

CONQUERING THE CREATIVE MARKETPLACE

*Between the Fickleness of Business
And the Pursuit of Design*

By Warren Feld

CONQUERING THE CREATIVE MARKETPLACE

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And the Pursuit of Design*

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**A Book About
How To Start and Run
a Successful Business
Selling Handmade Jewelry and
Other Crafted Products,**

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And the Pursuit of Design

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*For Jayden Alfre Jones
Jewelry Designer
Life Partner*

For Me, It Was Business First, Then Design

I had been working in health care for almost 20 years before I discovered jewelry making. Pharmacy technician. City health planner. Assistant Professor. Government policy planner. Director of a non-profit association of health clinics. And I had enough.

I felt so disconnected in my last job. My performance level was great, but I no longer cared. For several years, the very high salary kept me chained to my job. But money began to have less currency in my life. I wanted something more.

That was 35+ years ago. I re-wrote an organizational plan for my agency and left myself out of the plan. Instead, I jumped ship. With my partner Jayden, we started a business selling jewelry and jewelry making parts. The business was initially organized around Jayden's jewelry designing. I had never made jewelry before. I didn't wear jewelry. Jewelry had little attraction for me. But jewelry sells. I liked the idea of having a large custom jewelry making component to our business. Basically, for me, I saw jewelry as another way to make money. I had grown up in retail and was very comfortable with it.

As the business grew and evolved, I began to make some jewelry myself. Usually, I strung beads on cord into necklaces and bracelets. There was no design aspect to it. I was largely self-taught. And it showed. My pieces broke easily. The clasps and how they were attached to my pieces left a lot to be desired. A lot of my choices were misdirected and plain bad.

After a couple years, I began to take in repairs. This was my education. I could see the choices other jewelry makers had made, and the consequences of those choices. I could talk with the customers who wore or purchased the jewelry, and ask them how the jewelry felt and, if they were aware, what led to the jewelry breaking. I began to formulate my own rules for designing jewelry. I realized that part of the design process involved an understanding of art and architecture. Another part of the design process involved an intuitive assessment of client assumptions, expectations, perceptions, values and desires.

Putting 2 plus 2 together, this all sounded a lot like good business. Match the product to customer needs, wants, demands and desires. Demonstrate product value. Think about how display, promotion and distribution cement that link between product and value within any particular market niche. Anticipate how a client becomes emotionally attached to the work of a particular designer. Build in process management concerns leading to the best effective and efficient product design. Balance production time and creativity time. Price to sell. And you have integrated management with design.

It all seems so natural. But, in reality, this was a steady, developmental path with lots of experimentation, lots of trial and error, and lots of learning moments. I reached a point after a few years to begin to call myself a jewelry designer. As my pieces began to sell more and more, I started organizing them into lines of jewelry and collections. I never did full justice to packaging, though I should have. I worked with a sales rep for one of my lines of jewelry. Over the years, as my design skills and reputation grew, I have mostly done custom work for clients.

As you work your way through the topics in *Conquering The Creative Marketplace*,

my hope is that integrating business and creativity becomes natural, fluent, successful and profitable for you as a jewelry designer.

Thank You

I want to acknowledge the tremendous contribution my partner Jayden has made to our success as designers in business. Without her, there would have been no business to begin with. It was initially her designing that attracted our many custom-work clients, particularly from the country music industry. After she retired and the business began to become organized around my own designs, she was very supportive and encouraging.

Connie Welch was one of our most supportive customers and friends. She always kept up on the newest products and the newest trends, and made sure we were aware of these. We wouldn't have been successful without her. It was Connie that introduced us to many of the national-level bead weaving and jewelry making instructors in America. And it was Connie that always pushed us to experiment, think creatively, think broadly and bring a lot of disparate ideas and activities together into a coherent jewelry design and jewelry business framework.

I would also like to thank the many students I have taught over the years in how to start and manage their jewelry design businesses. This was also my opportunity to learn and live vicariously and experience a full range of business types, goals, strategies, successes and failures.

BOOKS BY WARREN FELD

BOOK 1: So You Want To Be A Jewelry Designer

Order here (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09Y3VNNMW>) :

Becoming a Jewelry Designer is exciting. With each piece, you are challenged with this profound question: *Why does some jewelry draw people's attention, and others do not?* Yes there are some craft and art aspects to jewelry making. But when jewelry designers turn to how-to books or art theory texts, however, these do not uncover the necessary answers. They do not show you how to make trade-offs between beauty and function. Nor how to introduce your pieces publicly. You get insufficient practical guidance about knowing when your piece is finished and successful. In short, you do not learn about *design*. You do not learn the essentials about how to go beyond basic mechanics, anticipate the wearer's understandings and desires, or gain management control over the process. *So You Want To Be A Jewelry Designer* reinterprets how to apply techniques and modify art theories from the Jewelry Designer's perspective. This very detailed book reveals how to become literate and fluent in jewelry design.

The major topics covered include,

1. Jewelry Beyond Craft: Gaining A Disciplinary Literacy and Fluency in Design
2. Getting Started
3. What Is Jewelry, Really?
4. Materials, Techniques and Technologies
5. Selecting Design Elements, Like Color, and Applying Rules of Composition, Construction and Manipulation

6. Design Management
7. Introducing Your Designs Publicly
8. Developing Those Intuitive Skills Within: Creativity, Inspiration and Aspiration, Passion
9. Jewelry In Context
10. Teaching Disciplinary Literacy In Jewelry Design

BOOK 2: Conquering The Creative Marketplace

Many people learn beadwork and jewelry-making in order to sell the pieces they make. Based both on the creation and development of my own jewelry design business, as well as teaching countless students over the past 35+ years about business and craft, I address what should be some of your key concerns and uncertainties. I share with you the kinds of things (specifically, *a business mindset* and confidence) it takes to start your own jewelry business, run it, anticipate risks and rewards, and lead it to a level of success you feel is right for you. I help you plan your road map.

I explore answers to such questions as: How does someone get started marketing and selling their pieces? What business fundamentals need to be brought to the fore? How do you measure risk and return on investment? How does the creative person develop and maintain a passion for business? To what extent should business decisions affect artistic choices? What similar traits to successful jewelry designers do those in business share? How do you protect your intellectual property?

Useful for the hobbyist who wants to sell a few pieces, as well as the designer who wants a self-supporting business, the major topics covered include,

1. Integrating Business With Design
2. Disciplinary Literacy In the Creative Marketplace
3. Getting Started
4. Financial Management
5. Product Development, Creating Your Line, and Pricing
6. Marketing, Promotion, Branding
7. Selling
8. Resiliency
9. Professional Responsibilities, including Developing Your Portfolio

BOOK 3: Pearl Knotting...Warren's Way (https://www.amazon.com/PEARL-KNOTTING-Warrens-Way-Simple/dp/B0B28D9ZJ6/ref=sr_1_2?crid=389QW490E0ECM&keywords=warren+feld+pearl+knotting&qid=1668639549&prefix=warren+feld+pearl+knotting,aps,119&sr=8-2)

BOOK 4: So You Want To Do Craft Shows (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Craft-Shows/dp/B0B67JDJDR/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1N04AMD9EWSES&keywords=so+you+want+to+do+craft+shows&qid=1668639620&prefix=so+you+want+to+do+craft+shows,aps,132&sr=8-1)

BOOK 5: Basics of Beading and Attaching Clasps (*expected January 2024*)

1. AN INTRODUCTION: THREADING THE BUSINESS NEEDLE



At The Beginning

When I began making jewelry 35+ years ago, my only interest was in making money. Concerns about design and art, construction and appeal, functionality and emotional engagement were superficial. Probably *non-existent* is a better word. And yes, this meant I did not care about what any piece of jewelry I made might mean for the person buying it. Or wearing it. Or otherwise putting it on display. There was no consequence for my actions in making jewelry. Except making money. There was a hollowness here which I was, at the time, totally unaware of.

That was a shame.

I missed out on a lot of excitement that emerges from the design process and that special relationship between designer and client.

As I became more proficient in making jewelry, I questioned more and more of myself about what I was doing. Why were some pieces of jewelry I made more successful than others? Why did some sell better than others? Why were some received more warmly than others? Why did some hold up much better from wear than others?

I had had to place a value on the pieces I made. Initially I used a simple pricing formula which related the costs of parts and the costs of labor and the costs of overhead to the price set. But over time, I noticed that some of my pieces were more resonant than others. More desirable. More intriguing. Sexier. Should I increase my prices to reflect these greater, though more difficult to measure, kinds of things? I didn't know. But I was thinking about it.

Over the years, I thought more and more about what made jewelry more or less successful. How to know when a piece was finished. How to know that I made the best tradeoffs between beauty and functionality. How to know what my jewelry was worth. How to market jewelry. How to sell it. How to sell it in a store. How to sell it at a craft show. How to sell it online. How to organize it into a coherent line of jewelry. How to measure and assess costs, revenues and returns-on-investment.

I share part of my developing knowledge in my book ***SO YOU WANT TO BE A JEWELRY DESIGNER*** (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09Y3VNNMW>). Here I go over the many hard and soft skills required to become fluent, flexible and original in jewelry design. It is important to understand what jewelry is, how design elements are selected, arranged, constructed and manipulated, how to manage the design process, and how to introduce your designs publicly.

*In this 2-part podcast,
I talk about SO YOU WANT TO BE A JEWELRY DESIGNER.*



PART 1: <https://tinyurl.com/3ntyafxp>
PART 2: <https://tinyurl.com/32rk8xj4>

What you'll learn in these episodes:

- Why designing a bracelet is the same as designing a bridge
- Why jewelry has its own design language, separate from the language of fine art or craft
- How Warren learned about the engineering of jewelry making by doing repairs
- Why the architecture of a piece of jewelry is as important as its visual design
- Warren's tips for creating beaded jewelry that will withstand the stress of movement

In this book, ***CONQUERING THE CREATIVE MARKETPLACE***, I focus on *strategies for integrating business practices with the creative design process* – things which can make balancing the creative self with the productive self easier and more fluid. I talk about how dreams are made between the fickleness of business and the pursuit of design.

I go into great detail about all the things you need to think about, know and do when getting started. This begins with basic bookkeeping and accounting as well as developing a business model and also understanding how to protect your intellectual property.

I discuss briefly about how the more literate jewelry designer is more successful in

business. *Disciplinary literacy* involves a set of skills which enable the designer to best relate the jewelry design to client understandings and desires. These skills influence how the client interacts with the piece of jewelry, seeing relevance, value, usefulness, and the designer's intent.

It is important to understand some basic concepts – *Risk, Rewards* and *Return-On-Investment*, and how these play out in all aspects of your business. Also critical is to recognize how what you do in business and what you do creatively affect the *Efficiency* and *Effectiveness* of both your design process as well as your business operations.

I have several chapters devoted to *product design and development*. These range from product goal setting to needs assessment to product distribution, pricing and promotion to managing product launch.

Another section focuses on *marketing and branding*. You need to create an identify for your business, one that people become aware of and feel positively towards.

This leads to the next section on *selling*. I review selling strategies important in different settings from retail to craft shows to home shows to online.


I talk about *resiliency* in business. What kinds of things – emotional, administrative, creative – lead to a greater level of resilience in your business as you face growth, market ups and downs and fashion and taste changes.

Last, I review and present advice for *creating the kinds of documents you will need to complement your business goals*. These include a creative resume; portfolio; artist statement, biographical sketch, certificate of authenticity and the like.

I know you are eager to get started. Let's go.

Warren Feld

2.
THREADING THE BUSINESS NEEDLE:
Management Strategies
For Integrating Business and Design

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can a jewelry designer survive successfully as a business? 2. To what extent should business considerations influence artistic choices? 3. What business fundamentals should be brought to the fore? 4. How does the creative person develop and maintain a passion for business? 5. What similar traits do successful jewelry businesses share?
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<p>Key Words: <i>business</i> <i>Design</i> <i>market-driven</i> <i>product-driven</i></p>	<p><i>survive</i> <i>success</i> <i>handmade</i> <i>cost/revenue</i> <i>pricing / selling</i> <i>return on investment (ROI)</i></p>	<p><i>choices</i> <i>business fundamentals</i> <i>passion for business</i> <i>management mindset</i> <i>creativity vs production</i> <i>intellectual property</i></p>
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It is very feasible to start and run a successful business selling handmade products. This book introduces you to the things you will need to do along the way as you develop *your business road map*. You need to embrace the idea that you are in business. You have to understand how the creative marketplace works. You have to understand, as well, what business fundamentals need to be brought to the fore. You have to be comfortable with money, documentation and production. You want to approach going into business with a clear vision of its challenges as well as its rewards.

Business involves creating sustainable income strategies. These includes things like:

1. Putting your jewelry designs on a sound cost/revenue footing,
2. Developing market-driven strategies (as opposed to product-driven ones),
3. Pricing your pieces for sale,
4. Implementing various selling strategies, and
5. Resolving artistic and design choices and tensions, in the interest of the business.

It is important to understand why designers fail at business so as not to repeat their mistakes. It is important to develop a *management mindset* where you are balancing creativity and business.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT:

How Do You Start and Run A Business Selling Hand Made Products?

Between Commerce and Art

Many people learn beadwork and jewelry-making in order to sell the pieces they make. In today's world, people who sell their pieces must become savvy in both regular retail, as well as internet retail. This does not have to be too complex. Nor too overwhelming. Too impossible. Too boring. There are a lot of tensions here between commerce and art. Production and creativity. They parallel the tensions between the creative act and having to introduce your jewelry publicly. But all are manageable.

Conquering The Creative Marketplace is a comprehensive guide for you – someone who wants to start and run a business selling handmade products you love to make. The chapters in this book focus on developing and implementing your ***road map***. This map helps show you how to better understand and relate to the creative marketplace, eventually earning money from your jewelry designs (or other art or craft projects). I go into detail about the things you have to do to start and run a business selling handmade products. I talk about the things you will want to do to manage, evolve and expand your business. These have to do with general accounting and setting up a general ledger. They include things like inventory management, pricing formulas, marketing and branding strategies. Also important is the protection of your designs – your intellectual property. I also discuss in detail key concepts like *risk, return on investment, legitimacy, effectiveness, efficiency, consumption, influence, persuasion, coherence and contagion*.

Based both on the creation and development of my own jewelry design business, as well as teaching countless students over the past 35+ years about business and craft, I want to address what should be some of your key concerns and uncertainties. I want to share with you the kinds of things (specifically, *a business mindset and confidence*) it takes to start your own jewelry business, run it, and lead it to a level of success you feel is right for you. *Right for you* will mean different things to different designers, from a hobbyist selling some pieces to a full-fledged operation. Whatever, your goals and ambitions, you will need to follow a basic road map. I want to help you plan your road map.

I explore answers to such questions as: How does someone get started selling their pieces? What business fundamentals need to be brought to the fore? How do you measure risk and return on investment? How does the creative person develop and maintain a passion for business? To what extent should business decisions affect artistic choices? What

similar traits do successful jewelry designers share with those in business? How do you protect your intellectual property?

The next few chapters are descriptions of the kinds of things it takes for successfully integrating commerce with art. There are literally full books written on each topic and subtopic, which you can easily access in bookstores or online. This book should be considered a comprehensive introduction to these topics. While all the information in this book is pertinent and necessary for you, it is not a substitute for talking with an accountant and business lawyer familiar with you and the locality, state/province and country you are doing business in.

The advice in these sections is useful for any jewelry designer who wants to sell their pieces. It is useful for the jewelry designer who occasionally wants to sell a few pieces. It is useful for the jewelry designer who wants to supplement their income. It is useful, as well, for the jewelry designer who wants to develop a fully, financially secure jewelry design business.

These major topics covered in this book include,

1. **Integrating Business With Design (begin with chapter 2)**
2. **Disciplinary Literacy In the Creative Marketplace (begin with chapter 6)**
3. **Getting Started (begin with chapter 7)**
4. **Financial Management (begin with chapter 18)**
5. **Product Development, Creating Your Line, and Pricing (begin with chapter 31)**
6. **Marketing, Promotion, Branding (begin with chapter 42)**
7. **Selling (begin with chapter 54)**
8. **Resiliency (begin with chapter 81)**
9. **Professional Responsibilities, including Developing Your Portfolio (begin with chapter 82)**



Let Business Concerns Influence Your Artistic Choices

To what extent do (and should) business concerns influence the artistic choices bead and jewelry artists make?

If you want to be in business, then I'd say, **“A Lot!”** But this isn't what a lot of designers like to hear. Success in business takes something besides being an excellent jewelry designer.

Jewelry making is not a passive art. You make jewelry for others to wear and buy, and you have to anticipate how they will assess your work and recognize your artistry. It is not the same as painting a painting or sculpting a sculpture in the sense that with paintings or sculptures, the artist does not need to communicate interactively with the viewer in order to create the product and be deemed successful. Jewelry making, instead, is more an interactive art. It is like architecture, where success can only be created through some kind of dialectic with others, and only be defined as successful as the product is introduced publicly and understood by others as finished and successful.

Selling your pieces is merely another phase of this interactive art, but sometimes forces upon you some more limits and refinements. You have to market to audiences. You may have to standardize things to be able to make the same thing over and over again. You may have to work in a production mode and repeat making certain designs, rather than freely creating and designing anew each time. You have to price things so that they will sell, and you have to price things so that you can make a sufficient profit. You do not (*which translates as never*) undersell yourself, like offering discounts to family, friends and co-workers.

You have to conform to prevalent styles and colors and forms. You have to make things which will photograph well for sale online. You have to make things that local stores want and are willing to buy or put on consignment. You may end up with a lot of *“one size fits all,”* because producing too much variety in sizes, shapes, colors and sizes could overwhelm you financially.

You find that if you want to make your jewelry design into a successful business, you may have to compromise with yourself, your artistic drives and sensibilities. You may have to limit what you offer. In order to make that sale. In order to make a profit. In order to establish your brand and how it is recognized. And stay in business.

As You Get Started, Ask Yourself These Questions

1. After honestly evaluating my hard and soft skills, am I business-ready?
2. Are there potential customers who will want, need and demand the kinds of jewelry I design?
3. Can I price my products competitively?
4. Where do I want to sell my pieces?
5. Can I get my pieces the visibility and opportunities to get purchased, given where I want to sell my pieces?
6. Are my pieces consistent and coherent enough to be recognized and understood as a brand, and as a brand designed by me?
7. Do I feel I can organize, manage, control and keep updated all the business functions – Design, Financial Management, Production and Distribution, Marketing and Branding, and Selling, Feedback and Evaluation?

Often Unexpected, Always Exciting: Your First Jewelry Sale



How many times have you heard a jewelry artist say...

I can't bear to part with my pieces.

My jewelry is too precious to me.

I only give a few pieces that I make away as gifts to friends and family.

I've never sold anything.

Selling would take the fun out of it.

And then, someone offers to buy a piece she is wearing, and the rest is history. A sale! Sold! They paid so much more than it cost me! Right off her wrist! Gotta make another! That was so fast! That was so easy!

My friend Connie used to make things only for friends. She always wore the things she made. At one point, she was repeatedly approached in various stores around town by women who wanted to buy the pieces around her neck.

At first, Connie quoted them, what she thought were outlandish prices. No one hesitated.

Connie was awe-struck, but didn't say *No*. I don't know if she secretly wore a sign on her back—**JEWELRY FOR SALE**—or, somehow stuck out her cheek in such a way, as if asking to be kissed, that people came over to her, but she was getting quite good at attracting buyers. At TJMAX, at TARGET, at MACY's, at DILLARDS, at SEARS, at KROGERS and PUBLIX. She kept upping her prices each time, and no one had yet to blink!

Jona had made many things before, but had never sold anything. Then she had one of those weeks. It started in a Dalt's restaurant. The waitress had to have them. She had to have Jona's earrings. She had to have them now. Any price. So Jona suggested a price, the waitress laid the money on the table, and Jona slowly removed each earring from each ear, and said a silent *Good-bye*.

