbers of art-works on your website. Choose your very best work, just as you would choose slides for a portfolio. When was the last time you went to a high-end gallery that had hundreds of pieces showing?
- Avoid effects such as flash movies unless they really compliment the art.

Your artist's website is the foundation of your online-marketing strategy. Every marketing tool and program will seek to draw attention to your website gallery. It's worth putting in the investment in time, thought, and money to make it great!

Step 2. Tell Collectors and Arts Professionals about your website

Now that you've expended all that brainpower and soul on getting your beautiful website gallery developed, it needs to be seen! Now's the time to put on your marketing hat and start attracting traffic. The following techniques will get you started:

Search Engines: If your website was well developed it should be at least partially optimized for online search engines like Google, MSN Search, etc.

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Search Engine optimization means that your site should come up in the first few pages of results if a visitor does a search on your name or on the phrases that your site was optimized for.

Email promotion: If your website is setup with an email management system, you can collect the names and email addresses of visitors who sign up to receive updates about your work. When you have events or new art you can email them automatically!

Press Releases: Both online and hard-copy press releases are valuable tools for bringing publicity to your website and career. Whenever you have a significant opening or event, send a press release to local and art-industry publications, as well as online press release services.

Brochures & Inquiry Letters: Your website is a centrally located portfolio that anyone can access. Send an inquiry letter to galleries and invite them to review your work on your website. An even better solution is to include a beautifully crafted brochure or postcard with your letter and website invitation.

Step 3. Make it Easy to Buy.

There are two different market segments for art sales on the internet: High-Value original works, and lower-cost art reproductions.

The high-value originals category is one where your collectors will probably want to get to know you and your art before they bring out their wallets. You should think of your website as a tool to help you close the sale and so it's sufficient to have a very clearly marked "Contact" page so that collectors or dealers can call you or email you.

Lower cost reproductions, on the other hand, lend themselves well to direct sales from your website with ecommerce capability.

Step 4. Measure Your Results.

As an artist and a business owner, one of the first foundations to success and growth is to measure your results. How do you do that?

The first and most obvious place to look is the bottom line - your sales. If you are selling handsomely, it's a good sign that you are doing things well.

In the online-world, marketing results are measured with website statistics packages which track useful information such as:

- How many visitors you had, where they came from, & how they found you
- What they looked at and how long they looked at it
- How they clicked through your site & how many times they returned

Website statistics packages allow you to measure the results of your promotion and search engine optimization efforts. You can then make informed decisions about where to put your

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precious marketing dollars to get the best results. You can then make informed decisions about where to put your precious marketing dollars to get the best results.

Step 5. Keep Your Website Current

When you measure your results, you'll find that visitors particularly enjoy some sections of your website. To make use of this information, you need to make changes to keep those sections updated. Visitors will eventually stop returning if they see the same information month after month.

To make these changes quickly and cost-effectively you need to have either: A cost-effective maintenance plan with your website designer, or, the ability to make the changes yourself. Be sure that your designer offers you one of these options.

Step 6. Put a System in place to constantly improve results

In the 21st century all businesses have to become much more productive to prosper. With 10,000 new artists graduating art schools every year in North America alone, you probably need to spend 100% of your time on marketing to have a chance at success. So where do you find time to be an artist?

The answer is to recognize that most marketing work is highly repetitive. Putting a schedule and a system in place to take care of these tasks will win you back that precious time to be an artist. The system is none other than the 5 steps we've outlined in this article. Here they are again:

Step 1: Showcase your work professionally

Step 2: Tell Collectors and Arts Professionals about your website.

Step 3: Make it easy to buy.

Step 4: Measure your results.

Step 5: Keep your website current.

Creating a system means to implement these steps as a cycle that you refine every month or two. The results of your sales, contacts from collectors and dealers, and your website statistics measurements should help you to make changes to your website and choose the best, most cost-effective ways to promote it.

If you follow this system, you'll quickly start to see where to place more attention and how to achieve better results with your art. After a few months, you'll find that the system has become second nature to you - just like learning to drive a car; and you'll be happy to find that you are spending more time in the studio!



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About This Report

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