

Creating a Niche for your Craft Business Online

Module 2 - Technology and the Artisan Business

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<p>Welcome the group. Introduce yourself, the participants, and the subject of the workshop.</p> <p>Objectives for this module After completing this module you will know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of utilizing Internet technology in the artisan business, • essential technology skills, • how to use search engines, • the importance of planning Web page content, and • why copyright and legal issues are relevant to craft. <p>What types of technology do you use in your business?</p> <p>After a long-term study of microenterprises, the Association of Enterprise Opportunity demonstrated that technology is a good fit with <i>any</i> very small business. Research involving small businesses with at least six employees shows that a majority of these businesses use e-commerce to conduct some part of their operations. Most tend to do what is called B2B, or business-to-business selling. Other research has demonstrated that increasing the technology capabilities of the smallest businesses has enabled owners to expand their businesses and improve the confidence of those with fewer business skills.</p> <p>Artisans can benefit from learning these skills. Learning computer and Internet skills and improving them with practice builds the confidence of the business owner. One source of research found that because artisans prefer to focus on creating craft rather than marketing, finding a skilled</p>	<p>Slide 1: title slide</p> <p>Slide 2: What You Will Learn</p> <p>Slide 3: Technology</p> <p>Slide 4: Research – Small Business & E-Business</p> <p>Slide 5: Benefits from Technology Complement Your Creative Skills with Technology-Skilled Resource People.</p>

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<p>technology specialist was beneficial. Artisans felt that the telephone was most important in conducting business concerning their craft product. Time and money are factors that affect Web site development and Internet skills. However, technology is here to stay, and consumers of craft are using it.</p> <p>Business planning and good management entails thinking about the future and how you will manage your business. Introducing technology can help strengthen your business in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track products made and sold (inventory). • Record sales. • Develop marketing materials. • Maintain customer records. • Save money on extra labor. <p>Have the group list others.</p> <p>Once an artisan engages computer technology into the business, the next step is connecting to the Internet. Benefits include the following:</p>	<p>Slide 6: How Computer Technology Helps</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It saves money. For example, you can e-mail a photo of a craft rather than spending money on prints and mailing costs. • Customers can refer friends to your site. • It reduces travel time and costs to display and sell handcrafts. • You can tell your story online: how you began making your particular craft and how your business started. • You can create an online portfolio of your work. • You can tell more on your Web site than a hangtag on a vase or lamp can tell about your product – such as the process of creating it. 	<p>Slide 7: Benefits of Internet Connectivity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can connect to potential customers who visit your booth at trade shows, fairs, festivals, and other venues. • The Internet offers valuable reference tools and access to current information, including online learning. • You can communicate with artisans and suppliers through E-mail, instant messaging, and online assistance in real time. • You can submit artistic work through online 	<p>Slide 8: Benefits of Internet Connectivity</p> <p>Slide 9: Web site activity ZAPPLication</p>

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<p>application for jury review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Internet levels the playing field with big business competitors. <p>We know that the smallest and most isolated businesses are at the greatest risk for failure. In other words, failing to make enough sales to create a positive cash flow can contribute to business failure.</p> <p>Art of Ohio promotes the work of artisans from Ohio who may be seeking opportunities to increase their exposure and thus sales of their crafts. Economic development benefits the artisan, the community, the state, the and region. Take a look at the site. Is there a similar organization here in your state or region? What would be the benefits and disadvantages of such a site for your craft business?</p> <p>What barriers do you face in deciding about or using an Internet business site?</p> <p>How can you make an Internet business site work <i>for</i> you?</p> <p>Understanding the Essentials of Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to use a computer. • Know the type of connectivity that is available to you. • Either develop or find someone to develop your Web site, which allows you to connect to a whole new world of consumers. <p>Technology and connectivity are essential in today's <i>and</i> tomorrow's business world.</p> <p>What Do I Need to Know and Where Do I Start?</p> <p>There are basic types of Web sites that apply to a craft business, and all are considered e-commerce.</p>	<p>Optional slide 10: Submitting Your Work</p> <p>Slide 11 : Web Sites</p> <p>Slide 12: Sant Fe Weavers link.</p> <p>Slide 13: List of possible barriers to Internet site. Discuss responses to the question.</p> <p>Slide 14: Understanding the Essential Technology</p> <p>Slide 15: Know the Type of Web Site</p>