Later that week, one of her friends was desperate. The wedding was this weekend. The piece of jewelry she had purchased for herself went lost. She remembered one of Jona's pairs, and asked for it, and insisted on paying for it.

Elizabeth wanted to show her best friend at work the kinds of jewelry she was making. One day, she brought a box of jewelry in with her to work. At lunch time, they spread all the pieces out on a table. All of a sudden, the table was mobbed by other women in the lunchroom. They were grabbing, trying on, and throwing money down right and left.

Ingren had a box of her mother's jewelry stored away in a closet. She didn't particularly like these pieces, and would never wear them, but knew they had some value. She took pictures of each one, and placed them on EBAY to see if she could auction them off. She sold all but one within a week's time.

Those first jewelry sales can result in a big *high*. They are thrilling. Exciting. Very motivating. Selling that first piece feels like it can change your life.

But it's that second sale that begins to determine if you can make a business out of it. Can you do it again? Is it as much fun? Now all of a sudden you have to think about record keeping, government forms, tracking inventory, making enough product, adequately pricing your stuff, and marketing to recruit and retain customers.


The situation doesn't seem quite the same anymore.

But believe me, it's not as onerous as it might appear at first.

And selling your jewelry keeps getting better and better and better!

3.

THREADING THE BUSINESS NEEDLE: Where Can I Sell My Jewelry?

	<p>Guiding Questions: 1. Where can I sell things?</p>
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<p>Key Words: sell target market / audience risk gathering email addresses</p>	<p>retail, wholesale, consignment gallery art and craft fair, flea market, bazaar jewelry party</p>	<p>home show trunk show online website, auction catalog application procedures multi-venue approach visibility</p>
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[See all the chapters in the section on 54. SELLING YOUR JEWELRY for more options and details.]

Where Can I Sell My Jewelry?

There are lots and lots of places for selling your jewelry. These include,

1. Wear It and Sell It
2. To Friends, Family and Work-Mates
3. Retail and Wholesale Stores
4. Consignment Shops
5. Art and Crafts Fairs, Flea Markets, Bazaars
6. Jewelry Parties, Home Shows
7. Trunk Shows

8. Galleries
9. Online
10. Catalogs

As well as through Trade Shows, TV and Radio, Webcasts, Through Sales Reps and Agencies, and many more options for profitable venues.

1. Wear it and Sell It

Yes, people do buy jewelry off your back, so to speak. You might be standing in line at the supermarket. Or attending a concert. Or sitting in the shade at a table in a local park. People will come up to you, marvel at your jewelry, and ask if they can buy it.

So, wear your favorite pieces and flaunt them.

2. To Friends, Family and Work-Mates

Arrange showings of your jewelry with friends, families and people you work with. They know you, and you know them. This fact makes it easier to approach them about buying the jewelry you make.

Don't, however, be too quick to offer them any discounts. Your prices are most likely way below similar items sold in a department store or boutique. So, if you think about it, they will already be getting a discount.

Also, if you are just getting started with your business, don't present yourself as willing to make anything for anyone. If they want a particular color of bead you do not have, it's alright, even advisable from a business standpoint, to say you cannot do something in this color at this time. From experience, they will probably say, *OK, I'll go with what you do have*. It is not very cost-effective if you have to invest in inventory that, in the short term, you will not use often and in sufficient quantity.

In a similar way, they might want a very different design from what you have in your inventory. If this change will require a big investment, you probably want to say you cannot do this at this time.

3. Retail and Wholesale Stores

There are many different types of retail stores and settings where you can place your jewelry for sale.

The most obvious is a store-front. This can be a jewelry store. A boutique. A gift shop. A souvenir store. It can also be a beauty parlor, spa, nail salon, chiropractor's office. It could be a department or specialty store.

It might be downtown, in a mall, on a strip highway, or a quaint little part of town.

It could also be a pop-up shop. A booth at a fair or bazaar. A food truck.

It might be your store or someone else's store.

Here you offer a discounted price to the store's owner, who will want to double or triple that price when selling to their customers.

You want to guarantee some sense of exclusivity, such as not selling to another store in the same neighborhood or town.

4. Consignment Shop

This would be considered a retail setting, as well.

Instead of the store owner paying you for your jewelry outright, she or he would only pay for it once it sold.

For a consignment setting, you need to realize that the store owner is at greater financial risk than the jewelry designer. The store owner has to display the pieces, keep them clean and presentable, and train staff on the key selling points. Displaying your jewelry also creates what is called an *opportunity cost*. There is a cost to the store, given that your pieces are taking up desirable retail square footage, should the store miss out on an opportunity for displaying some other jewelry designer's pieces which would sell better.

Given the shared risk, the best split of the profits would be 60% to the store and 40% to the consignee. A 40-60% would be OK. 50-50% would be OK. However, a 70-30% or 30-70% split would be a red flag. It would signal that the consignment store owner did not understand the business fundamentals of consignment. That would translate into you finding it difficult to get paid for your pieces which have sold.

5. Art and Crafts Fairs, Flea Markets, Bazaars

Many years ago, I started my business with my partner Jayden, by doing flea markets and craft shows. Eventually our business evolved into one store, then a second store, and an online business. But you never forget your roots.

There are many advantages to doing craft shows. You don't have to invest in long term rent. You do not have to have a big investment in inventory and in displays. You can make good money. You can jump-start and enhance your reputation. You can generate a large email list. You can learn a lot of good business tricks. And find out about a lot of good resources.

If... And that's a big, "if"! You know what you're doing. All too often, jewelry designers who want to do craft shows have not done their homework. They have not researched and evaluated which shows to do, and which not to do. They have not figured out how best to set up their booths and displays. They are clueless about what inventory to make, and to bring, and how to price it. They are unprepared to promote, to market and to sell.

There are different types of craft fairs. Some are local, some are regional, some are

national. Each is targeted at a particular market niche, and it is important that you and your products have a good fit, both in design as well as price points.

Some art and craft fairs are juried. That means you send in an application and selection is up to a panel of judges. Be aware of the criteria and the procedures and all the deadlines.

6. Jewelry Parties and Home Shows

Bring the sales event to you.

You can arrange a jewelry party. There are companies that specialize in jewelry parties. They prepare a showy catalog. You buy the parts from them. Invite friends. They pick the parts they want. You have them arrange the parts into a design. Then either you train everyone to construct their jewelry, or you construct it for them. Besides the tasks at hand, you can provide beverages and snacks or even turn it into a wine and cheese party.

You can also design your own jewelry party format.

Home shows are similar. You showcase your jewelry in a home setting, as if it were a retail shop. You invite people to come, see and buy. It could be your own home. Or someone else's home located in some prime neighborhood. You might make an arrangement with a realtor to hold the home show in a home that is vacant and for sale.

Home shows work best when there are 2 or 3 other vendors besides yourself selling complementary merchandise. This could be clothing. Hand-bags. Perfumes and cosmetics. Something that goes well with jewelry.

You might arrange some demonstrations. Some entertainment. Keep it fun and lively.

The key to success is inviting people who are likely to buy. So creating a large mail/email list is very important.

7. Trunk Shows

At a trunk show, usually done in a retail store setting, you bring a lot of merchandise and set it up for sale over a 2 or 3 day period. The here-today/gone-tomorrow feeling ramps up the pressure on customers to buy, buy, buy.

If you can be present at the trunk show, it's a fact that nobody can sell your stuff as well as you can. If not, you will need to prepare a list of selling points for those store staff responsible for the show. Also you might offer incentives to the staff if they sell a certain amount.

Try to get a list of customers who purchase your jewelry, hopefully with their phone numbers and email addresses. Keep them and everyone else on your mailing lists aware of where and when you will be doing trunk shows.

Selecting stores is critical. Your best bets are stores which carry similar styles to yours but where your pieces do not duplicate other jewelry they already carry.

If a store is already carrying your jewelry on a retail / wholesale / consignment basis, you

might do a trunk show once a year at these places. This will heighten excitement about you and the jewelry you make.

8. Galleries

Galleries specialize in selling things they call *art*. You will find that many galleries may not view jewelry as art. They see it more as craft. So, you may experience some resistance here.

But getting into a gallery will require the same insights, persistence and determination that getting into any retail setting requires.

Galleries and stores have target markets. These are groups of people who share an interest in particular styles and price points. You (and the gallery) will sell more pieces if they fit with the target market, but do not duplicate what the gallery is already selling.

Galleries showcasing jewelry will emphasize the artistic strengths of the pieces. They will not be that concerned with fashion or trends.

Galleries may demand a higher level of exclusivity than other types of retail settings.

9. Online

You have many different options for selling your jewelry online. You might have your own website. You might place your jewelry on someone else's website. You might place it on an auction site. Or a social media site like Instagram.

You will want to spend a lot of time marketing, thus, increasing visibility and attention and directly *eye-balls* to your jewelry.

Be sure you take great photos.

10. Catalogs

Print catalogs showcasing jewelry is another option for you.

For catalogs you like, contact the business office of the catalog and get the instructions for how to submit your pieces for consideration.

One thing they will want you to demonstrate is your ability to create a very large inventory and very fast.

A Multi-Venue Approach Towards The Creative Marketplace

Successful jewelry designers are able to get the visibility and legitimacy they want and deserve. They know what to expect when exposing their work publicly within the creative marketplace.

They are good at communicating their ideas and their value, when approaching art and craft show vendors, stores and boutiques, galleries, and buyers and collectors, or applying for art grants or doing demonstrations. They are able to get articles written about them in blogs, newspapers, magazines and jewelry editorials. And, very importantly, they use a multi-venue approach (*diversification*) when introducing their jewelry into the marketplace. At a minimum, this multi-venue approach will include both an on-line strategy and a bricks-and-mortar strategy.

Legitimacy as an artist requires massive exposure, most often in diverse locations and venues. It is unusual for a single venue or location, whether you are looking for exhibitions or for sales, to be sufficient for a designer to achieve that needed legitimacy and become successful. You will need to have your jewelry pieces in many venues.

There are many online directories and other resources to help you find the wide variety of venues useful to the further development of your jewelry design career.

Approaching Stores and Galleries

Although some jewelry designers may feel uneasy mixing art with business, for most it is a necessity. Yet, you do not have to sacrifice *wonder* for *reality*. Most designers sell their pieces, so recognizing the things about coordinating art with business becomes very important.

When approaching stores or galleries to display and sell your pieces, it is critical that the designer understand how these venues function, who their audiences are, and what the attendant risks to *them* are, should they decide to exhibit and/or sell your pieces.

The first step is to be your authentic, passionate self. Your jewelry will not speak for itself. So, in spite of any feelings of vulnerability you might have when approaching stores and galleries, you will need to talk about yourself and your jewelry. You do not want to feel “salesy” when speaking with business or gallery owners and representatives. You do not want to feel pushy. Or desperate. But you do want them to get to *Yes*.

You speak to them on *their* terms. They want to know the real you. What excites you. The history behind the design choices you make. Your understanding of yourself as an artist, and your understanding of your virtual client, her desires, wants and motivations. How do you connect to your audience through your jewelry?

- *Who are your best customers likely to be?*
- *How would you describe them: demographics, shopping behaviors, wants and desires?*


- *Why are they attracted to your work?*
- *How and where do they find out about you and your work?*
- *What is your Getting Started story?*
- *How would you go about persuading someone to buy a piece of jewelry you made – what's in it for them? How does it connect with them emotionally? How would it make their lives better?*

Do some research ahead of time. The internet has a wealth of information you can pull up. Before you meet with them, get an understanding of the types of jewelry artists and their materials they carry in their venues. These venues are always on the lookout for new talent. They are most likely to say *Yes* to a jewelry designer whose style and materials fit in, but do not duplicate, what they already are showing.

Also research who their customer base is. They are most likely to say *Yes* to a jewelry designer whose audience either mirrors their existing customer base, or incrementally adds to and expands it at the margin. They most likely will not want to spend resources (and thus add risk) by going after a completely new and different customer base.

4.

THREADING THE BUSINESS NEEDLE: Can I Make Money?

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can I make money selling my jewelry? 2. How much money can I make selling my jewelry?
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<p>Key Words: <i>selling</i> <i>extra income vs. self-sufficiency</i> <i>creativity / business / administration</i></p>	<p><i>goals</i> <i>cash flow</i> <i>manage design process</i></p>	<p><i>time management</i> <i>focus</i> <i>development</i> <i>support</i> <i>reflection</i> <i>velocity</i></p>
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Can I Make Money?

Some jewelry designers are only interested in selling the occasional piece. Others want to create a steady flow of some extra income. Still others want to be financially self-sufficient as a jewelry designer.

Whatever your personal goal and commitment, can you make money? The answer is **YES!**... *That is*, if you are smart about it.

Your friends and relatives might tell you that jewelry design “*Is not practical,*” or a warning “*Don’t quit your day job.*”

I won’t lie to you. It’s tough. It requires commitment and perseverance. It requires some introverted skills and some extroverted skills. It requires managing a process which includes some creative elements and some business and administrative ones. But you can do it.

First, goals. Sit down and write down some do-able sets of goals for your business. Some sets of goals will be on the creative side; others on the business side.

One set of goals should answer the question: *How are you going to manage the design process (from inspiration to aspiration to finished product to marketing and selling your products)?*

Another set of these goals should answer the question: *How are you going to maintain your cash flow throughout the whole year?*

After you start implementing your goals, at some point you should be able to ask a friend: *Did I achieve my goals or not?*

Second, time management. Organize your time. You need to spend a certain amount of time with creative activity. Another block of time on business, administrative and marketing activities. And a certain amount of time for reflection and evaluation and self-care. You need to maintain balance between the personal and the professional, and between the creative and the administrative.

Third, focus. Do not try to do too many different projects or work with too many different kinds of colors and parts at the same time – particularly in your first 3 years in business.

As your business grows, you'll reach a point where you have enough cash flow—that *Velocity* of sales—that you can begin to broaden your efforts, meeting more of the needs of your current clients, and expanding the options for new clients.

Fourth, development. Do not go for roofs before setting foundations. Learn about materials and techniques in a developmental order. Things will make much more sense, and be easier to accomplish in this way as you advance your skills and endeavors.

Last, support. You can't do everything by yourself. Find compatriots. Find a mentor. Share or coordinate some workloads. Be sure you structure in ways to be accountable and get feedback.

Success or Failure?

Some of my jewelry design students' experiences at business



I'd estimate that 25–30% of my students are in the jewelry making /design hobby to

make some extra money. Some see a way to supplement their income. Some see it as a retirement strategy. Others see it as a career transition. Whatever their goals, some have been successful, and others less so. Here are some of their stories.

Cindy

Cindy saw it as a career transition. She made and sold jewelry, went to craft shows and church bazaars, put her stuff on consignment all over the metropolitan area, did home shows, whatever.

After about two to two-and-a-half years, she took the giant leap and quit her full-time legal aid job to be a full-time jewelry artist/entrepreneur. She was successful because she knew how to promote herself, and was very comfortable at this.

Her designs were fashion-current, but not bizarre. One business that had her stuff on consignment told me how great she was to work with.

My only concerns were that she often short-changed some of the quality of materials, and perhaps pushed the pricing a bit too high. But I marvel at her success. If you stick to it, and are confident in yourself, you'll get there.

Mona

Mona refurbished old pieces into new. She took old brooches, fixed them up, restored missing stones, polished or colored damaged edges. She turned them into pendants, and then created necklaces with the same sensibilities, colors, textures, bulk, and patterns to go with them.

Sold like hot-cakes. She took old, gaudy belt buckles, glued on Austrian crystal rhinestones, found leather belts to go with them, fashioned some type of bail, and voila! She had great stories to go with each piece. She also was great at self-promotion. She was very confident. And she got her pieces into all the major stores in the area. She also formed great connections to *power-fashion-players*, including many people in the music business.

Sharon

Sharon made lampwork beads, and turned these into necklaces and bracelets. She was shy. She tried to sell them to friends and family. She tried to get them into one store on consignment. She tried selling them on EBay. She's still trying.

Yanxi

Yanxi made Native American style earrings mostly, but some chokers and bracelets, as well. She relied on traditional bead weaving styles of Peyote and Brick. She used traditional materials including Czech seed beads, beading thread, sinew. She used traditional colors and designs. She sold in stores. She sold at markets. She was doing very well for many years.

Around the later 1990s. Chinese businesses began copying Native American jewelry, and selling their pieces at prices so low, that Native Americans could no longer afford to make a living at making jewelry.

Yanxi's business faded away to nothing. She was unable to adapt to the changes in the

business environment. She could have gone more upscale in the choice of materials and the elaborateness in the designs. But she did not recognize that as a pathway.

Veronica

Veronica made high-end clothing with an edge to her designs. At one point, with her clothing, she decided to create accessories, including jewelry. Necklaces out of old men's ties. Bracelets out of leather suspender straps from Germany. Odd beads which always catch your eye dangling from old, antiqued, large-linked chain.

She had an acute sense of what jewelry women — of all shapes, ages, sizes, body shapes — could wear to empower themselves. Attract that kind of attention which borders on admiration.

At first, she sold her jewelry pieces to individual stores in various cities she visited. They sold her pieces very quickly. In response, she began working in more of a production mode. She sent these stores boxes of her pieces to be sold as special trunk shows. That idea worked well.

She then worked on setting up a shop-within-a-shop. Several stores were eager to have her store-within-a-store. She envisioned taking over a 6'x8' area. She created display cabinets, display pieces, and an organizational plan for displaying her pieces. She went to hotel foreclosure sales and purchased old odds and ends to use for displays, such as old wooden clothes hangers which had the hotel logo or name etched in them.

Her jewelry lines overtook her clothing lines.

Debby

Debby made beautiful, elegant, dainty jewelry from bracelets to necklaces to eyeglass leashes. She put them in a few stores. She had been an airline stewardess, and frequently brought her jewelry with her to sell at get-togethers and conventions with past and current airline employees.

Everyone loved her pieces. Everything she made sold. She was reluctant, however, to place them in many stores. She was afraid people would copy her designs. One person, in fact, had copied some of her designs.

Debby wanted to mass-market her pieces to high end boutiques and department stores. She spent years making contacts and connections, which she was very successful at. But she couldn't reel in the opportunities. Her fears overcame her — people would copy her designs, or they would not manufacture her pieces to her quality expectations, or the manufacturers wanted to make pieces with more mass appeal. Fears.

There was always something that got in the way of her making a living by making jewelry. She built walls. She couldn't climb over them.

Larry

Larry approached Barneys New York about his line of jewelry. He had a personal connection there. He had a marketing strategy for them, which included explaining why the lines of

jewelry they currently carried, were not working for them.

He showed them a very full line—jeweler’s tray after jeweler’s tray after jeweler’s tray of jewelry.

With each tray he showed them photographs of jewelry which were carried by their major competitors in New York, as well as fashion spreads in major magazines.

He kept making the point: His jewelry is better, and this is why. His jewelry is better, and this is why. His jewelry is better, and this is why.

Success!

Kiki

Kiki wanted to sell on-line. She knew she needed a website with a shopping cart. But she shied away from the \$50.00 per month price tag. She knew she would have to hire someone to design her website, but again, the \$500.00 quoted price seemed daunting to her. She spent year after year researching *web-hosts* and *web-designers*, each time finding something that made her more and more uncertain.

Virtual jewelry, virtual business.

Rosie

Rosie lived in the wealthiest part of town—Belle Meade. She custom made jewelry for the rich for them to wear at special occasions. Her biggest obstacles to overcome: many of her clients were not sure that anyone could actually *make* jewelry. Jewelry was something that you bought in New York. Not Nashville. Somehow it could only be made in New York and probably by machine. Her clients hesitated, not sure how anyone, let alone anyone local, could actually *make* jewelry for them.

She took their naivete in stride. She made the making of jewelry seem straightforward. She made the custom designing seem specialized and right up her alley.

She made a necklace and earring set for someone to wear at the Swan Ball.

She made a very unattractive, yet very appreciated by the customer, necklace to wear at a horse race. The colors had to match the specific colors in the horse’s blanket—navy, white and rose. The rose was a special color rose associated with some Queen’s rose somewhere. On the face of things, navy, white and rose don’t usually result in something rich, elegant and status’y looking. But Rosie did a fabulous job. She would not, however, have ever worn this particular necklace herself.

She made a lariat for someone to wear on a cruise. Plus, 5 different sets of earrings, each coordinating with the lariat. Plus, 10 different bracelets, each having a different clasp, and again, coordinating with the lariat.

Rosie’s willingness to adapt to the peculiar needs of her customer base made her a success. And to her customer base, money was no object.

Alejandro

Alejandro didn't want to design jewelry per se. He wanted to find jewelry designed by others and find places that might sell this jewelry. His mom had gotten breast-cancer (she's a survivor). And he had this brainstorm.

He visited the Dallas Merchandise Mart. He found about a dozen vendors who represented lines Alejandro thought would do well in the various fundraising events the state's Breast Cancer Society sponsored.

From these vendors, he gathered information about the products, the minimum units which needed to be purchased at a time, the unit cost, and the suggested retail price.

He determined what kind of commission he needed to make this work and wanted to get.

He sat down with the marketing executives at the Breast Cancer Society. He showed them pictures of the various products and the numbers. He negotiated a deal and a plan.

This is what you call a Win-Win-Win. The vendor wins. The client wins. and Alejandro wins.

Getting Started In Business

You need to look yourself in the mirror, and be very, very, very honest with yourself. Getting started in business is a big step. It's not all fun and games. There's paperwork, repetition, tradeoffs to be made. Be honest with yourself.

Ask yourself:

- Why do I want to start a business?
- What type of business do I want?
- What kinds of things do I want to sell?
- What kind of time and energy commitments do I want to commit?
- Where will the money come from to get started?
- Where will I work: kitchen table? craft studio? at a store?
- What will I name my business?
- Where will I get my jewelry making supplies?
- Do I want to do this alone, or with a partner(s)?

There are many different kinds of jewelry you can sell. Necklaces. Bracelets. Earrings. Eyeglass leashes. Name badge jewelry. Rings. Anklets. Ear cuffs. Body jewelry. Jewelry for dogs and cats. Jewelry representing social causes. Beaded jewelry. Wire jewelry. Polymer and metal clay jewelry. Fabricated jewelry, such as with silver smithing techniques. Lampwork jewelry. Blown glass jewelry. Micro macrame and hemp jewelry. Jewel-decorated objects like pillows, lampshades, dinner ware.


There are many different approaches and venues for selling jewelry. these include selling to friends, co-workers and family. Selling at home shows. Selling at craft shows or trunk shows. Selling online. Selling in stores and galleries, either retail, consignment or wholesale. Selling in a truck, driving from city to city, parking, and opening your truck doors for people to come into your mini-showroom. Selling in print catalogs. Designing and/or selling for promotions and events, such as a fund-raiser for breast cancer. Doing repairs.

Whatever the approach and venue, you need to step back, and be sure it is on a solid business basis. This means delving into some *bureaucracy* and *administrivia*. You can't get around this.

Yes, you can make money selling jewelry. But you have to be smart about it.

5.

THREADING THE BUSINESS NEEDLE: Why Designers Fail in Business

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>1. Why do some designers succeed and others fail in business?</p>
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<p>Key Words:</p> <p>success survival failure people-pleasing saying No! to the face competitive advantage</p>	<p>business conduct attention span fear introducing pieces publicly self-promotion marketing market niche</p>	<p>knowing the competition rate of sales number of sales / count velocity / constant rate record keeping accounting principles asking for help</p>
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Why Designers Fail In Business: Some Key Reasons

Over and over again, I have seen one jewelry designer after another fail as a business. The reasons may seem predictable, and they repeat themselves over and over again, as well.

1. Has not defined a clear set of goals from the start
2. Going for roofs before setting foundations
3. A reluctance to learn how to conduct yourself as a business
4. Gets bored or lonely
5. A fear of marketing your own things
6. Tries to do too many projects at the same time
7. Trying to please all audiences
8. Doesn't do homework on the competition
9. Trying to do everything by yourself

10. *A fear that someone will steal your designs*
11. *Failure to plan for balances in the use of your time*
12. *Hasn't planned for the ups and downs of cash flow at different times of the year*
13. *Cannot describe your competitive advantage(s)*
14. *Failure to understand marketing and merchandising requirements*
15. *Not photographing all your pieces, or, making notes about their construction*
16. *Lacks understanding about how to **leverage** your work*
17. *Doesn't have plans and procedures for generating follow-up sales and re-orders*
18. *Failure to innovate*

FIRST RULE OF HOLES

*When you are in one,
stop digging!*

1. Has not defined a clear set of goals from the start

OK, you've made a decision that you want to make some money through your craft. Before you start buying a lot of inventory and equipment and tools and furniture and other supplies, sit down and reflect. Write down 3 or 4 achievable goals about what you want to have accomplished within 1 year. Write down another 3 or 4 to achieve within 3-5 years.

For each goal, list what specific tangible and intangible things you need to have or need to happen, in order to achieve that goal within your timeframe.

At the end of each year, you should be able to ask a friend: *Did I achieve my goal or not?* And the goals should be clear enough that your friend can immediately weigh the evidence and let you know their thoughts.

2. Going for roofs before setting foundations

At the point you are getting started, I know you are very excited about all the prospects. Your brain is racing in many different directions all at once. As a creative person, you are probably generating an inordinate amount of things you want to do.

Rein yourself in.

You need to be very deliberate here. Get control over all that excitement and all those ideas.

Create the foundations for your business. These are made up of the different systems of activity which have to be in place so that everything will work smoothly, and continue to work smoothly, down the road.

Systems include things like:

- Administrative
- Financial Management
- Product Design and Development
- Inventory
- Marketing, Promotion and Selling
- Evaluation and feedback

For each system, you specify required policies, procedures, and materials.

You set up some pretesting and reality-testing of each system and its policies and procedures.

Yes, this is a lot of work up front, but it will all pay off in your success.

3. A reluctance to learn how to conduct yourself as a business.

Many jewelry designers get so excited after selling their first piece, that they think they don't have to get too involved with business principles. They misunderstand their *business* as a *necklace-by-necklace* endeavor. Make something, sell it. Doesn't matter what the price. Doesn't matter to whom. Doesn't matter if making the piece in the first place is in line with the resources you currently have to make the piece again, or will this drive you into debt in order to get those resources. All that matters is the *count* – *the number of pieces you have sold*.

Designers need to focus, not on the *count*, but rather on what is called the *Velocity*. Velocity is the *rate of sales*, not the *number of sales*, that is most important. You need to have in place sufficient strategies for keeping the money turning over at a *constant rate*. If you can't maintain this rate, you go in the hole. You make something. You sell it. You reallocate the money you just made to reinvesting in more inventory, replacing the inventory you sold, evaluating the pros and cons of the sale that just happened, adjusting accordingly, and strategizing how to keep this velocity going at a constant, or ever-increasing, velocity or rate.

It's the *rates*, not the *counts*, that matter.

And designers need to keep good records, and implement good accounting principles. This is true for money. It is true for inventory. It is true for marketing and sales. It is true for

employees and contractors.

4. Gets Bored or Lonely

People who get started are very excited. They've made a lot of pretty pieces, and someone has bought some of them. But then you need to leave your creative mode, and enter a production mode. You need to discipline yourself to make the same things over and over again, particularly in the first 2 or 3 years of your business. Many designers quickly lose interest. They lose their *stick-to-it-iveness*.

You need to survive those times when you are not creating and designing jewelry. You do whatever it takes which works for you.

When you own your own business, things can sometimes get lonely. The buck stops with you. Cash flow, paying bills, keeping production going, promotion, hiring staff. In business, you make lots of decisions, but don't always have someone to discuss them with, or appreciate them.

And when you get out there, among the Glambours and Cosmos and Vogues and Fashion Shows in New York and Paris and Milan, and the Oscars and Golden Globes and Cannes, and get online searching the 42,300,000 other jewelry design websites and auction sites you are competing with, you don't want to allow yourself to get discouraged. Or overwhelmed. Or getting to feeling very small. Very lonely. Very defeated.

Treat the world of jewelry design as if you are the very center of it!

5. A fear of marketing your own things

You won't succeed without marketing. Marketing is more than advertising. It includes all forms of self-promotion. It includes doing research on your markets and market niches, how to reach them, how to get their attention, how to get them to translate this attention into needs and wants and desires, and how to get them to part with some money.

Many designers are shy about self-promotion. Time to train yourself, if this is you, to get over it.

Don't be shy here. Self-Promotion is the key. You got to get yourself out there. If this is too uncomfortable for you, find someone else to do this. *Don't wait* to find someone. Find that person *NOW*.

Don't be afraid that someone else will copy your ideas. You want to go full steam ahead, promoting your business, and creating a brand identify.

Be persistent. Self-Confident. Willing and able to learn, adapt and change.

Wear your own jewelry! Wearing your jewelry is like wearing a billboard. You'll attract viewers. You'll attract visitors. And you'll attract buyers. Wear your jewelry wherever you go.

When people complement what you are wearing, don't be afraid to say, *"Thanks, I make these myself. They are available for sale."*

In a similar way, see if you can get your friends and family to wear your jewelry, and tell people who the designer is.

6. Trying to please all audiences

When people get started, they are reluctant to use the *"No!"* word. They want to please everyone – particularly their co-workers, friends and family. But when you get started, you can't. It will put you out of business.

Let's say you have some jewelry that is predominantly purple. Someone at work loves the jewelry, but asks if you can make it in red. If you don't have an inventory of red beads, and will have to go out and buy them, it may make this sale foolish, from a business standpoint. You can't buy just one bead at a time; you need to buy strands or packages of these beads.

When you start, you need to pursue a strategy of *depth*, rather than *breadth*. You want to buy a limited number of pieces, colors, sizes and shapes in large enough quantities to get adequate price breaks. So, initially, your designs will be limited, as well. You need to be able to say *No!*. *No!* to your family. *No!* to your friends. *No!* to the people you work with.



Learn how to say "NO!" to the face.

In my experience, such as the situation with red vs purple beads above, when you say *No!*, the potential customer tends to make a face. Pitiful. Angry. Frustrated. Sad. Pleading. If you can wait *60 seconds*, in almost every case, the customer stops making this face, and says, "OK, I'll take what you have in purple."

60-seconds. That's how long you have to wait without responding. Only *60-seconds* before that person gives up and stops making the Face. It always amazes me, but so many jewelry designers can't wait that *60 seconds*.

And don't give these people discounts. They're already getting it cheaper, than if they bought the same piece in a store. One major way your business will get built up is word-of-mouth. You don't want some of that information to include extremely low price expectations. If you are stuck giving low prices, you will never be self-supporting in your business.

7. Tries to do many projects at the same time

You are creative so your mind is full of ideas. Compartmentalize them. If you spread yourself too thin, nothing will get done. You'll make more mistakes. You'll get more frustrated that nothing is getting done.

Set priorities. Organize the use of your time. File some projects away for later.

8. Doesn't do homework on the competition

You need to understand how other jewelry designers you compete with function as businesses.

- How do they define their markets?
- How do they price things?
- What kinds of inventory do they carry? What kinds do they NOT carry?
- Where do they advertise? How do they promote themselves?
- How do they define their competitive advantage — that is, all the reasons people should buy from them, rather than from anyone else, like you?
- Where do they sell things — stores, shows, fairs, online, etc.? What seems to work better for them?
- How do they figure out the best place — real or virtual — to link their product and product message to the customers most likely to need, want and buy their jewelry?

You can find a lot of this out by Googling. You can look for designers in your field and occupation. Directories of designers. You can plug in a designer's website, and see where they are listed, and who lists them. You can look at their work. Often, you can discover many of their clients. You can look at reviews.

9. Trying to do everything by yourself.

Jewelry making can be isolating. It can be lonely. Business tasks can be taxing and border on boring. Not every design or business choice will be clearly understood and implemented by you.

Keep people around, either informally or formally. Have a person to bounce ideas off of. To raise questions. To be supportive.

You need some accountability and you need some direction, especially when you are

getting started or when you are expanding or evolving your business.

10. A fear that someone will steal your designs

Don't sabotage your business because you are fearful, that if you show your pieces publicly, someone will steal your designs. Yes, this happens. But don't let this fact paralyze you. You need to get your pieces out there in order to sell them.

11. Failure to plan for imbalances in the use of time

If you only spent your time creating jewelry, your business would suffer. Your personal life might suffer, as well.

You need to always find a balance between the creative and the business, and between the personal and the professional.

Otherwise burn-out sets in very fast. As do feelings of isolation, frustration, and impending consequences.

12. Hasn't planned for the ups and downs of cash flow at different times of the year

More jewelry sells for certain holidays. More jewelry sells in the 4th quarter of the year. Different types of jewelry are seasonal.

Your cash flow will ebb and flow at various times during the year. You need to have plans for dealing with this.

Those plans might have to do with the timing of your purchases. With employees. With travel. With selling alternate merchandise. You get the picture.

You might offer something else for sale that would be popular during times when jewelry sales are slow. You might take in repairs.

13. Cannot describe your competitive advantage(s)

There is a lot of jewelry for sale out there. In all kinds of settings. In all kinds of styles. In all kinds of prices.

In order to make a sale, you need to know why someone would want to buy one of your pieces rather than something similar down the street. Why would your pieces be more advantageous for the buyer? They might be better constructed. More unique in some way. Personal fitting. Better quality materials. Available right now. Locally made. Rare in some way. Cultural or historical significance.

Whatever the reason, you need to be very clear on your competitive advantage, and market to your competitive advantage.

This enables you to keep your Designer Identity clear, without any mixed messages. It helps your target audience find themselves a match or connection with your jewelry. If you are a designer who offers a broad range of styles and selections, give each style a separate name, and market it and its competitive advantage(s), separately.

In a similar way, be sure that the materials you use in your pieces and your construction techniques mirror your message. For example, we have a customer, Jemma, that markets her pieces as higher end, but frequently uses metallized plastic beads as spacers, instead of vermeil, sterling silver or gold-filled, with her gemstone and crystal beads. She sees her choices here as successful in keeping the prices of her pieces down. But she communicates a mixed message about what she presents as her competitive advantage – *higher end jewelry*.

14. Failure to understand marketing and merchandising requirements

Pretty pieces don't sell themselves. Information about them needs to be broadcast, and broadcast in strategic ways. And they need to be displayed and packaged in attractive ways.

Also, I have found that you make more sales when pieces have a *Name*. And any Name invariably leads to a story. Customers like stories. They like stories about how the piece was made, what it was named after, why the piece was made, and the like.

In a similar way, group pieces that are alike into a series, and Name the Series. Customers are natural collectors. If there are more items in a series, they are more likely to purchase more pieces within that series.

15. Not photographing all your pieces, or, making notes about their construction

It is important to document your work. You want to be able to show others what you've done, whether friends or prospective clients. You want to remember how you constructed them, and what they looked like, so that you can repeat your design work.

Invest in a good digital camera or cell phone camera, a good flat-bed scanner, and a good graphics program (so you can manipulate the quality of the images).

Positioning your jewelry in order to photograph it poses special problems. Angles are important. Getting images of the minute details is important. Minimizing inadvertent and annoying light reflections is important. Showing the scale of the piece and the wearability of the piece is always a plus.

Works better: jewelry looks ready-to-wear. It has some shape, curvature, and body-sense to it.

One trick: put your jewelry around a clear drinking glass or jar or flask. In photos, you will then pick upon the piece's 3-dimensionality, as well as show off more details in the piece.

You might find it useful to create a Jewelry Portfolio or Look Book of your work. With

your images, include captions. Include notes about your materials and techniques. Write the date the piece was created. You might also post your Portfolio on a social networking site, like Facebook.

Make your images at least 300 dpi, and 500x500 pixels in size. This works best for print, and will work with digital. *[NOTE: Many ZOOM applications require a minimum 500x500 pixel image size.]*

16. Lacks understanding about how to *leverage* your work

Leveraging means getting more uses out of something, thus getting more value, hence profit or visibility, without a major increase in investment costs.

Examples:

I make a square stitch bracelet to sell to customers.

I teach a class on making a square stitch bracelet.

I take my lecture, and turn it into a set of instructions and a kit for sale.

I take my lecture, and turn it into an article for a bead magazine.

I promote this class as a workshop I can take on the road and do anywhere.

I use the substance of this class and a photo to promote my jewelry making website.

I use the lecture to create a follow-up project or class.

I put the pieces made in the class for sale in a local store.

I offer the instructions to a site that provides free information to ezines and websites, with a required link back to my website.

17. Doesn't have plans and procedures for generating follow-up sales and re-orders

Often, you don't make a true profit with your first sale. You make it through repeat sales. So the business problem becomes: How do I generate follow-up sales and re-orders?

It is important to collect names, addresses, emails, phone numbers, and the like of customers and potential customers.

Send out emails, postcards, newsletters, ezines, and other announcements. Follow up with customers who have purchased your jewelry.

If you are going to be at an art and craft show or doing a trunk show somewhere, let your customers know. Deputize them as promoters to spread the word for you by letting their friends and family members know, as well.

Hand out business cards.

Use a guest register.

Have a website, and at the least, use it as a billboard.

Run a contest.


18. Failure to innovate

Too often, jewelry designers get stuck in a rut. They continue to make what they've always made, and which has always sold – at least in the past.

Yet styles, fashions and tastes change. There are constant pressures for the designer to innovate, and keep innovating. The designer needs to see these pressures as creative challenges, rather than burdens.

6.

Disciplinary Literacy In The Creative Marketplace

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a special way of thinking, more precisely 'literacy', which jewelry designers bring to bear when designing jewelry? 2. How do they apply this disciplinary literacy when selling their jewelry within the creative marketplace?
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<p>Key Words: <i>disciplinary literacy</i> <i>fluency</i> <i>comprehension</i> <i>originality</i></p>	<p><i>fix-it strategies</i> <i>shared understandings</i> <i>desires</i> <i>process management</i> <i>finish and success</i></p>	<p><i>design elements</i> <i>principles of composition,</i> <i>construction and</i> <i>manipulation</i> <i>parsimony</i> <i>resonance</i></p>
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Disciplinary Literacy Underlying Jewelry Designing

I believe jewelry designers have a special way of thinking through selecting design elements, composing, constructing, and manipulating objects. Different than crafters. Different than artists. Different than other disciplines and their core ways of defining things and thinking things through.

How should the designer think? How should she organize her tasks? How should she tap into her creative self? How should she select materials, techniques and technologies? How should she assert her creativity and introduce her ideas and objects to others? How much does she need to know about how and why people wear and inhabit jewelry? What impact should she strive to have on others or the more general culture and society as a whole? How should she approach unfamiliar, unknown or problematic designs?

In my book

SO YOU WANT TO BE A JEWELRY DESIGNER (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer/dp/Bo9Y3VNNMW/ref=sr_1_1?crid=36ELFBPI5YCCH&keywords=warren+feld+jewelry+designer&qid=1651961657&sprefix=warren+feld+jewelry+designer,aps,82&sr=8-1),

I try to formulate a disciplinary literacy unique and special and legitimate for jewelry designers. Such literacy encompasses a basic vocabulary about materials, techniques, color and other design elements and rules of composition. It also includes the kinds of thinking

routines and strategies jewelry designers need to know in order to be fluent, flexible and original. It includes what the jewelry designer needs to know and do when introducing their pieces publicly, either to have others wear, buy or collect their pieces.

These routines and strategies are at the heart of the designer's knowledges, skills and understandings related to creativity, elaboration, embellishment, reflection, critique and metacognition. This disciplinary literacy in design is very similar to how sounds are made into music. This literacy is very similar to how words are made into literature. There is an underlying vocabulary and grammar to jewelry design, from decoding to comprehension to fluency. The jewelry designer is dependent upon this disciplinary literacy to the extent that she or he is able to move from inspiration to aspiration to implementation and management towards finish and success.

At the heart of this disciplinary literacy are the tools and strategies designers use to think through and make choices which optimize aesthetics and functionality within a specific design. Again, these literacy tools and strategies enable the designer to create something out of nothing, to translate inspiration into aspiration, and to influence content and meaning in context.