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<p>Informational sites <i>Brochure:</i> A small Web site consisting of the basic information about an organization, similar in content to a flyer or leaflet. www.websight.co.uk/glossary</p> <p>Let's look at an example of a brochure site. Information is given in a simple format. No sales transactions take place, but contact information is given. <i>Example:</i> Web mall www.arts-crafts.com/</p> <p>Transactional sites <i>Virtual store:</i> Site where sales or interactions can occur between businesses, businesses and consumers, or consumers and consumers. <i>Example:</i> www.joannfabrics.com</p> <p><i>Auction:</i> Some are devoted to crafts only, but the definition of <i>craft</i> is very loose, and you are not likely to find "fine handcraft." <i>Examples:</i> www.ebay.com www.amazon.com (search for "handcrafts")</p> <p><i>Virtual mall:</i> www.rubylane.com</p> <p>Look for artisan resources</p> <p>Many types of Web sites can help you in your artisan business, in sourcing products to create your craft (ask for types of sources they use), product development, manufacturing, procurement of goods to support the business, selling, payment, restocking, and marketing.</p> <p>Searching for resources, competition, partners The Internet is the most massive collection of information the world has ever known. It may appear to be disorganized, but using carefully selected keywords can help you find almost any kind of information you need. How can the Internet work for me in my art business?</p>	<p>Slide 15: Know what type of Web site you Need</p> <p>Slide 16: Informational Site Activity: Using Google.com, search for e-commerce terms that you have heard of but may not understand, such as <i>brochure</i>. Go to Google.com, enter "define: brochure" or the word you are looking for. Result will be several definitions from multiple online sources.</p> <p>Slide 17: Informational site www.arts-crafts.com</p> <p>Slide 18: Transactional Site <i>Activity:</i> Go to these sites. Describe the e-commerce activities that can take place.</p> <p>Slide 19: Transactional Site www.ebay.com - auction</p> <p>Slide 20: Affiliate Site Amazon.com www.arts.state.tx.us/ -resources and buy online under TX Originals</p> <p>Slide 21: Searching</p> <p>Slides 22: Searching the Internet</p>

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<p>It is important to understand how search engines can make your online work a little less timeconsuming. They do the work for you - if you use the correct combinations of keywords.</p> <p>What is a keyword?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library: go through the door. • Web: open a browser, such as Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera, MSN. 	<p>Slides 23 and 24: - Searching Library vs. Internet</p>								
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="191 535 492 609" style="text-align: center;">Library Keywords</th> <th data-bbox="492 535 792 609" style="text-align: center;">Search Engine Keywords</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="191 609 492 756">Person looking through paper files, databases, etc.</td> <td data-bbox="492 609 792 756">Computer “spider” looking through millions of files</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="191 756 492 871">Time involved: Hours or days to complete</td> <td data-bbox="492 756 792 871">Time involved: Seconds</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="191 871 492 987">Results: paper copy, many pages</td> <td data-bbox="492 871 792 987">Results: PDF files, Web sites, or abstracts</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Library Keywords	Search Engine Keywords	Person looking through paper files, databases, etc.	Computer “spider” looking through millions of files	Time involved: Hours or days to complete	Time involved: Seconds	Results: paper copy, many pages	Results: PDF files, Web sites, or abstracts	
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<p>Graphic Design on the Web Page: How Do I Select and Use It?</p> <p>Basic rule: Keep it simple. Simple means quicker loading on a computer screen and easier access to viewing by anyone, whether they have high-speed or dial-up Internet access.</p> <p>The following slides are from actual Web sites.</p> <p>This activity will help you begin to consider or reconsider what you have planned for your own site. This is useful <i>before</i> meeting with a Web designer or attempting to develop your own Web page.</p>	<p>Slide 25: Web Site Design</p> <p>Slides 26, 27, 28, 29, 30: <i>Activity:</i> Discuss what the artisans like and don’t like about these pages. What suggestions do they have for improving these sites? What did they learn that they will apply to designing their own sites?</p>								