For the jewelry designer, *literacy* means developing the abilities to *think like a designer*. These include,

1. *Reading* a piece of jewelry. Here you the designer are able to break down and *decode* a piece of jewelry into its essential graphical and design elements. This aspect of fluency and literacy is very *descriptive*.
2. *Writing* a piece of jewelry. Here you the designer are able to identify, create or change the *arrangement of these design elements* within a *composition*. Fluency and literacy are very *analytical*.
3. *Expressing* a piece of jewelry. Here you the designer use the design elements and principles underlying any arrangement to convey *content and meaning*. Fluency and literacy are very *interpretive*.
4. *Expressing* a piece of jewelry *in context*. Here you the designer are able to anticipate, reflect upon and incorporate into your own thinking the understandings and reactions of various client groups to the piece, the degree they desire and value the piece, and whether they see the piece as finished and successful. The jewelry is introduced publicly, whether for someone to admire or wear or buy or collect. The designer comfortably moves back and forth between the objective and subjective, and the universal and the specific. The designer analyzes contextual variables, particularly the shared understandings as these relate to desire, and in line with that, thus determining value and worth. Fluency and literacy are very *judgmental*.

Literacy in business follows a parallel path similar to that of literacy in jewelry design. You need a foundation in business requirements. You need to coordinate what you do

creatively with what you do as a business. And you need to introduce your business strategies publicly as you market and sell your jewelry.


When integrating business with design, you might find some of your creative choices more constricted and limited. You might need a tighter focus. You will certainly have to manage the tensions between creativity and production.

You probably, in the interests of efficiency, want to restrict the number of design element choices available for your designs. You might resort to re-usable components more often. You might limit your designs and selections for a narrow but profitable market niche. You might rely on more known qualities and do less experimentation.

This book is devoted to teaching you how to read, write, and express creativity within a jewelry making business context.

7.

GETTING STARTED IN BUSINESS

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What do I need to do to become official?2. How do I protect my intellectual property?3. What organizational form of business should I set up?4. What is a business model, and how do I define it?5. What will I consider a measure of my success that is right for me?6. Where should I sell my work?
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<p>Key Words: official start date</p>	<p>fiscal year goals for success business organization type</p>	
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First, If You Have Not Already Done So, Make These Particular Choices Right Now

Pick a date.

It might be easiest, from an accounting standpoint, to pick January 1st. But you can pick any date. This is the date your business has been founded, and your business obligations (*discussed below*) begin.

Define your fiscal year.

It would be easiest to make your fiscal year January 1 through December 31. But any 12-month bounded period which works best for you would be acceptable.

Set your goals for success.

Everyone's goals will be different. You might want to sell a few things occasionally. You might want some steady extra income. You might want to be financially self-sufficient.

Determine what business organizational type you want

How do you want to evolve into the future. These range from hobbyist to sole proprietor to partnership to various types of corporate arrangements.

The next several chapters concentrate on the kinds of things you need to do to lay those business foundations which will support all your creative and business


activities. These chapters cover:

1. **Writing a BUSINESS AUDIT MEMORANDUM to yourself (chapter 8)**
2. **Writing your GETTING STARTED story (chapter 9)**
3. **Naming your business (chapter 10)**
4. **Protecting your business name and other intellectual property (chapter 11)**
5. **Tag Line, Descriptions, Naming Your Jewelry, Story, Elevator Pitch (chapter 12)**
6. **Becoming official – licenses and registrations (chapter 13)**
7. **Determining your preferred organizational form of business (chapter 14)**
8. **Understanding retail, wholesale and consignment (chapter 15)**
9. **Setting up your business model (chapter 16)**
10. **Doing custom work (chapter 17)**

8.

GETTING STARTED:

Write A Business Audit Memorandum To Self

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>1. What are all your ideas for your business?</p>
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<p>Key Words: <i>business audit memorandum descriptions product / service customer profile value proposition sales channel financial facts staffing / employees record keeping credit card information compliance</i></p>	<p><i>business name contact information business organization keywords / phrases dependency on owner leases / contractual obligations cash flow debt / debt ratio</i></p>	<p><i>start date fiscal year licenses / registrations Standard Indus- trial Classification (SIC) code competitor competitive advantage fixed costs variable costs breakeven costs</i></p>
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If you are just getting started, you have a mix of clear ideas about what you want to do, and some fuzzy ideas. So, right off the bat, see how completely you can fill in this **BUSINESS AUDIT MEMORANDUM TO YOURSELF**. Here you want to encapsulate in an organized way the crux of your business.

If, on the other hand, you have been conducting your business awhile, this is a useful exercise to clarify and intensify exactly what your business is all about. It is something you want to repeat every 3 years or so.

BUSINESS AUDIT MEMORANDUM TO YOURSELF

BUSINESS NAME

Your business name
If you have one, include your tag line

PROPRIETOR'S NAME

You (and your partners) name(s)

CONTACT DETAILS

Physical address
Home address (if different than physical address)
Phone number(s) (separate or same for personal and business?)
Website address
Blog address
Email address (separate or same for personal and business?)
Social media pages
a.
b.
c.
d.

ORGANIZATION

Hobbieist
 Solo Proprietor
 Partnership
 Limited Liability Corporation
 Corporation

START DATE AND FISCAL YEAR

Date business started:
Start and End of your Fiscal Year (12 months):

LICENSES AND REGISTRATIONS

Do you have (or plan to get) any of these account numbers?

City business license
 County business license
 State Resale (aka, Tax or Wholesale) Number
 Federal EIN (employer identification number)
 State Unemployment Account Number (if you have employees)
 Trademarks / Service Marks (business name, jewelry line name, logo)
 Other: List _____

LOCATION

Physical (primary) address

Also, website(s) address(es)

OTHER LOCATIONS

If any

WHAT THIS BUSINESS DOES

In 250 words or less, describe your business. What you sell. To whom. Your competitive strengths, that is, the reasons people will come (or already come) to you.

CATEGORY / THEME / SPECIALIZATION(S)

*Such as, Jewelry Making, Handmade Art, Crafts, Fashion Accessories
Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code*

KEY WORDS

Write at least 10, and up to 30, key words you would associate with your business and might be used in an online product or business search, say with Google or Bing:

COMPANY WEBSITE

List all websites, you own or where you appear on others

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

List all social media sites on which you have a presence:

Examples:

Facebook (personal, business pages)

Instagram (business)

YEAR ESTABLISHED AND HISTORY

Your history:

Example:

2001 Sold handmade jewelry on consignment in 3 stores

2004 Opened pop-up shop, now held 3 times per year

2005 Listed storefront under Etsy.com

WHY THIS BUSINESS WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE FOR ANY BUYER IF YOU WERE TO SELL YOUR BUSINESS TODAY

Attractiveness of business:

Examples:

- *High mark-up items resulting in higher profits than more general retail*
- *Creative enterprise, where you can apply your creativity as well as business skills, and assist others in applying their creative and business skills, as well*
- *Offers more challenges than more general retail in selecting and acquiring merchandise, and marketing to a specialized customer base*
- *Business goes back 15+ years, with established customer base, great reputation locally, regionally and nationally, as well as on-line, for products, classes, and repairs*
- *Inventory mix is very diversified, meeting the needs of several different customer preferences types – bead strung, bead wovens, wire worked – which enables the business to more easily adapt/adjust to changes in fashion, interest, and economy*
- *Inventory comes from all over the world, and as we did in our earlier days with the business, we traveled extensively to find those special beads, parts and pieces*
- *Have well-established, active relationships with many suppliers throughout the world, including many suppliers who today would only accept much larger businesses than we are as customers. This gives us a significant, very competitive leg-up on merchandise costs and selection.*
- *Has both bricks and clicks presence*
- *Offers progressive sliding scale discounts for retail customers, as well as wholesale discounts, which help recruit and retain a full range of clientele, from hobbyist to small business.*

REASON FOR STARTING BUSINESS

Highlights of your Getting Started Story.

INDEPENDENCY OF BUSINESS FROM OWNER

How much, if any, does the continued existence of this business depend on you, your skills, your personality, your good will, your relationships with suppliers and customers?

Examples:

The inventory, product mix, and repairs services reflect the interests of the customers, not the owners, per se. Suppliers, inventory, financial records, customer databases, emailing lists, contractual relationships and other key information is well documented.

The owner developed the online website, blog and the like himself from scratch. So all this too is well documented and controlled from the store. Continuation of these online activities requires a knowledge of HTML and CSS languages.

The staff members are trained to manage most operations without the present owner's on-site supervision. They are not trained to do the daily accounting, taxes preparation, ordering and inventory management.

Current Jewelry designs reflect color and design preferences of owner, but business robust enough to accommodate a range of color palettes and design styles.

BRIEF BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

PRODUCT OR SERVICE

Products: Finished jewelry, unusual clasps, buttons

Services: Jewelry repairs, jewelry making

CUSTOMER PROFILES

Define target market boundaries: My customers live within a 5 mile radius of Green Hills, a major shopping area catering to upper middle and upper class clients.

Few local customers order from us online.

Characterize your shoppers or shopping sub-groups.

One categorization of customers reflects when people tend to shop:

- local, wealthier customers (shop weekday mornings)*
- local, customers who tend to work full time (shop weekday afternoons and after work)*
- local, not as wealthy and who tend to work full time (shop Saturdays)*
- tourists (shop at all times)*

Customers appreciate the personal, detailed and comprehensive level of services we provide, and this is one of the keys to retaining customers.

SALES CHANNELS USED

The primary sales channel is the retail store with about 25% of sales resulting from our online presence.

From time to time, we do local craft fairs and bead shows.

We maintain referring relationships with 2+ jewelry stores to take in the kinds of repairs they do not do, but for which we are perfect for, such as pearl knotting, fixing beaded jewelry, fixing costume jewelry.

KEY MARKET FACTS

What is it about your target market or markets which draws them to your business, and gets them to buy jewelry? How would you characterize their needs, wants, demands, desires, willingness to part with money?

MAIN PROMOTIONAL METHODS

Primary promotional methods are all geared to triggering positive word of mouth:

- *Email marketing, sending out emails monthly to all customers, plus periodic emails to smaller customer segments*
- *Maintaining social media presence, with business pages on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, Google Business, a blog on Wordpress, writing articles for Medium.com, uploading video tutorials to Teachable.com, video promotions on Youtube. Routinely posting and commenting on posts in many sites.*
- *Supporting charity auctions*
- *Posting special offers online, such as in Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace*
- *Offering classes, including a first and free Orientation class*
- *Offering off-site workshops and presentations*
- *Actively encouraging customers to post reviews on various directory sites like Yelp, Facebook, Google, Trip Advisor*
- *We maintain a progressive discount schedule (>\$50.00, get 15% discount; >\$100.00, get 20% discount; offer a wholesale discount of 30% with no minimums)*
- *We get almost daily referrals from the main craft stores – Michaels, Hobby Lobby, JoAnns*

Less important promotional methods:

- *Advertising on social media sites, particularly Instagram*

THE VALUE PROPOSITION

Why customers come to you:

Customers come to us and buy our products for several reasons. It is all about things which lower the risk for shopping at the store versus shopping on line or through a catalog. They want to figure out ahead of time the chances they will find the things they want or good substitutes for them.

- (a) *Comprehensive selection*
- (b) *See colors and quality in person*
- (c) *Maintaining high expectations about quality of beads and related parts*
- (d) *Location:*
Near our primary local customer base, which is south and west Nashville
Located in the Berry Hill Design district, close to other bead and craft stores, and even close to hardware stores, and the like
- (e) *Very visible from major thoroughfare, adequate parking*
- (f) *Years in business (35+ years)*
- (g) *Our progressive discount schedule (>\$50.00, get 15% discount; >\$100.00, get 20% discount; offer a wholesale discount of 30% with no minimums)*

COMPETITORS AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Who are your primary competitors (local and online)?

Why would customers choose you over them?

How would you compare yourself to them?

How would they compare themselves to you?

Our competitive advantages over local competitors:

- *We're honest about quality and value of what people buy here, which cannot be said about most of our competitors*
- *We have a considerable selection to satisfy many different jewelry target markets*
- *It takes many years and years to bring in the variety and scope of our inventory, and to establish supplier relationships*
- *Our prices are very competitive for the vast majority of our products; for most products, we use a standard markup*
- *We are conveniently located in Nashville, including close proximity to I-65, I-440, I-24, and I-40.*
- *We maintain high expectations about the quality of the merchandise we carry*
- *We have high visibility in our location, on major thoroughfare, prominent signage, across from a large shopping mall*
- *We do jewelry repair*

KEY FINANCIAL FACTS AND FORECAST

List, and if possible, project 5 years out:

Gross sales, net sales, profits

Sales per day and/or per week

Customer volume per day and/or per week

Sales per customer per day and/or week

Cash on hand, amount of long and short term debt, debt ratios

Any trends

STAFFING

Land of Odds-Be Dazzled Beads currently employees 1.8 FTE employees. The store is open 44 hours/week at this time. Two people cover Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat.

Warren Feld is full time.

Tyresa Husbands works 24 hours/week.

Patricia Daniels works 8 hours/week.

While both employees are very technically proficient at most aspects of jewelry making, neither employee would be considered sufficiently experienced with the business, reliable or responsible enough to become the manager of the business.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, FULL-TIME

1

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, PART-TIME

2

STORE OR OTHER OPERATIONAL LEASE

The leasing period ends 2/28/2024.

The terms of the current lease:
Rent
Pass-thru costs
Monthly payment

OTHER CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

List other contracts which obligate you to pay fees for a specified or unspecified amount of time.

Credit card equipment (monthly, but no longer under contract)
Accounting software (monthly, annual contract)

SOFTWARE, HARDWARE, EQUIPMENT

What critical software packages do you own or lease?

- Microsoft Office
- Quickbooks

What hardware and equipment do you own or lease?

- Credit card machine
- Cash register
- Desk
- 4 folding tables and 8 folding chairs
- Scanner
- Desk top computer
- Printer
- Tablet
- Cell phone

SERVICES PROVIDERS

List those businesses which provide services to you, such as

- Telephone
- Plumbing
- Electrician
- Copy machine maintenance
- Window cleaner
- Bookkeeper or accountant

- Lawyer
- Insurance broker

SUPPLIERS

List all your primary product and tools/equipment suppliers by name. Indicate whether you have any payment terms with them.

Beads and findings, net 30 accounts
 ABC jewelry supply
 Beads and findings, paid upon receipt accounts
 NW beads
 Finished jewelry designers
 Greta Garbo
 Office supplies companies
 Quill
 Silversmithing equipment and tools
 RioGrande
 Display cases and related items
 Azar
 Fetpak
 Hanks

VALUE

CURRENT VALUE OF BUSINESS

= Inventory at Cost + Resale Value of All Other Assets + Annual Sales

\$45,000

PERCENT OF BUSINESS SYSTEMS

List your distinct functional systems and estimate % of business (by dollar volume, effort, profitability, whatever makes sense for you). The grand total should equal 100%.

Example:

Designing finished jewelry	20
Marketing finished jewelry	15
Selling finished jewelry	20
Administrivia	10
Jewelry Repair	30
Workshops	5
	100%

CASH ON HAND AND CREDIT AVAILABLE

List:

CASH FLOW

LIST FIXED COSTS:

LIST VARIABLE COSTS:

Breakeven Point:

Minimum inventory of finished jewelry on hand at full retail cost =

25% of this will sell within 1 year =

Fixed costs (30% of full retail cost) =

Variable costs (33% of full retail cost) =

Breakeven: $\text{Income} = \text{Fixed} + \text{Variable Costs}$

RECORD KEEPING

RECEIPTS, STORAGE, ACCESSIBILITY

Document, List, Explain:

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS IN PLACE

Bank Accounts

Credit Card Processing

Insurance

Costs/Revenues

Travel

Employee/Independent Contractor/Commission

Consignment and other Jewelry Placement Monitoring

Annual Budget

Website/Online tracking and statistics

Shipping / Postage / Delivery

Email / Mail List and Email Server / Software

PRODUCT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Images, descriptions, tracking, feedback/evaluation

Goals (what needs/desires are you meeting; product as problem solving)

Design

Development

Distribution

Promotion

Evaluation / Feedback

INVENTORY MANAGEMENT
INVENTORY

Estimate total dollar cost of inventory of parts (beads, clasps, stringing materials, etc.):

Estimate total dollar cost of inventory of finished jewelry:

INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Check those things which are active, in place, or well along in the planning stage:

- Unique numerical identifiers for your finished jewelry
- Spreadsheet of all parts and finished inventories with supplier sources
- A system indicating the age of various parts and finished pieces
- A system letting you know when you need to either reorder something or remake something

PRICING, MARKETING, SELLING

Pricing formula

Target Market

Where are you going to sell your products?

Strategies for getting product to target market

Setting order minimums

Your Elevator Pitch

RESILIENCY AND SELF CARE

DOCUMENTS DEVELOPED

- Getting Started Story

- Business Card

- Business Checks

- Brochure / Blurb

- Logo

- Tag Line

- 100-word, 250-word, 1000-word Descriptions

- List of Key Words (top 10 plus at least another 30)

- Resume

- Artist Statement
- Portfolio
- Biographical Sketch and Profile
- General Ledger Chart of Accounts
- Travel Log
- Purchase Order form / Order Sheets
- Invoice / Statement form
- Packing Slip
- Check Requisition Form
- Account system cost/revenue entry form
- Credit Sheet (used when asking a supplier for terms)
- Inventory Tracking and Control Sheet
- Product by Product SKU numbering system, print or online catalog sheets/web-pages, images (300 dpi, 8-16 bit color)
- Business Plan

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

THE PRIMARY BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

There are opportunities to continue to expand our customer base, with a reasonable goal of increasing sales by 5-6% annually. We are not currently meeting the full extent of customer demands. These include,

- a.
- b.
- c.

Can increase local marketing regarding jewelry repair services.

Can do local craft shows, other craft fairs opportunities.

Can set up trunk shows

THE CHALLENGES AND RISK

It is the nature of business that there are always challenges and risks. The primary ones include:

1. Turning over inventory as fashions and fads change.
2. Maintaining a sufficient diversity of inventory is a challenge, but a necessary one.
3. Competition with online retailers.
4. Maintaining merchandise quality standards is always a challenge, especially as established bead and jewelry making supplies manufacturers in the US and Europe close their doors.
5. Finding good and reliable staff is always a problem.
6. Rent for store space in this area has increased considerably, which may necessitate a change in location at some point.

NEW OR EMERGING COMPETITORS

Online sellers of finished jewelry increase considerably everyday as the internet reduces the costs to function as a business.

Mass production can respond much more quickly to rapid changes in customer demands than a 1-person jewelry manufacturer.


IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS ALREADY TAKEN

To continue to compete in today's environment, we have implemented these changes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

9.

GETTING STARTED: Your Getting Started Story

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you explain who you are as a designer to people who do not know anything about you? 2. When did you first realize you wanted to make a business out of your passion for making jewelry?
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<p>Key Words: Getting Started story business name brochures elevator pitch tag line</p>	<p><i>excitement inspiration aspiration motivation choices the hook</i></p>	<p><i>influences self-discovery professional development meta-cognition</i></p>
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The Challenge To Explain Who You Are As A Designer

It is very challenging to explain who you are to people who do not know anything about you. You have several vehicles for conveying this information. These include how you name your business or name your jewelry and jewelry lines. These include your getting started story. Your tag line. Your elevator pitch. Your brochures, business cards and stationery. The types of inventory you carry, and do not carry. The consistent and coherent features of your jewelry designs.

In this book, I go over in detail how to begin to develop the kinds of information and the vehicles for conveying this information to influence how people see you, want to come to you, want to buy your jewelry, want to recommend you to others. Then it comes down to planning, strategy and practice.

TELL YOUR STORY

The story of your jewelry passion and career is a critical component of business success. The story can be real. It can be partially real and partially embellished. It can be a fantasy. However, it is important to have a story. It will always be a foundational element of your business. Jewelry design doesn't speak for itself. Storytelling helps design stand out. People

are attracted to stories and like to follow narratives. Always remember this maxim: *Facts Tell, but Stories Sell!*

With your story, you begin to establish that personal, emotional connection between your customer, you and your products. When you establish a very personal connection with your customer, you will more likely make the sale. And keep making the sale. Over and over again.

People are not just buying your work. They are buying an experience. The more they know about you, your techniques, and the particulars of the work, the more likely they are to buy something.

You, in effect, are building a brand. The brand is you.

Your story could be real or imagined. Whatever it is, it must be relevant and ring true to what you are selling. AND, it must be to the point and easily repeatable.

Telling her story was something Sarsaparilla Sue did very, very well.

Sarsaparilla Sue



Sarsaparilla Sue was great with customers. She began each conversation by talking about her name. While she was drinking sarsaparilla in a local soda shop, the idea came to her – making jewelry which looked like candy confections. She looked around the shop and noticed all the colors and color combinations, the textures, the visual sensations.

And she found materials to match, and designs which expressed all her feelings and creative inspirations in that soda shop.

How sweet.

Sweet Sarsaparilla Sue.

Your Getting Started Story

When did you first realize you wanted to make a business out of your passion for making jewelry?

[While you are thinking about this, now is a good time to get out your pen and paper and jot down some thoughts.]

Everyone has a *Getting Started Story*.

This is a story you tell over and over again. In it, you express your wonderment and passion. You talk about your excitement, your inspirations, your aspirations, your motivations and how you decided to channel them. You go over the steps you went through to discover what it is that drives you to create. You recall who influenced you, when and why. You remember different pathways and crossroads, where you decided to pursue your interests in one direction or another. You reflect on your expectations before you got started, and how these evolved or changed as you began to make and design jewelry.

Sometimes your story begins by touching some beads. Or running a strand of pearls through your hand. Or the sight of something perfectly worn around the wrist, upon the breast, or up near the neck. Other times, it may begin by taking a class, or deciding to make a special pair of earrings to match a particular outfit. Or thinking you want to make a piece of jewelry you saw someone wearing on TV or in a photospread in some magazine.

Your *Getting Started Story* is a measure of what you have discovered, and what you need to discover still. It is a foil against which to measure your successes, and some not-so-successful things. It represents your insight and foresight when making both personal development and jewelry design choices.

And, it is very important to be cognizant and aware of how your *Getting Started Story* follows you throughout your career in your marketing and exhibiting. It becomes part of your business name, your brochures, your advertising. It becomes part of your description, your elevator pitch, your tag line. It underlies how you talk about yourself and your jewelry. It becomes one of the major ways other people get to know you, get interested in you, and want to wear or display things made by you. You will always need to have a *Getting Started Story*, and you will always come to rely on this story to further your literacy development in design, as well as your creative and business ambitions.

Better designers are very *metacognitive* of what they do. That is, they are very aware of all the choices they've made, and their implications and consequences. This means reflection. It means evaluation. It means critiquing.

Writing your *Getting Started Story* is a necessary, early first step towards developing your metacognitive abilities as a designer. So, even at this very beginning of your jewelry making path, take some notes. Keep a journal. Be aware of what is driving you.

SO, YOUR STORY COULD INCLUDE:

- IMPORTANT MILESTONES IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT AS AN ARTIST
- HOW YOU GOT STARTED
- HOW YOU LEARNED YOUR “CRAFT”
- WHO TAUGHT YOU
- THE REASONS YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR WORK
- DO YOU MAKE THINGS FULL TIME OR PART TIME
- YOUR INSPIRATIONS
- INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE MATERIALS YOU USE, and WHERE YOU FIND THEM
- SOME HUMOROUS TALES OF THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO YOU, IN THE CONTEXT OF YOUR WORK
- THE KINDS OF THINGS WHICH DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF FROM OTHER JEWELRY DESIGNERS
- THE KINDS OF THINGS WHICH ARE CRITICAL TO YOUR SUCCESS
- HOW YOU MANAGE A REGULAR JOB AND YOUR “CRAFT”
- WHERE ELSE DO YOU SELL YOUR PIECES

If you are uncomfortable talking about yourself and your jewelry, practice, practice, practice.

Assignment: WRITE UP A STORY

Your story might be 1 to 3 paragraphs long. It should be something you can say out loud to someone within 1 – 4 minutes.

Make this write-up part of your promotional materials. Tell your story out loud to friends and relatives. Eventually telling your story will become second-nature.

Your story will have three parts:

1. INTRODUCTION

Establish a context or situation. Explain why it matters. Identify the various problems or difficulties you had to overcome. The context or situation is something you believe your customer can connect with on an experiential and/or emotional level. If possible, your first sentence should contain a *hook* – something that captures

someone's attention, curiosity, wonderment, or something that captures a strong connection with the listener.

2. BODY

Detail how you came up with various solutions to the problems or difficulties. Mention your style or design preferences, and why you think they are important or advantageous. Pick 1 or 2 problems that you solved. Keep things simple, short, clear.


3. CONCLUSION

Say something about how your success evolved from how you found solutions to the problems you identified. Indicate how your success guides you now and will guide you into the future.

Practice how you tell your story. Make it impressive!

10.

GETTING STARTED: Naming Your Business

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the best name for my business?2. How do I go about choosing a name for my business?3. What does the name tell us?4. How does the name make us feel?5. Is the name evocative of jewelry?
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<p>Key Words: name / naming brainstorming</p>	<p>filtering criteria scoring reality testing</p>	<p>logo print digital domain name email address</p>
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You may also be interested in my video tutorial about [NAMING YOUR BUSINESS](https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/naming-your-business) (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/naming-your-business>).

NAMING YOUR BUSINESS

Be Smart About Selecting A Business Name That Works For You

It really is difficult to pick a business name.

Your choice of name can make your business the talk of the town, or doom it to obscurity.

Coming up with that great name for your business takes a little work, some organization, some thinking, some getting opinions from several other people, and some reality-testing.

The material in this chapter will work for all jewelry making businesses, whether you have already gotten started in your business, or are still in the "*I'm thinking about starting a business*" stage.

I examine the pros and cons of different types of business names. Together, we will be doing some self-marketing analysis. We will rehearse a best strategy for brainstorming and for filtering.

I also review other critical business and marketing tasks which you can do, given the research work you have done generating a business name. These include,

- Registering your business, trademarks, copyrights
- Creating a tag line
- Working on an elevator pitch
- Naming your jewelry and jewelry lines
- Writing short descriptions of your business, as well as a short story to use with your marketing plans.

The name you pick for your business is so critical, that I am spending a lot of time with you discussing the hows, whys, pros and cons. The information in this chapter is organized as follows:

- 1. Naming your business: what's involved**
- 2. Delineating all the naming possibilities**
- 3. Brainstorming (with other people)**
- 4. Filtering: put words together into phrases**
- 5. Reality testing**
- 6. Picking your business name (working title)**
- 7. Don't settle on the first name you come up with**
- 8. Picking your business NAME (final draft)**

The next 2 chapters are also important to this discussion. The topics covered there include,

- ***Protecting your business name and other intellectual property***
- ***Creating a tag line***
- ***Writing up short descriptions about your business***
- ***Naming your jewelry***
- ***Writing a story***
- ***Creating an Elevator pitch***
- ***Go forth and prosper***

First, before we continue,

***List your business name or
range of business name ideas here:***

STEP 1. NAMING YOUR BUSINESS: WHAT'S INVOLVED

It's Really Difficult To Pick A Business Name

Would you ever buy a Swarovski necklace or a bead crocheted rope lariat from a company called “*Flan*”?

The *FLAN CORPORATION* sells handcrafted, bead strung and bead woven jewelry.

The name “*FLAN*” doesn’t suggest anything associated with *jewelry* or the *emotions jewelry should evoke*. The name “*FLAN*” doesn’t connect in any way with people who might be looking to buy some jewelry. The name “*FLAN*” doesn’t lend itself very well to the kinds of imagery you might use in a logo, or on a business card or on a website. The name doesn't really make you want to find out more information about the company.

FLAN DIAMONDS

What does the name tell us?

How does the name make us feel?

Can we recognize the name as a jewelry company?

Would we want to buy jewelry from a company with this name?

Does their name allow us to picture the kind of jewelry they sell?

What would their logo look like?



As the people at the FLAN CORPORATION discovered every early on in their new, budding jewelry business, as new customers failed to knock down their doors...

Welcome to ALLURE DIAMONDS



IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO PICK A BUSINESS NAME.

Your name choice can make your business the talk of the town, or doom it to obscurity.

Picking a business name can be harder than naming your child.

It can be harder than naming your dog.

I've tried many times to come up with business names with varying degrees of success.

And the first business name you pick might seem great and work great at the beginning, but will it evolve with your business as well? Maybe yes, maybe not.

People often make snap judgments about your business based on your business name.

**You Want A Business Name
That Works For You**

*Whether you are
selling jewelry...*

- ...To friends and family*
- ...At craft fairs and home shows*
- ...In retail, wholesale or consignment settings*
- ...in storefronts or websites*



Your business name can often make or break your success.

What's important is not only how good your business name sounds, and how appealing it is today, but also how adaptable it is over time, as you grow or change your business.

TYPES OF BUSINESS NAMES

There are three major types of business names:

- 1. ABSTRACT**
- 2. INFORMATIVE**
- 3. COINED**

Some are **ABSTRACT** – a blank slate upon which to create an image, suggestive of what your business is about.

ABSTRACT NAMES

- Suggestive of what your business is about
- Provide your customer with a blank slate upon which to create an image

Examples:

Amazon.com

Land of Odds

Be Dazzled

Allure

ABSTRACT

PROS

- Powerful conveying emotions, meanings
- Allow your business to grow in many directions
- Easily differentiate you from your competition

CONS

- May be too vague
- May be too distantly related to your core business
- Will not be indexable in online search engines and directories

Some are **INFORMATIVE** – so that customers immediately know what your business is, where it is, who owns it.

INFORMATIVE NAMES

Describe some specific aspect or aspects of your business such as what you sell or where you sell it.

Examples:

Tennessee Pearl Company

Warren Feld Jewelry

Be Dazzled Beads

One problem that businesses which select an Informative name run into is that the name can become a straight-jacket. If your name is a niche business name, and you change or

outgrow your business, your name might not grow with it.

You don't want to outgrow your business name. What if Amazon had been named Bookstore.com — books were the primary item they were selling when they first started? They would be limited to selling books.

INFORMATIVE

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People will know exactly who you are• Exactly what you sell, and/or• Exactly where you sell it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You might outgrow your name• Or want to re-locate or expand geographically• Sometimes these kinds of names can be boring, or “lost in the crowd”

One name that outgrew itself is *Burlington Coat Factory*. When they were naming their store, they didn't think far enough into the future. When they expanded their product offering, they had to change their tagline to, “*We're more than just coats.*” (They also always have to have a legal disclaimer in their ads that says, “*Not affiliated with Burlington Industries.*” Ouch.)

Some are **COINED** – names that come from made-up words, usually to try to evoke an emotional feeling or to make your business more memorable.

COINED NAMES

These come from made-up words.

Some are a mash-up between two words.

Some are pleasantly sounding syllables.

Some are purposely misspelled or invented words.

Examples:

- Yrings (for earrings)
- Jewl (for jewels or jewelry)
- Dasign (for design)

If you invent a new *word* for your name, be careful that it doesn't sound unnatural. Mashing two words together or mixing up a bunch of letters to form a new word rarely appears or sounds smooth. And be cautious using trendy suffixes to make up a new word. *Sprayology*, *Teasophy* and *Perfumania* are all train wrecks.

Coined	
PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could be very attractive and <u>rememberable</u>• Might look great in printed form• Might make your company appear innovative and with-it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May sound unnatural• Might be difficult to spell or pronounce or remember• Not easily <u>indexable</u> online• Might feel random or meaningless• Might be annoying

You try to be Mysterious.

A sure-fire way to annoy people is to choose a name that's completely random and seemingly meaningless. One I wonder about a lot is *Vungle*. I have no idea what this company does, and I don't want to know. Likewise, can you guess what companies *Qdoba*, *Magoosh*, *Iggli*, *Kiip*, *Zippil*, or *Zumper* do?

Blindly following naming trends will lead to nothing but trouble down the road. But don't just take my word for it. Ask the founders of *Xobni*, *Svbtle*, and *del.icio.us*.

Some names involve NEW FORMS – new ways of spelling traditional words, like *YRNGS* for Earrings, to make your business more memorable and have qualities of innovation or with-it-ness.

The problem with having a name like *Naymz*, *Tackle*, *Flickr*, or *Speesees* is that you will forever have to spell it when you say it, because it isn't spelled how people hear it. (Think about how often you have to spell your own first and last name. Why would you want to have to do this with your brand name, too?)

Plus, Siri and other voice recognition software do not understand names that are not spelled naturally. And if you and your employees have to spell your name out loud for people, you are wasting everyone's time and apologizing for it, over and over again.

Your business name has to reflect...

- The practical usefulness of your products and services for your customers

- Set you apart from your competition
- Embody the philosophy and values of your business

STEP 2. SELF-MARKETING ANALYSIS


Be Brutally Honest About What Your Business Is (And Will Be) All About.

You first need to know:

What Do You Want To Communicate About Your Business?

Questions To Ask Yourself

- What do you want to sell?
- What merchandise mix?
- To whom to you want to sell?
- How many different types of customers do you have?
- What kinds of things do they want to buy?
- Why would they want to buy it?
- At what price points?



More Questions To Ask Yourself



- Where do you want to sell your stuff?
- How many different venues?
- How do you see your physical or digital store organized, decorated?
- What characterizes your jewelry, your business your design work or your approach?
- Who are your competitors?
- What sets you apart from your competitors?

Over the years, I have had to come up with many business names for different types of businesses, some more, some less successful.

Some of my own experiences

LAND OF ODDS

BE DAZZLED

WARREN FELD
JEWELRY



LAND OF ODDS (www.landofodds.com)



Take the business name, *Land of Odds*.

The name was always received well by customers, and was memorable.

Originally, I used the name for a hobby business where I restored antique lamps and sold some antiques.

Years later, with my partner Jayden, we opened up a retail store that sold all kinds of handmade jewelry and unusual collectibles and beads. The name still had a good fit.

Eventually, Land of Odds evolved from a bricks and mortar operation to an internet e-commerce store. Here visibility and recognition depended on how well the website got indexed by search engines. We were not selling LAND. We were not selling ODDS. Our name, which had served us so well over many, many years, became a bit of a handicap.



We also opened up (in 1999) a retail store we called *Be Dazzled*. At first, Be Dazzled sold finished jewelry, collectibles, some clothing, greeting cards, and beads. But at its location, mostly the beads sold, and nothing else. So we narrowed the operation to beads.

The name was always popular and attractive, but there are many bead stores across the country that called themselves some version of “Bead Dazzled”, and there were many hair salons across the country that called themselves some version of “Be Dazzled”. People frequently confused us with other businesses.

Again, as more and more business, directly or indirectly, moved online, I wished we had formally named our business “Be Dazzled Beads”, so it would be more easily indexed.

And for awhile, one business opened up a few miles from us in Nashville, and named their business, “BeadDazzled”. Nothing we could do about that.



Several years ago, I began making high end, handcrafted jewelry. Coming up with a name for this business was difficult, as well. I settled on *Warren Feld Jewelry* – www.warrenfeldjewelry.com .

Several things went into consideration here. I wanted to create a strong brand identity associated with my name. I wanted to make it difficult for other people to copy my business name. Since I anticipated that most of my business would be conducted on-line, I wanted a

key word that search engines would see and associate with my business.

However, I settled for a name configuration that is so common among jewelry designers – *Your Name Jewelry* – that it was not a name that would stand out as much, set me off from the pack as much, or be as memorable as much – not like Land of Odds has been.

Also, if I ever entertained thoughts of selling this business, having my name in the business name would probably be a negative.

Self-Marketing Analysis means that you take some time and write down what you think your business is today, and what it will evolve into tomorrow. What is it that you want to accomplish over time?

WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS TODAY? (Real or Anticipated)?

BUSINESS ATTRIBUTES	What Your Think Your Business Is and Will Be...
<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Merchandise mix b) Who your customers (or subsets of customers) are, in terms of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) what kinds of things they will buy, 2) what about these things is attractive to them, 3) at what price points c) How you see your physical or digital store organized, decorated and appointed d) Listing all the businesses and people and situations that will form your competition 	

What do I want a name to accomplish for my company?

What do you want your name to accomplish for you?

A name can help separate you from competitors and reinforce your company's image, says Steve Manning, founder of Sausalito, Calif.-based [Igor](http://igorinternational.com/) (http://igorinternational.com/), a naming agency. He suggests clearly defining your brand positioning before choosing a name, as *Apple* did to differentiate itself from corporate sounding names like *IBM* and *NEC*. "They were looking for a name that supported a brand positioning strategy that was to be perceived as simple, warm, human, approachable and different," Manning says.

Exercise: DISCUSS Name Options,

In light of each evaluative question posed below...

Will the name be too limiting?

Don't box yourself in, says Phoenix-based Martin Zwilling, CEO and founder of [Startup Professionals Inc.](http://www.startupprofessionals.com/) (http://www.startupprofessionals.com/), an advisor to early-stage startups. Avoid picking names that could limit your business from enlarging its product line or expanding to new locations, he says, citing the example of *Angelsoft.com*, a company formed in 2004 to help connect startup companies with angel investors. A couple of years ago, the company realized it needed to appeal equally to venture capital and other types of investors. So, it did a costly rebranding to *Gust.com*, which is less specific and evokes a nice *wind in the sails* image.

Your Business Name Will Better Serve You If...

- ...It sounds more corporate, or more warm and fuzzy?
- ...It focuses on exactly what you do, or where you do it, or is more general?
- ...It is more rememberable, or more pronounceable, or more easily spelled?
- ...It describes your design skill, approach or philosophy, or it does not?
- ...It is very different from your competition, or somewhat similar?

Does the name make sense for my business?

For most companies, it's best to adopt a name that provides some information about their products and services. That doesn't mean it can't also have a catchy ring. *Lawn and Order*, for example, is a good name for a landscaping business because it gets people's attention and also clearly relates to the company's services, Zwilling says. While unusual words like *Yahoo* and *Fogdog* sometimes work, quirky names are always a crapshoot.

Is the name easy to remember?

The shorter the name, the better, Zwilling says, suggesting that business owners **limit it to two syllables and avoid using hyphens or other special characters**. He also recommends **skipping acronyms**, which mean nothing to most people, and **picking a name whose first letter is closer to A than Z** because certain algorithms and directory listings work alphabetically. "When choosing an identity for a company or a product, simple and straightforward are back in style and cost less to brand," he says.

Is the name easy for people to spell?

That may seem to be a given, but some companies purposely select names that consumers can't easily spell. It's a risky strategy to try to make a company stand out, and some naming consultants recommend against it. "**If your name looks like a typo, scratch it off the list**," says Alexandra Watkins, founder and chief innovation officer of *Eat My Words* (<http://www.eatmywords.com/>), a naming service based in San Francisco. She also believes

that it's important that your name be spelled exactly as it sounds. Otherwise, you will forever have to spell it out for people when saying the name or your company's email or website address aloud. "Think of how often you have to spell your own first or last name for people," she says. "Why would you want a brand name with the same problem?"

How will potential customers first encounter your name?

Some naming experts believe there are **exceptions to the easy-to-spell rule**, especially if most people will see your name for the first time in a print or online ad. For example, consider Zulily, the online company offering daily deals for moms, babies and kids. "If you just heard that name, you might not guess how to spell it, but the company's aggressive online ad campaign has meant that most people first see it spelled out," says Chris Johnson, a naming consultant in Seattle and author of *The Name Inspector* (<http://www.thenameinspector.com/>) blog, who came up with the name *Zulily*. "The payoff is that **the unusual sound and spelling of the name have helped them create a very distinctive brand.**"

Does the name sound good and is it easy to pronounce?