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<p>Photos: Guidelines for E-Commerce Sites</p> <p>Refer to PowerPoint titled Module 4 for examples of good and bad craft photography.</p> <p>The Texas Photographic Society and the American Association of Media Photographers can be a fairly inexpensive source of assistance to the Texas artisan. Many members will volunteer their time, equipment and skills to gain experience and build their own portfolios of work with your craft.</p> <p>Photography of your craft is critical for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entries to juried exhibitions can now be submitted online via “ZAPApplication” process. • Quality photos may be the only example of work that online customers will see. • Different media require different photographic techniques and photo quality. <p>Amateur photography is a poor substitute for the work put into creating fine crafts. Poor quality photos taken without planning for effect can do more harm than good for the artisan and actually misrepresent the work. Always look at your work online once a photo is posted. In addition remember that a search engine cannot read photos. Always tag the photo with text that can be read by search engine spiders. [Illustrate with PowerPoint Module 4.]</p> <p>Legal Issues: Copyright</p> <p>Copyright is by far one of the most important legal issues that artisans have to deal with because of the creative process and the need to protect the artisan.</p> <p>The best source of information related to business laws protecting artisans’ work is the U.S. Patent and Copyright Office. www.copyright.gov/register/visual.html</p>	<p>Slide 31: Guidelines for Web site photos</p> <p>Slide 32: Note the wrinkled background</p> <p>Slide 33: Photo Tips.</p> <p>Slide 34: What could be improved?</p> <p>Slide 35: Guidelines for Photos - Web Site</p> <p>Slide 36: Legal Issue, Copyrights, Licensing, Patents.</p>

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<p>This site explains how to register a visual art and other artistic expressions. Also visit the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for other useful information that may apply to your craft business. www.uspto.gov/</p> <p>The best source of information related to business laws protecting consumers is the Federal Trade Commission www.ftc.gov/ftc/business.htm.</p> <p>Visual Arts Works</p> <p>For copyright purposes, visual arts are original pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works, which include two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of fine, graphic, and applied art.</p> <p>Examples of visual arts works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertisements, commercial prints, labels Artificial flowers and plants Artwork applied to clothing or to other useful articles Bumper stickers, decals, stickers Cartographic works, such as maps, globes, relief models Cartoons, comic strips Collages Dolls, toys Drawings, paintings, murals Enamel works Fabric, floor, and wall-covering designs Games, puzzles Greeting cards, postcards, stationery 	<p>(Slide 37 goes with the paragraph on visual arts.)</p>

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<p>Holograms, computer and laser artwork</p> <p>Jewelry designs</p> <p>Models</p> <p>Mosaics</p> <p>Needlework and craft kits</p> <p>Original prints, such as engravings, etchings, serigraphs, silk-screen prints, woodblock prints</p> <p>Patterns for sewing, knitting, crocheting, needlework</p> <p>Photographs, photomontages</p> <p>Posters</p> <p>Record jacket artwork or photography</p> <p>Relief and intaglio prints</p> <p>Reproductions, such as lithographs, collotypes</p> <p>Sculpture, such as carvings, ceramics, figurines, maquettes, molds, relief sculptures</p> <p>Stained-glass designs</p> <p>Stencils, cutouts</p> <p>Technical drawings, architectural drawings or plans, blueprints, diagrams, mechanical drawings</p> <p>Weaving designs, lace designs, tapestries</p>	
<p>In almost every state in the United States there is a volunteer law association devoted to arts. In Texas this group is Texas Accountants and Lawyers for the Arts (TALA). There are organizations that volunteer on a pro bono basis to artisans and their businesses.</p> <p>www.talarts.org</p>	<p>Slide 38: Assistance with Copyright and other Legal Issues</p>

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<p>The American Association of Law Schools created the discipline of ARTLAW. Refer to <i>Law in Plain English for Crafts</i> by Leonard DuBoff.</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Go to these two associations Web sites. www.asmp.org www.texasphoto.org</p> <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-commerce requires a great deal of planning. • What Internet users see makes a lasting impression on them and shapes their opinion of your business. • Having an Internet presence requires that you carefully plan content, understand your product, and have a well-defined business image. • Be certain to register your artistic work and your Web site for copyright or other appropriate licensing both online and offline. 	<p>Slide 39: Summary</p>