Manning says **the sound of the name is important in conveying a feeling of energy and excitement**. You also must be sure potential customers can easily pronounce your company's name. "It is a hard fact that people are able to spell, pronounce and remember names that they are familiar with," he says, pointing to *Apple*, *Stingray*, *Oracle* and *Virgin* as strong names. But he doesn't like such company names as *Chordiant*, *Livent* and *Naviant*. "These names are impossible to spell or remember without a huge advertising budget, and the look, rhythm and sound of them cast a cold, impersonal persona," he says.

Is your name meaningful only to yourself?

A name with hidden or personal meanings evokes nothing about your brand, and **you won't be there to explain it** when most people encounter it. "Refrain from Swahili, words spelled backwards, and naming things after your dog," Watkins says. She gives the example of *Lynette Hoy*, who was using her first and last name for her PR firm in Bainbridge Island, Wash. The name didn't work because it failed to evoke Hoy's fiery personality and passion, Watkins says. So, the company was rebranded *Firetalker PR*, and Hoy took the title of Fire Chief. She called her office The Firehouse, and began offering PR packages such as Inferno, Controlled Burn and The Matchbox. "Her entire brand is built around that name and lends itself to endless ways to extend the name," Watkins says. "Her prior name didn't lend itself to any theme or wordplay."

Customer Interaction With Name

How will your customers first encounter your name?

- Printed version on business card or stationery?
- Email address?
- Online website?
- Jewelry tag or packaging inscription?

Is the name visually appealing?

You also want to consider **how the name looks in a logo, ad or a billboard**, Manning says. He points to *Gogo* (<http://www.gogoair.com/>), the inflight Internet service provider, as a good name for design purposes. "It's the balance of the letters, all rounded and friendly, versus a word with hard, angular letters like Ks and Ts and Rs," Manning says. Other visually appealing names include *Volvo* because it has no low-hanging letters and *Xerox* for the symmetry of beginning and ending with the same letter.

How will your name look? – On the web, as part of a logo, on social media.

What connotations does it evoke? – Is your name too corporate or not corporate enough? Does it reflect your business philosophy and culture? Does it appeal to your market?

Is it unique? – Pick a name that hasn't been claimed by others, online or offline. A quick web search and domain name search (more on this below) will alert you to any existing use. When naming a business, you need to think about your potential customers. What's their appetite for embracing the new? Or should you place emphasis on tradition and history?

STEP 3. DELINEATING ALL THE NAMING POSSIBILITIES

Initially, at least, Don't Limit Yourself.

How did you come up with your current business name, or list of business name possibilities?

If you were starting from scratch, and trying to name your jewelry-making business, what things could you do?

What factors are important?

What do you want your name to communicate?

Do you like how certain words sound or look printed on a page?

Write down everything you can think of. Write down all the qualities you associate with your jewelry. All the materials you are using. The price points. Write down all the types of things you think you will sell – right now, a few years from now, many years from now. Available only through you, or at local stores? Write down everything you think makes your jewelry better than that of anyone else’s that your likely customer might buy. Better made. Better materials. Better designs. Better prices. More accessible. More sensitive to customer needs, or customer situations they find themselves in. Better colors, more relevant colors, more needed or wanted colors. Local focus. Cultural or historical significance. Personal significance.

DISCUSSION Q:

How does your business name, or name possibilities relate to what you wrote about your jewelry above?

Start by deciding what you want your name to communicate. It should reinforce the key elements of your business. Your work in developing a niche and a mission statement will help you pinpoint the elements you want to emphasize in your name.

The more your name communicates to consumers about your business, the less effort you must exert to explain it. According to naming experts, entrepreneurs should give priority to real words or combinations of words over fabricated words. People prefer words they can relate to and understand. That's why professional namers universally condemn strings of numbers or initials as a bad choice.

BRAINSTORM PROCESS:

You first brainstorm with yourself only.

Words, Partial Words, Phrases

These can be...

- ADJECTIVES
- VERBS
- ACTIONABLE TERMS
- NOUNS
- ADVERBS
- SYLLABLES
- SOUNDS
- PHRASES

First, write down every name, word, partial word which comes to your mind?

Things Which Inspired You

Write down all the things which inspired you...

- Inspired you in the past
- Inspires you now
- Motivated or influenced you to get into this jewelry making business

Second, what inspired you, or inspires you? Why did you get into this business?

THINGS RELATED TO YOUR BUSINESS

*Write down things
related to your business...*

All the qualities you associate with your jewelry

All the materials you are using

The price points

**All the types of things you think you will sell right now,
a few years from now, many years from now**

**Things available through you only, or through other
outlets as well**

What Makes Your Jewelry Better

*Write down everything you think makes your
jewelry better than anybody else's...*

Better designs

Better finishing

Better prices

More accessible

More attuned to customer needs

Better colors

Local focus

Cultural or historical significance

Personal significance

Fashion and style

Things About Your Services

Write down things about your services...

All the services you will be providing

**All the customer experiences you will be
providing**

Third, look at your jewelry and think about every word that might be used to describe it. What are your styles of jewelry? Sophisticated, every day, novelty? Gemstone, crystal,

glass? Only one of a kind, or more mass-produced? In what settings will you sell your jewelry?

Fourth, think about your work process – how you organize your jewelry making supplies, how you apply your craft, how you finish off your projects. What are all the words which come to mind here?

Fifth, think about your potential customers, markets and niche markets. Who are they? How will your jewelry benefit them? What are all the words which come to mind here?

Sixth, find out what types of business names are jewelry designers currently using?

USE YOUR RESOURCES... Now use other resources to expand your list. What current words and names are other jewelry designers and businesses using? What key words do they present on the home pages of their websites?

If you do a Google search on “jewelry designers” or “directories jewelry”, you can come up with lists of names other people use. Most use the artist’s name and either the word “design” or the word “jewelry”. Susan Fein Designs. Susan Fein Jewelry. Susan Fein Jewelry Designs. Susan Fein Designed Jewelry.

The Google search will also show you other types of business names jewelry designers use. You might also page through popular jewelry and trade magazines.

Write down all the words and phrases that appeal to you.

Play with Words and Word Combinations

Write down all the words and phrases that appeal to you. Combine 2 to 3 words at a time into phrases.

DOUBLE MEANINGS ARE POWERFUL

Phrases where a word (or the phrase itself) has a double meaning can often make a very strong impression.

“Jewelry Works”

“Beyond The Fringe”

STEP 4. BRAINSTORMING (with other people)

Now, involve other people in this “coming-up-with-names” process. At this point, you come up with every word, phrase and idea that has any possibility. Synthesize your work.

Share your lists of words and names with others.

See what additional words and names they can come up with.

Brainstorm with EVERYONE. As many family, friends and strangers you can. Don't be shy about this.

Brainstorm deeper. What things get associated with the words and ideas you are coming up with, in terms of:

- VISUAL
- TOUCH
- AUDIO
- PERCEPTIONS
- UNDERSTANDINGS or ASSUMPTIONS

What images come to mind? These can be any kinds of images, directly related indirectly related, or not related at all to your jewelry making business.

Brainstorm. When making the decision about words and names, brainstorm a lot. Brainstorm with yourself. Your friends and family. Potential customers. In this initial part of the naming process, don't reject anything. You want to pull out as many ideas as possible. You never know what combination of words and phrases might click.

How would they describe your work and your design abilities?

Why do they think you wanted to get into this business?

What do they think inspires you?

What qualities do they think people will associate with your jewelry?

What target markets do they think you should go after?

How do they see your products benefiting others?

When choosing a business name, keep the following tips in mind:

- Choose a name that appeals not only to you but also to the kind of customers you are trying to attract.
- Choose a comforting or familiar name that conjures up pleasant memories so customers respond to your business on an emotional level.
- Don't pick a name that is long or confusing.
- Stay away from cute puns that only you understand.
- Don't use the word "Inc." after your name unless your company is actually incorporated.

Here are five of my most lucrative brainstorming tools and techniques:

1. Open the thesaurus treasure chest.

Begin your online brainstorming on a thesaurus website, where you can find a jackpot of synonyms and related words. My go-to one is *Thesaurus.com*. When I had to come up with fresh name ideas for a hip frozen yogurt franchise in Utah that was targeted at teenagers, I hit the jackpot when I typed in the word "cold" and found these three fun names:

Bitter: With one of the two yogurt flavors being tart, it was self-deprecating and fun

Goosebumps: Perfect for their target audience of hormonal teenagers

Frigid: Playful and fun. We actually used this later as the name of an ice cream store

2. Comb through glossaries of terms.

Every sport, hobby and industry has its own lingo of fun words and phrases. You can find pages and pages of them online by searching for "glossaries," "lingo," "vernacular," "jargon," "dictionaries," "thesaurus," "terms," "words" or "slang," which are essentially the same thing but will turn up different results in searches. While brainstorming frozen yogurt store names, I looked at snowboarder glossaries and stumbled upon the word "Chatter," which was perfect for this business, as it evokes teens socializing with each other.

3. Go "Googlestorming."

There are endless ways to utilize Google for brainstorming, or as I call it, *Googlestorming*. For the frozen yogurt store, I searched for "coldest places on earth." I found a small town "deep Siberian wilderness." The word Siberian jumped out at me. **Siberia**, is a funny word

that would make a super name for the frozen yogurt store. It implies “cold,” and considering that Utah is a kind of Siberia (removed from the rest of the population), it’s just the kind of hip name that teens would love. “Mom, I’m going to Siberia with my friends.” Cool.

4. Tune into iTunes.

Song titles make super sticky names, because just like the songs themselves, they get stuck in our head. While looking for frozen yogurt store names, I typed in the word “cold,” and discovered “**Cold Hearted**” and “**Cold Play**,” which could be fun. “**Funky Cold Medina**,” not so much. One of my favorite “iTunes-inspired names,” was for a hunky chili pepper-infused brownie. I did a song search for the word “burn,” and found the famous Elvis Presley song, “Burning Love.” The brownie flavor name became “Hunka Hunka Burning Love,” and made everyone smile.

5. Search stock photos and Google images.

A picture says a thousand words. Photos can inspire awesome names, which is why I always do image searches to fuel my creativity. Stock photo websites such as *Bigstock* (<http://www.bigstockphoto.com/>) and *Getty Images* (<http://www.gettyimages.com/>) are fantastic places to get ideas and search for concepts related what you’re naming. For the frozen yogurt store, I went to Google Images and searched for “eat frozen yogurt,” which led me to a lot of photos of colorful plastic spoons in yogurt, which immediately made me think of the phrase, *Spoon Me*, which ended up being the name the client chose.

There are many word and image resources online to help stimulate your creativity. Try the ones above and poke around to find others. You’ll have the freedom to come up with ideas without anyone shooting them down. And you won’t have to buy anyone dinner.

6. Check out foreign language spellings.

English: Jewelry (America) or Jewellery (Britain)

Spanish: Joyas

Latin: Jocale

7. ONLINE BUSINESS NAME GENERATORS

USE YOUR RESOURCES

ONLINE BUSINESS NAME GENERATORS.

Have some fun with these online business name generators.

Here are four that I like. Each comes up with different possibilities.

www.businessnamegenerator.com
To use this business name generator, you input a word or words, and it generates a list of possible business names.

www.naming.net
Allows you to enter specific criteria and generates a list of 24-816 possible names for each search. You can specify root word, syllable letter, number of syllables desired, rhymes and many other criteria.

www.netsubstance.com
Randomly generates new business names based upon keywords you identify. Will assist you in generating coined names.

www.rhymer.com
Allows you to enter in word, syllable or letters, and find possible business names.



STEP 5. FILTERING: PUT WORDS TOGETHER INTO PHRASES

*See how combinations of words might work for you...
Then, filter.*

Start Putting Words Together Into Phrases. From this list of potential key words

and tags, start putting words together in various combinations. Say them out loud. Plug in some of these words into the GOOGLE or Yahoo browser bar, and see what other suggested key words they are associated with.

For some of your favorite words, you might look these up in different languages – French or Spanish or German or Italian or Chinese or whatever.

Check these words in a Thesaurus to find related words. For each 2 or 3 or more word combinations, do a Google or Yahoo search on them, and see what comes up. Are these the kinds of businesses you want your own to pop up with in an internet search? See any other words other businesses use that relate? Does it appear that no other business is using the same name you want to use?

Filter

Eliminate words and phrases. Your GOAL: To end up with 100 or so useful candidates.



Begin to group the words and names into categories, such as GREAT, GOOD, FAIR and BAD.

10 Criteria You Might Find Useful

1. How it looks in print
2. How it sounds
3. How it might translate into image or logo

4. How memorable
5. How it fits with business context
6. Whether customers need prior knowledge to make sense of it
7. How web-ready it is
8. How useful it will be over time
9. How common among your competition
10. How useful to a multi-lingual audience

10 CRITERIA

1. HOW IT LOOKS IN PRINT
2. HOW IT SOUNDS
3. HOW IT MIGHT TRANSLATE INTO IMAGE OR LOGO
4. HOW MEMORABLE
5. HOW IT FITS WITH BUSINESS CONTEXT
6. WHETHER CUSTOMERS NEED PRIOR KNOWLEDGE TO MAKE SENSE OF IT
7. HOW WEB READY IT IS
8. HOW USEFUL IT WILL BE OVER TIME
9. HOW COMMON AMONG YOUR COMPETITION
10. HOW USEFUL TO A MULTI-LINGUAL AUDIENCE

Criterion Example

THE WORD:

"Jewelry"

THE CRITERION:

"How useful to a multi-lingual audience"

THE SCORE:

"Fair"

1. In some English speaking countries, "Jewelry" is spelled "Jewellery"
2. Word in another language may be very different, such as "Joyas" in Spanish.

Criteria

Not every business name will score high on all the criteria you will use.

But using these criteria will make the filtering process more manageable.

Again, at this point, we want to reduce your list to about 100 or so items.

If you are marketing to a **multi-lingual audience**, will the words you use be recognized in more than one language, and will they be seen as positive and have no negative connotations?

Some better business **names function on more than one level of understanding** – a play on words. That is, a word or part of a word can convey more than one meaning, and each meaning can be appreciated. A business called *JewelryWorks* or *DesignWorks* suggests that the jewelry is handcrafted, as well as successful – it works! – for the wearer.

Names that **begin with hard sounds** – **K**, -- usually work better.

Find **words or pairings with a rhythm or semantic flow**, which helps to avoid leaving someone with a hard stop. This tends to create alliteration, such as Freaky Friday or Sunny Shores.

People are most likely to remember how something makes them *feel*. This means **that beautiful-sounding names have a better chance of encoding into long-term memory**. Interesting fact: “Cellar Door” has been rated as the most phonetically beautiful pairing of words.

Names with letters that have high point values in Scrabble -- J, K, Q, V, W, X, Y and Z -- tend to be more memorable, likely because they are less commonly found in western languages. This less commonly found attribute makes a name more distinct for encoding into memory.

Letter form beauty. Brand names are more often seen in writing than any other form, so having a name translated into visual language, such as a logo, is an important next step. Take *OXO* and *xpedx* for examples.

Context is important. A **name should feel like a fit for the category it is going to occupy**. Do this by being relatable through contextual meaning. For example, naming a small pillow company *Microsoft* today would be odd, but 100 years ago it may have worked.

The more physical and tangible a word is, the easier it will be to remember.

The reason? It gives someone an image in their mind and helps to store it as a memory. Take “mossy rock” vs. “soft place” as an example. One is an object and the other is a concept. Guess which one someone would remember tomorrow?

Not every name is going to encompass all of these factors, but considering them gives a better sense of how memorable a name may be when it reaches the eyes and ears of a brand’s audiences.

Avoid tongue twisters. “Six Thistles Jewelry”, looks pretty on paper, offers many graphic illustration options, but is very difficult to say aloud.

THE CRITERIA

HOW IT LOOKS IN PRINT

How will the word look when printed out?

Do the letters have a natural letter-form beauty?

Think of the word...

- ...Printed in different fonts
- ...Doodled by hand
- ...Written out in script
- ...Appearing on a business card or letterhead

Be sure there is no confusion:

- I, L, 1
- 0, O
- 5, S
- _, -, (blank space)

THE CRITERIA

HOW IT SOUNDS

Does it have a rhythmic or semantic flow?

Is there a natural alliteration, such as “Sunny Shores” or “Gemstone Jewelry”?

Does the sound of the word or phrase make people feel good?

Is the word a tongue twister, and too difficult to pronounce, like “Six Thistles Jewelry”?

THE CRITERIA

HOW MIGHT IT TRANSLATE INTO A LOGO OR OTHER IMAGERY?

Does your business name lend itself to a logo?

Not a great translation into a logo.
Begs the question: Which associate is the upside down "F"?

FEINSON-FELD PLANNING ASSOCIATES



THE CRITERIA

HOW MEMORABLE IS IT?

Is the word recognizable?

Can people spell it?

Does it evoke a clear or specific image?

Names with letters that have high point values in Scrabble tend to be more memorable.

J, K, Q, V, W, X, Y and Z

Words with more than 2-3 syllables, and names with more than 2-3 words are more difficult to remember.

Long sets of initials or numbers are difficult to remember.

THE CRITERIA

HOW DOES IT FIT WITH THE CONTEXT?

How does it relate in meaning to your business, your product or your services?

When people hear it, will they know what your business is about?

Do the words constrain the potential scope of your business in any way?

Customers need to see your name and know it is relevant to them.

Usually, you want to eliminate names that are too broad, that is, so general, that no one knows what you do.

THE CRITERIA

DOES YOUR CUSTOMER NEED TO HAVE SOME KIND OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE, IN ORDER TO MAKE SENSE OF YOUR NAME?

Will the word or phrasing be seen as silly or amateurish?

“BJIT” for Best Jewelry In Town, might be cute, but people who don’t know you won’t recognize the name.

Usually, avoid acronyms or initials. “H-M Jewelry” for Harlin-Martin won’t be understood.

Avoid cute puns.

THE CRITERIA

HOW WEB-READY IS IT?

How will the word look on a computer screen?

How will the word look in a domain name or email address?

How will it look when it comes up in a search in a search engine or in a social media site?

How long will it take, or how difficult will it be, for someone to type out your email address?

THE CRITERIA

HOW USEFUL WILL IT BE OVER TIME, AS YOUR BUSINESS GROWS AND MATURES?

Is your word/phrase too trendy, and thus, may not hold up over time?

THE CRITERIA

HOW COMMON ARE THEY IN THE NAMES OF SIMILAR BUSINESSES?

Be sure to eliminate names already in use by your competition.

Don't Settle On The First Name You Come Up With

The best approach is to generate 3-5 business names, and start pre-testing them.

REDUCE YOUR LIST TO 100

You have evaluated each word in terms of how it scored along several criteria.

Give scores of...

4 for GREAT

3 for GOOD

2 for FAIR

1 for POOR

Add up all your scores, and select the top 100 or so words and phrases.

REDUCE YOUR LIST TO 5

Using a mix of...

...your criteria scoring,

...the feedback from others, and

...your gut

First, reduce your list to 10-20 options.

Then, reduce it to 5 potentially useful business names.

Again, search Google, domain name registries and trademark offices.

Show your friends and family members all 3-5 names, and ask them to pick their favorites, and tell you why.

STEP 6. REALITY TEST

Subject your 3-5 choices to some rigorous and extensive reality-testing...



Apply Your Criteria Again

1. How does it look in print?
2. How does it sound?
3. How does it translate into imagery?
4. How memorable is it?
5. How does it fit with the context?
6. Will your customer need prior knowledge?
7. How web ready is it?
8. How useful will it be over time?
9. How does it compare to your competition?
10. How does it translate for multi-lingual audience?

THE PRINTED WORDS. Type out the names, using **different type-font faces**. You can easily do this in your word processing or **web-page** editing software. How does it visually appear on the page, and do you like it or not? Besides the overall look, *be sure that anyone reading your typed out name (or domain name or email address) won't confuse lower case "L" with the number "1" or a capital "I", or Zeroes and "O's" or Fives and "S's" or underscores with hyphens or blanks when the name or email address is shown as a highlighted, underlined link.*

THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT. Type in your business name and domain name into a web browser and search engine. How does it look in the location bar at the top of the browser. In the search list, how does it appear, where does it come up, and what other businesses come up with it?

Type your email address into the TO section of an email.

Make sure you haven't picked a name where, when you write it down, some letters slur together, making it illegible for others to read.

On the screen, it's difficult to read "*ill*", for example. Again, Besides the overall look, be sure that anyone reading your typed out name (or domain name or email address) won't confuse lower case "L" with the number "1" or a capital "I", or Zeroes and "O's" or Fives and "S's" or underscores with hyphens or blanks when the name or email address is shown as a highlighted, underlined link.

How long will it take or how difficult will it be for someone to type out your email address?

Does your business name lend itself to a logo. A long time ago, I had done some consulting with a friend – Marje Feinson. We called ourselves Feinson-Feld Planning Associates. “Feinson-Feld” was easy to say, sounded professional and established, and we liked it. We had a terrible logo, however. We took the “F” of both of our last names, and had one F upright and one F facing down, to form a right-leaning box, and people would frequently ask which one of us was the upside down F. (*Of course, it was me!*)

LOGO: Things To Think About

1. Does it work vertically; Does it have both vertical and horizontal options?
2. Does it work without a box around it?
3. Can you sketch it near-instantly?
4. Does it use less than 2 fonts?
5. Does abstract or literal work best?
6. Your brand is more than your logo; your logo is a suggestion, an impression, a clue to the essence of your brand.
7. A logo’s job is to provide a legible, recognizable face to your brand.
8. Does your logo work in black and white?
9. Does your logo work with both black and white backgrounds?
10. Is your logo 2 colors or less?

Solid colors work better than gradients.

Two or less fonts work best.

Two or less colors work best.

Your logo goes everywhere – website, business cards, letterhead, signs, cards, advertisements. But it isn’t the logo’s job to tell the whole story.

Hold your jewelry next to your name. Match? Mismatch?

Say your business name out loud. How easy is it to say and pronounce and be understood? Have other people say your business name out loud. Say it out loud over the telephone. Is it understood? My name *Warren* sounds like *Juan* over the telephone.

Your name pronunciation is not *güd*. Your name should be approachable and intuitive to pronounce in your brand’s country of origin. Don’t rely on punctuation marks or letters in different colors to aid in pronunciation. Your name will not appear in color in the press or in search-engine results and people go batty trying to find accent marks and umlauts on their

keyboard.

DISCUSSION: Relate business name/names to questions below...

Can people spell your business name?

Can people remember your business name?

When people hear your business name, will they know what your business is about?

Does the name seem as workable for a physical bricks and mortar business, as it does for an online business?

Think about how you intend to market your business – brochures, directories, ads, email campaigns, signage – does your name feel good and fit with these marketing strategies?

If your primary means of marketing is a listing in the Yellow Pages or some other directory, then the first letter of the name might be important. **Should your business start with the letter “A”?** Should your business name avoid the “a”, “an” and/or “the”?

Do certain words in your name make different people react in different ways? Are there social, cultural and psychological issues you need to anticipate? I remember a gemstone shop named *Art By God*. On the one hand, gemstones are literally Art by “God”. Lots of people can appreciate that. On the other hand, whenever you use “God” in a name, it may seem that you’re diminishing something some see as sacred. I don’t think I’d feel comfortable naming one of my businesses, “Land of Gods”. And I remember the TV commercial where a woman named her new shoe store “Clothing Optional”, and attracted a hoard of nudists.

If you have an identifiable major competitor, does your business name sufficiently distinguish you from them?

Using “DESIGN” or “JEWELRY” as part of the business name...This has pros and cons. On the positive side, it’s important to get your name associated with the jewelry you make, and the certain style, look and/or quality of your jewelry. This is called *branding*. You always need to keep re-emphasizing your name. In terms of both positive and negative, this gives the search engines something to work with when indexing. The name is user friendly in that it is easy to interpret and understand.

On the negative side, it seems that almost everyone you are competing with uses the same naming construct. If a potential customer is paging through the yellow pages, or scrolling down a list of designers in a search engine, you can get lost in the crowd.”

Do a little more brainstorming. Sample potential customers.

What will the future bring?

Where do you see yourself in 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years? What will you be selling, to whom, at what price? Will it be the same merchandise you began with, or very different merchandise?

Will the name limit you in any way over time? Have you chosen something like *Tennessee Jewels*, and may want to sell outside Tennessee, or have non-Tennessee products to sell? Do you think you might want to expand beyond jewelry?

STEP 7. PICK YOUR BUSINESS NAME (working title for now)

You have narrowed the possibilities at this point to 3-5 choices. Now you are ready to choose the ONE...

KEEP IT SIMPLE

*(NOTE: double meanings work best
DesignWorks
DesignedExpressions)*

DON'T SETTLE ON THE FIRST NAME YOU COME UP WITH

That first name you come up with probably won't be the chosen name...

STEP 8. PICK. Pick your business name. (final draft)

Final Decision: *Now, you need to pick one.*

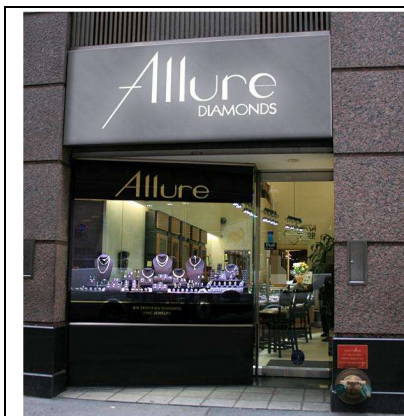
How do you make your final decision?

Recall all your analytic work. Which names fits your objective criteria the best? Which name most accurately describes the company you have in mind? Which name do your potential customers prefer? Which name do you prefer?

Some entrepreneurs arrive at a final decision by going with their gut or by doing consumer research or testing with focus groups to see how the names are perceived. You can doodle an idea of what each name will look like on a sign or on business stationery. Read each name aloud, paying attention to the way it sounds if you foresee radio advertising or telemarketing in your future. Use any or all of these criteria.

11.

GETTING STARTED: Protecting Your Business Name and Other Intellectual Property



Guiding Questions:

1. How do I protect my business name and intellectual property?
2. If someone violates my copyright or trademark, what are my options?
3. What is a Doing Business As (DBA) name?

Key Words: business registration doing business as (DBA) name	trademark copyright service mark trade name	domain name email address social media identity
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You may also be interested in my video tutorial about [NAMING YOUR BUSINESS](https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/naming-your-business) (https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/naming-your-business).

In this chapter, I discuss trademarks, service marks, copyrights, and registrations.

PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS NAME AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Trademark, Service Mark, Copyright and Register...

Register Your New Business Name

Registering a business name is a confusing area for new business owners. What does it mean and what are you required to do?

Registering your business name involves a process known as registering a “[Doing Business As](http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name/) (http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name/) (DBA)” name or trade name. This process shouldn’t be confused with incorporation and it doesn’t provide trademark protection.

Registering your “Doing Business As” name is simply the process of letting your state, county and city governments know that you are doing business as a name other than your personal name or the legal name of your partnership or corporation. If you are operating under your own name, then you can skip the process.

Learn about the requirements in your state and how to file in this [Registering Your Doing Business As Name](http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name/) (http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name) guide.

You will also want to register your domain name(s) online.



Business Registration

Search state and local business name registration directories.

Register your business trade name or DBA (Doing Business As) name with your

- City
- County
- State

You do not need to incorporate in order to register your business name.

A registered business name is not the same as a trademark, but it does give you a little bit of protection.

This protection prevents another *similar* business from using your registered name within the jurisdiction of the agency which registered it.

Apply for Trademark Protection

A trademark protects words, names, symbols, and logos that distinguish goods and services. Your name is one of your most valuable business assets, so it’s worth protecting. You can file for a trademark for less than \$300. [Learn how to trademark your business name](http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/business-law-regulations/patents-trademarks-copyright/) (http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/business-law-regulations/patents-trademarks-copyright).

When it comes to starting a business, there’s often some confusion about the process of business name registration. How are trade names and trademarks different? Does a trade

name afford any legal branding protection? Can your trade name be the same as your trademark?

Simply put, a **trade name** is the official name under which a company does business. It is also known as a *doing business as (DBA)* name, assumed name, or fictitious name. A trade name does not afford any brand name protection or provide you with unlimited rights for the use of that name. However, registering a trade name is an important step for some – but not all – businesses (more on this below).

A **trademark** is used to protect your brand name and can also be associated with your trade name. A trademark can also protect symbols, logos and slogans. Your name is one of your most valuable business assets, so it's worth protecting.

An important reason to distinguish between trade names and trademarks is that if a business starts to use its trade name to identify products and services, it could be perceived that the trade name is now functioning as a trademark, which could potentially infringe on existing trademarks.

NOTE: You cannot trademark adjectives. For example, you can't trademark the business name "Best Jeweler In Town".

Registering a Trade Name

Naming your business is an important branding exercise. If you choose to name your business as anything other than your own personal name (i.e. a "trade name"), then you'll need to register it with the appropriate authority as a "doing business as" (DBA) name.

Consider this scenario: John Smith sets up a painting business and chooses to name it "John Smith Painting." Because "John Smith Paining" is considered a DBA name (or trade name), John will need to register it as a fictitious business name with a government agency.

You need a DBA in the following scenarios:

- **Sole Proprietors or Partnerships** – If you wish to start a business under any name other than your real one, you'll need to register a DBA name so you can do business under the DBA name.
- **Existing Corporations or LLCs** – If your business is already incorporated and you want to do business under a different name, you will need to register a DBA.

Note that many sole proprietors maintain a DBA or trade name to give their business a professional image, yet still use their own name on tax forms and invoices.

Depending on where your business is located, you'll need to register your DBA name through either your county clerk's office, city clerks office, and/or your state government. *Note:* Not all states require fictitious business names or DBA registration. SBA's [Business Name Registration](http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name) (<http://www.sba.gov/content/register-your-fictitious-or-doing-business-dba-name>) page has more information about the process, plus links to the

registration authorities in each state.



Registering Your Trademark

Choosing to register a trademark is up to you, but your business name and identity is one of its most valuable assets, so it's worth protecting.

Registering a trademark guarantees exclusive use, establishes legally that your mark is not already being used, and provides government protection from any liability or infringement issues that may arise. Being cautious in the beginning can certainly save you trouble in the long run. You may choose to personally apply for trademark registration or hire an intellectual property lawyer to register for you.

Trademarks can be registered on both federal and state levels. Federal trademarks can be registered through the [United States Patent and Trademark Office](http://www.uspto.gov/main/trademarks.htm) (<http://www.uspto.gov/main/trademarks.htm>). Applications can be submitted online, by using the [Trademark Electronic Application System \(TEAS\)](http://www.uspto.gov/teas/index.html) (<http://www.uspto.gov/teas/index.html>), or by requesting a hard copy application and mailing in a paper form. Although both methods are acceptable, filing online is a faster and more cost-effective process (less than \$300).

Tip: Before you register, you'll need to follow these steps:

- Determine whether your product is eligible for a trademark
- Conduct a [trademark search](http://tess2.uspto.gov/bin/gate.exe?f=tess&state=4007:mecvj3.1.1) (<http://tess2.uspto.gov/bin/gate.exe?f=tess&state=4007:mecvj3.1.1>) using TESS (Trademark Electronic Search System)

Because it can be tricky to identify potential infringement or clashes, and the penalties for doing so are high, it's worth talking to a good intellectual property lawyer to ensure you cover all bases.

As with trade names, registering a trademark at the state level varies from state to state. Check out the USPTO's [State Trademark Information](http://www.uspto.gov/web/menu/statetmoffices.html) (<http://www.uspto.gov/web/menu/statetmoffices.html>) page for links to your state's trademark office.

For a step-by-step guide to filing a trademark application, FAQs and more, refer to SBA.gov's [Small Business Guide to Intellectual Property](http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/business-law-regulations/intellectual-property) (<http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/starting-business/business-law-regulations/intellectual-property>).

TRADEMARKS AND SERVICE MARKS

As you begin to narrow down a name, check with the US Trademark office to be sure no one else has used these names. Go to www.uspto.gov, and search the business names. Your state trademarks office may also have a searchable list.

Protect your business name by registering the name (*and logo, if you have one*) as a trademark or service mark. Also copyright your brochures and advertising copy, and any sets of instructions, if you create these.

State and US Trademarks

For most of us, getting trademark protection at the State Level is sufficient.	Getting a US Level trademark is more involved and costly.
Usually easy to do and very low cost.	I'd suggest enlisting the help of a trademark attorney, intellectual property lawyer, or consultant.
This is something you can do yourself.	

As soon as you pick your business name, register it as a trade or service mark with your state trademark office. Each State you do business in, as well as the US as a whole, offer opportunities to protect your trade or service mark. You can prevent someone else from using your business name, or product name, by registering this name with the state(s), or US. You would put a TM next to the name you've trademarked, such as Be Dazzled Beads TM.

In Tennessee, this process is especially inexpensive – around \$40.00 per trade or service mark. Your intellectual property would be protected in Tennessee. If you create a strong brand identity, this can prevent businesses outside the state of Tennessee from representing your intellectual property as their own.

Getting a US trademark is expensive and a little more complicated, and I'd suggest using the services of a trademark lawyer in this case. A US trademark would protect your intellectual property anywhere in the United States.

In Tennessee, trademarks and service marks are handled by the Tennessee Secretary of State. For the United States, these are handled by the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Have I conducted a proper trademark search?

A great name is worthless if someone else already has laid claim to it. Start with some free resources like Trademarkia.com or USPTO.gov to do a cursory search to see if the name is already in use. Then, hire a trademark attorney to do a more thorough screening, and if the name isn't taken, to register it with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. "Get it right the first time," Watkins says. "A third of our business comes from companies who are being threatened with trademark infringement."

COPYRIGHT

Copyrights protect intellectual property, as well.

You can copyright...

- ...brochures
- ...advertising copy
- ...sets of instructions

Two ways:

(1) With Library of Congress

(Involves small fee, and they send you a certificate of copyright)

(2) Putting "COPYRIGHT, YOUR NAME, DATE" somewhere on the document

COPYRIGHT

You can copyright any documents or marketing materials (brochures, instructions, etc). You can do this by registering a copy with the Library of Congress, or just putting © **YOUR NAME, date** somewhere on the document.

Or you can send a copy to yourself in a Registered letter, write on the outside of the envelop what is inside, and don't open the envelop when you receive it back in the mail. This is a proof of date, should you need to challenge anyone.

Crittenden Jewelry

One jewelry dealer I know, and who exemplifies many other jewelry artists I've met,

owns a business called Crittenden Jewelry. Ulrich is his name. Ulrich is very pleasant, interesting to talk with, knows the jewelry business in and out, but is somewhat of an odd duck. He sells some of the most beautiful and intricate jewelry you will ever see anywhere, except in a museum.

But he hides it.

He keeps all these phenomenal pieces in boxes under the floorboards of the store. He fears if they were on display, other jewelry makers would copy them. And he would be out of business. So he only takes these pieces out for a select few.

Not surprisingly, Ulrich works alone. As he often explains, "I don't want to hire anyone to assist me, because all they're going to do is steal my designs."

Business is about taking risks. If you are willing to take no risks, as Ulrich has done, you probably don't really have a viable business.

When you have written copy you want to copyright, first, somewhere on the document, you want to either use the copyright symbol © or write out the word COPYRIGHT. List your name and the year.

Examples: ©Warren Feld, 2020 or COPYRIGHT, Warren Feld, 2020

At this point, your document is considered copyrighted. The issue for you is if someone violated that copyright and you went to court to contest this, this would not be sufficient evidence for the courts.

Library of Congress: You can get an official certificate of copyright by submitting an application to the US Library of Congress. Your copyright starts the date the application is submitted. There is a minimal fee. It usually takes about one year before you actually receive the certificate. Courts usually require this certificate as evidence.

US Post Office: You can put your material in a self-addressed, stamped envelope and mail this Registered/Certified to yourself. On the outside of the envelope, write what is inside. When you receive it, however, DO NOT OPEN IT. The post mark date will be evidence of copyright. This will usually hold up in court.

NOTE: It is difficult to copyright a specific jewelry design. While there is no legal rule about what constitutes a copyright violation of the design, it is generally accepted that merely a 10% difference would not be a violation. That 10% difference might be a different clasp, a slightly different pattern, or a different color scheme (though the courts allow you some flexibility with color issues).

NOTE: It is expensive to contest a copyright violation in court. This might run \$3,000

per incident.

The US Copyright Office will often reject jewelry designs for lacking authorship because they consist of common or usual shapes and forms. When submitting your application, you should present a well-reasoned argument, based on basic principles of jewelry design composition, form and function, as to why your jewelry and patterns should be copyrighted.

You can also copyright a “collection of jewelry”, but you can’t add new designs to the collection, without getting new copyrights. In the collection, the pieces would need to share design elements and sensibilities, and these would need to be obvious.

Copyrights last for the life of the designer plus 70 years. Use form VA (Visual Arts). It usually takes about a year for the paperwork to go through, but your piece is considered copyrighted from the date you submitted your application.

REGISTER ONLINE DOMAIN NAME

Check to see if anyone has registered your business name online as a registered domain name. Go to <http://www.networksolutions.com/> or www.GoDaddy.com and type in the name you want. If the name you want is taken, you can always vary the domain type, such as “.net” or “.biz” instead of “.com”. You can vary a name by adding punctuation like a hyphen or period or deleting a space between words. You can vary a name by making it plural. You can vary the name by playing with the spelling of certain words – even making up your own creative spelling for some words.

Next, register a business domain name, so that you protect your business name from other people who might use it on-line. In translating your business name to an internet domain name, keep in mind that your email address will include that domain name. You want people to be able to easily and quickly type in your email address into an email. You do not want people to confuse the spelling or any added punctuation.

Pointers:

The business name does not have to match your domain name

The .com extension would be best, even though there are many other choices

If possible, the domain name should be rich in key words.

To find out if your business name has been claimed online, do a simple web search to see if anyone is already using that name.

Next, check whether a domain name (or web address) is available. You can do this using the WHOIS database (<http://www.networksolutions.com/whois/index.jsp>) of domain names. If it is available, be sure to claim it right away. This guide explains how to register a domain name (<http://www.sba.gov/content/starting-online-business>).

SET UP YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES

Determine how you want emails to be directed to you.

Never use “info@yourname.com” or “customerservice@yourname.com” or “webmaster@yourname.com” or “store@yourname.com” or “mail@yourname.com” or “contact@yourname.com” or “ask@yourname.com” and generic things like that. These too often are challenged by spam prevention systems as spam. You don’t want your customers’ email systems automatically deleting your emails.

CLAIM YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA IDENTITY

SOCIAL MEDIA IDENTITY

Claim your social media name early in the naming process
-- even if you are not sure which social media sites you intend to use.

Be sure the name you want is available on each social media site.

Typically, a social media site will require a certain level of activity, or accumulated activity, before they give you a vanity name.

Facebook required 25 LIKES for your facebook page to be:
www.facebook.com/yourvanityname
Otherwise, it would be:
www.facebook.com/120593930

It’s a good idea to claim your social media name early in the naming process – even if you are not sure which sites you intend to use. A name for your Facebook page can be set up and changed, but you can only claim a vanity URL or custom URL once you’ve got 25 fans or “likes.” This custom URL name must be unique, or un-claimed.

Along with the URL for the business name, you’ll want to check and make sure there are places on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram (at the minimum) to claim early on.

You will want your business listed as a business in various search engines, like Google and Bing, and various directories, like Yelp.

Social Media

Think about trademarking things like:

- Your handle you use in each of your social media sites,
- Your url that each social media site gives you

While you are at it, set up a **business blog** with your business name in it.

*For example, I set up a business blog called:
"Learn To Bead At Land Of Odds"*

Being active on public social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter in addition to your own business blog, is almost an essential part of any business marketing toolkit. These tools can have enormous benefits, but they also have their dangers.

For example, some businesses jump on social networking sites only to discover that someone has already registered their company or product names on Facebook and Twitter and is misrepresenting their brand as a consequence. Likewise someone might be out there reproducing your copyrighted web copy, blogs, photographs and videos (all that good multi-media stuff that social networks love to propagate) – without your knowledge.

MONITOR

It is important to monitor whether someone else is using your intellectual property, including your business name, without your permission.

Periodically, search for your business name on search engines and in social media sites.

Violations: What To Do About It

To pursue any kind of legal action requires that you officially register a name, trademark or copyright.

Pursuing any action may be costly and time consuming.

Pursuing Action

First, decide if it is in your best interest to act.

The “abuser” may be giving your brand greater visibility and promotion.

Also, if you pursue any kind of action, think first whether there might be some kind of backlash that you can’t control.


If you need to pursue action...

1. Document what you think are violations.
2. Contact the violator directly.
3. Become familiar with the Terms of Service of the sites you find the materials on. Report the violations.
4. File a “Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) Infringement Notice” with search engines to block content.
5. Pursue legal action. Consult an attorney. Copyright and trademark offices maintain registrations. They do not enforce laws.

12.

GETTING STARTED:

Tag Line, Descriptions, Naming Jewelry, Story, Elevator Pitch

	<p>Guiding Questions:</p> <p>1. What do I need to take into account when developing tag lines, business descriptions, names for jewelry and jewelry lines, getting started stories and elevator pitches?</p>
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<p>Key Words: tag line descriptions stories</p>	<p>naming jewelry / jewelry line elevator pitch</p>	
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*You may also be interested in my video tutorial about **NAMING YOUR BUSINESS** (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/naming-your-business>).*

CREATE A TAG LINE

Use a catchy phrase to summarize your business and get people's attention...

Create A Tag Line

On written documents, brochures, stationery, envelopes and on online documents with titles, headings and the like, you have an opportunity to present more “words”, that is “meanings”, about your business. This gives you a second opportunity to convey things about your business that perhaps your specific business name falls short on, or needs more emphasis.

After you've come up with a business name, return to your lists of key words, and not-so-key words, and think of a tag line. **Think of it as a “subtitle”.**

Your Tag Line is a marketing opportunity, and should be worded in a catchy way. A great tag line captures the essence of the value you provide to your customer in one or two concise

sentences.

Great tag line for taxidermy business:
“the only game in town”

For my shop, Be Dazzled,
“*Don’t Be Frazzled, Be Dazzled!*”

For my shop, Land of Odds,
“*Your Partner In Design*”

First write a 9 words or less tag line. You need to be able to tell someone, in 1-sentence, preferably seven to nine words, who you are as a jewelry designer. What’s your style? What’s your approach? What’s your uniqueness? What’s your competitive advantage?

Write a 9 words or less tag line:

No qualifiers. No further supporting detail and elaboration. 1-Sentence.

It might be helpful to fill in this blank: “You want to buy/sell my jewelry because...(blank)...”

Or, “My jewelry is different and more relevant and better than everyone else’s because... (blank) “

A tagline doesn’t need to be overly clever or cute to be effective. A good tagline is primarily functional. It should explain the unique value that your business offers as clearly as possible.

Sure, many classic taglines are pretty smart. “Let your fingers do the walking” is a clever play on words. But it also clearly evokes the value that the Yellow Pages offers: easy access to reliable information.

Don't Worry About Being Too Cute

Make It Memorable

Inject a Little Personality

Settle on a final draft.

GUIDELINES TO CREATE A GREAT SLOGAN

1. **Identification.** A good slogan must stay consistent with the brand name either obviously stated or strongly implied. It's better to include the name of your business to it.
2. **Memorable.** Some of the best taglines or slogans are still being used today, even though they were launched several years ago.
3. **Beneficial.** Reveal your purpose and benefits of the product by conveying the message in consumer language. Turn bad into good. Suggest the risk of not using the product. Create a positive feeling for the consumers.
4. **Differentiation.** In an overcrowded market, companies in the same industry need to set themselves apart through their creative and original tagline or slogan.
5. **Keep it simple.** Use proven words and short keywords. One word is usually not enough.

Some examples of tag lines / slogans:

A diamond is forever.

Beyond precision.

Crystal gets closer to the body than ever before.

Diamonds by the Yard.

Every kiss begins with Kay.

Live the moment.

Perpetual spirit.

Quality is Remembered Long After the Price is Forgotten.

The crown jewellers for 150 years.

The Jeweller of Kings.

The right time for life.

The added value of the first impression.

Where Maryland gets engaged.

For those who want more.

*Honesty, my addiction.
Getting rid of headaches since 1888.
Ring on your finger, necklace on your neck, and men on their knees.
Diamonds. Divas. Desire.
Love's embrace.
Want honesty?
She only has two things on her list.
Unleashing the beauty of the stone.
Unstoppable.
Our reputation shines as brightly as our diamonds.
Beautiful, masterful design never goes out of fashion.
Walk down our aisles first.
Hearts on fire.
The ultimate in luxury and style.*

NEXT WRITTEN EXERCISE:
Write Up Short Descriptions of Your Business

At this point, from your Name-Your-Business brainstorming, you have done a lot of work generating terms, key words, phrases all very relevant to your business. Take a little more time to generate some descriptions of your business which you can cut and paste into forms, such as the application forms for getting listed in various online directories.

Then, come up with a 25 word description of your business.

Then, come up with a 100 word description of your business.

Last, come up with a 250 word description of your business.

All these will be useful, when creating written documents, as well as web-pages, and, just as important, will be useful for filling out forms to register your business name with various search engines and directories online.

HOW HAVE YOUR DESCRIPTIONS ANSWERED

THESE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- ***What is the ultimate benefit I want my customer to gain?***
- ***How will my product make my customer's life better?***
- ***Why is my business better than my competition's?***

NAME YOUR JEWELRY

Naming your jewelry will increase your sales...

I was filling out an entry form the other day for a jewelry contest sponsored by Beading Daily, a part of Interweave Press. I was submitting my Duchess Aiko Necklace under the Czech Glass category. On the entry form, they asked you to name your piece, and I'm glad I had.

This piece was very classical looking, very European sic Roman sic Greek sic British aristocracy and French bureaucracy. Stuffy, Uppity, and Refined. Hence the "Duchess".

I have frequently used a variation on a Japanese jewelry design technique and motif called a bundle of straw. The bundle of straw allows some interlacing, some interpenetration of forward, center and receding spaces, and some simple movements. I used a variation of this technique with a narrow tube bead that slipped through the larger holes of two positioned rondelle separator bars, and underneath two 14mm faceted and frosted carnelian discs. This had the effect of pushing the upper disc forward, increasing the dimensionality of the piece, as well. Hence, the "Aiko".

I kept thinking how important it was to name all your pieces, and how I had named them – *The E. Taylor* (a take-off on a multimillion dollar piece worn by Elizabeth Taylor), the *Barcelona Necklace* (a translation of contemporary Spanish jewelry fashions and techniques), the *Etruscan Vestment* (a contemporary interpretation of an Etruscan collar), and

Blue Waterfall (for a piece in silvers and a multitude of blues that felt very much like a moving waterfall).

The point here is, *Name Your Jewelry*. I find it useful in increasing attention and sales to name my jewelry. I name each piece of jewelry, and organize similar pieces of jewelry into collections and series, to which I assign names, as well.

This helps people relate to the various pieces I make. They get **connected** to my pieces because the “titles” give them meanings to relate to. Naming adds layers of romance, history and purpose. Naming allows me to segment all the jewelry I make into smaller subsets. This enables me to explain techniques and materials pertinent to particular pieces, so I don’t end up, in my sales pitches, making broad generalizations about what I sell. And I find people often like to own more than one piece within any series or collection. People are natural “collectors.” The familiarity these names generate seems to encourage people to want to own a second or third piece of mine.

Pointers:

Keep your names short.

Relate the names to your design work, but not necessarily too literally.

Have fun with your names.

WRITE A STORY ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

Sell yourself as an artist by telling your story...

[Also review chapter 9: *YOUR GETTING STARTED STORY.*]

Buyers of your jewelry and other craft creations will want to know a lot about your craft or jewelry background. They will want to know about the piece, how you thought about it, what kinds of techniques you used to make it, where the materials come from, what makes the piece special or original. The more they know about you, the more **connected** they feel towards you. And the more comfortable they will feel about doing business with you.

They might want to know who taught you and how you learned your craft. They might want to know if you make your items full-time or part-time. They might be interested to learn where else you sell or have sold your pieces.

Write up a 3-4 paragraph story about yourself. It could be a true story, or it could be a fantasy you want associated with your products. ***This story, or parts of it, may end up in your brochures. It may end up on your packaging, such as earring cards, bags or gift boxes. It may end up on your web-site. It will be something you should be prepared to tell orally, as well.***

Then re-write these paragraphs as 3 short, concise, distinct sentences. You won’t be able to tell everything about yourself. You won’t be able to go into your creative process. Things that will work well in this 3-sentence structure are titles of articles you’ve written, awards won, specialized training programs, classes you teach, your website address, specialties you concentrate on, state where you are from.


ELEVATOR PITCH

Last, translate your short story and 3-sentence summary into a 30-second Elevator Pitch. Picture yourself on an elevator with a potential client, and you have 30 seconds to “make the sale”, so to speak.

Write down some ideas that would form the beginning of your Elevator Pitch:

13.

GETTING STARTED: What Do I Need To Become Official?

	<p>Guiding Questions: <i>1. What registrations do I need to become official?</i></p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>license registration account resale number / tax number FEIN number DBA</i></p>	<p><i>sales taxes payroll business license SUTA / FUTA Schedule C estimated taxes business insurance credit card processing</i></p>	<p><i>property tax income tax certification business property inventory consumable supplies depreciation</i></p>
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What Do I Need To Become Official?

The purpose of this section is to discuss how to get the necessary federal, state and local licenses and registrations.

NOTE: The information in this section is a guide. It is not a substitute for sitting down with an accountant, lawyer or business consultant.

Registrations and Licenses

You register and get licenses for your business for several reasons. First, you will be setting up accounts with various agencies. This allows you to collect money for them, and then transmit that money to them on a regular basis. This might be sales taxes, payroll taxes, property taxes, income taxes, business census information, and on and on.

The account numbers associated with each registration or license, in turn, allow you to present yourself as a business. They make you look more official and give you more legitimacy. They open doors for you to get deep wholesale and manufacturer discounts.

But, after you register or receive a license, each is associated with some application fees,

some have annual renewal fees, some have income or property tax levies, most require periodic paperwork and more involved accounting and bookkeeping.

So, to get the benefits of more legitimacy as well as lower business costs to you, you will incur some additional monetary and time costs. You will have to decide at what point in time becoming an official business is right for you.

Let's look at some of these things I have had to get doing business in Tennessee. Most of the federal, state and local application forms can be found totally or partially online.

STATE

1. **Registration to Collect Sales Taxes** (called a “tax number”, “wholesale number”, or “resale number”)

This registration sets up an account so that you can collect sales taxes on each of your in-state taxable sales, and then transmit these sales taxes to the state. You only have to register once. There is a small registration fee, but this is a one-time fee only.

The application will ask if you will be doing more than \$4500. (or some similar number) of sales within the current year. If not, you do not need to register. However, even if you don't think you will, this does not prohibit you from saying Yes. Saying Yes means you will start to incur costs (fees, taxes, paperwork), and have to be more organized as a business. But it also means you will be able to purchase inventory at wholesale prices, as well as not having to pay any local or state sales taxes.

After a few years, the state will review your activity. If less than \$4500/year, they will de-activate your number. You can simply and easily ask them to re-activate it.

In Tennessee, this is handled by the State Department of Revenue.

2. **Business registration number** (you might end up with separate business registration numbers for the city, county and state you do business in, or there might be a single number used by all three).

This number allows you to pay business income taxes and business property taxes (to your city, county and state), usually once a year. In Tennessee, this is collected each April 15th. Tennessee also collects a registration renewal fee each year.

This is handled by the County Clerk, the City Clerk and the State Department of Revenue.

3. **State Employment Account Number.** (It might be called a State Unemployment Account Number in other locales).

If you have employees, and thus collect payroll taxes, you need this number to submit these taxes to the state. Typically, you pay these quarterly. You only have to register once for this.

This is handled in Tennessee by the State Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

4. **State Income Taxes.** Some states will ask for the same information you put on your Federal income tax forms. Other states will ask for additional information or information in a different format. Be sure your data collection procedures anticipate all this.

This is handled by the State Department of Revenue.

LOCAL CITY AND COUNTY

1. **Business License from the county you live in (County Clerk)**

You use this number to submit business county income and property taxes. You renew this annually.

2. **Business License from the city you live in (City Clerk)**

You use this number to submit business city income and property taxes. You renew this annually.

NOTE: If you register for a State Re-Sale Number, the State will eventually inform your local county and city. Your county and city will check if you have registered your business with them. If not, they will find you. This works in reverse, as well. If you register with the city and county, they will inform the State, and the State will eventually find you.

3. **Business Property Taxes** (sometimes called Use Taxes; in Tennessee, called Schedule B)

Each year you send the state and/or county and/or city a list of your business property assets. About 6-8 months later, you get an invoice due notice from the state/county/city indicating how much business property taxes you owe.

Your business property is: displays, tools, cash register, telephone, computer, fax, credit card machine, copier, furniture and the like; things that will be around longer than 1 year. Some states might consider major (meaning costly) software, such as accounting software, business property. Other states do not.

You do not have to list everything, but you have to list somethings. Many people

who first get started think that if everything – tables, calculators, computers, phone, etc. – are old and used, or given to them by someone else, that their value is \$0.00. It is not. Here you would estimate the value or depreciated value at the time you consider the first day of your business. You can check auction sites online, like Ebay, to gauge current values.

If you are leasing any equipment, you would list this separately.

Your business property is NOT: inventory, consumable supplies, the parts you use to make your jewelry. It is not something assumed to be used up within a year.

In Tennessee, the state uses a different depreciation schedule than the Federal Government. Your property, from the State's standpoint, never gets fully depreciated as on your Federal taxes.

You cannot expense your property for state purposes, although you can for Federal purposes. This means you have to keep separate Assets Lists for the state and for the Federal government.

This is handled by the city and county Tax Assessors, and the State Department of Revenue.

4. State Unemployment Insurance Form – if you have employees, you will be submitting state payroll taxes (SUTA) collected on their behalf to the state, usually quarterly.

This is handled in Tennessee by the State Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Federal Income Tax Forms (available from the US Internal Revenue Service online)

Each year, you summarize your revenues and costs on an income tax form (*really a series of forms, beginning with a **Form 1040***). Depending on what form of business (**discussed in chapter 14: FORMS OF BUSINESS**) you are organized as, you will have different forms to fill out.

Learn how to do most of this by yourself without having to pay an accountant or tax attorney. This will save you a **lot** of money. Use these professionals for the more difficult, confusing parts of the tax code requirements. Besides the Form 1040 Income Tax Return, you will be completing one or more of the forms below.

1. **1040-ES** You will need to submit estimated income taxes to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at least quarterly. You do this online, and easily done by yourself. When

you do your annual taxes, you will reconcile these payments on your **form 1040**.

2. **Schedule C** - You use this form if you are a sole proprietorship to report your revenues and expenses, as well as the total value of your inventory on the last day of the year. This is a form you should be able to fill out yourself.

The only tricky part is that in the expenses section, when it asks for the *Costs of Inventory*, it is asking **only for the costs of the inventory that you have sold during the year**. This is NOT all your inventory costs. The inventory bought but not sold during the year is treated as if it were cash. *[In your inventory management procedures, you need to be able to accurately track the costs of your inventory that has sold within the current year, so you can deduct these costs from your revenue, thus reduce your tax burden if you are showing a profit.]*

3. **Schedule SE** - self employment taxes. You have to pay both the employer and the employee payroll taxes (so double-paying on yourself as the sole proprietor), if you show a profit on your Schedule C. This can end up being a big number. This is a form you can complete by yourself.
4. **Schedule K** - If your form of business is a partnership, you will be completing a Schedule K to document your revenues, expenses and profit distributions. This can be a very confusing form, so it is a good idea to have an accountant complete this. On this form, it will indicate where various calculated subtotals or totals should go on the 1040 form, which is something you can do yourself.
5. **Form 1120** - If your form of business is a corporation (or S-corporation), you will be completing a Form 1120 (or a Form 1120-S if your business is an S-corporation) to document your revenues, expenses, profit distributions and tax obligations. It is a good idea to have an accountant complete this.
6. **Depreciation Form** – This can be a confusing form. The depreciation rules can change frequently. It is a good idea to have an accountant complete this form, at least the first time you have to fill it out. Then, perhaps, teach you how to fill this out in the future.
7. **941 Form** – If you have employees, you will be submitting payroll taxes collected on their behalf to the Federal Government, usually monthly or quarterly, and reconciling all your payroll tax deposits quarterly.
8. **940 Form** – If you have employees, you will be submitting federal unemployment taxes (FUTA), at least annually, but quarterly if these exceed \$100.00 in a quarter.

NOTE: If you will be submitting payroll taxes (Forms 941 and Forms 940) to the Federal Government, you will be setting up an account (FEIN account, see next item) with the IRS to submit these electronically.

9. **Federal EIN (or, FEIN) Number.** You can apply for this online through the Internal Revenue Service. This Employer Identification number is a *tax identification number* (sometimes referred to as your *TIN number*) similar to a Social Security Number (SSN) (also a TIN), but attached to a business rather than an individual. You need this number if you have employees and are collecting payroll taxes on their behalf and have to submit these taxes to the federal government.

However, if you do not have employees, this FEIN number is still useful to have. On various forms and applications you will be filling out for your business, you will be asked to put down either your FEIN number or your Social Security Number (SSN) as your Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). The FEIN makes you look more of an official business. There are no fees or costs involved by having this number. However, the first year after you applied, you will have to complete a Form 940. On this form, you can indicate that you have no employees and will not need to complete this form again.

They will not deactivate your FEIN number, however, even after indicating you have no employees.

OTHER

1. At some point, you may want to purchase business insurance [See *chapter 26*]. If you are working out of your home, this may be problematic. The zoning laws in most places forbid businesses in areas zoned residential. Most business insurance packages will not cover a business if they are violating any law, in this case, zoning. Your homeowners insurance may or may not cover things related to your business.
2. If you have 5 or more employees (that's the number of people, not the number of full time equivalents), you will need to purchase Workers Compensation Insurance. You do this through a private insurance company.
3. You will need a set up where you can process credit cards.
4. You will need a bank account. You can either set up a business account or use your personal account.
5. You will need checks preprinted with your business name on them. If you are using a personal account, get business-size checks printed up. If your business type is a sole proprietorship, whether the account is personal or business, your business name is your personal name.

So you would have them print something like this, where DBA stands for Doing Business As:

Warren Feld
DBA Warren Feld Jewelry

6. You will need an organized way (either in-house, or with an accountant or bookkeeper) to track your costs and revenues, and liabilities and assets. Liabilities are money you owe to someone else, like a credit card company or bank loan or lease/contract. Assets are things you own that are supposed to have a useful life greater than one year. These include equipment, computers, furniture.,
7. You will need an organized way to *store all your receipts* during the year, and then all your receipts from prior years. You need to store all your receipts and ledgers for 10 years.

Approaching Government Offices Shouldn't Be Off-Putting



Whether you are just getting started in your design business, or have been business awhile, you will need to interact with various government agencies. There are licenses and registrations. Taxes and fees. Permissions and applications. Codes and requirements.

Approaching government offices, for many people, can be somewhat off-putting and scary. There's always that underlying psychological fear of authorities and big brother. You don't want anyone to laugh at you and your ideas, or put you down, or belittle you and think you and your business are too insignificant.

But personal fears are *NOT* the reality!

Starting a business, even though it might be very small initially, is the American way. All these local and state and federal bureaucrats owe their jobs to people like you. In a big way. Your efforts to make money selling jewelry or other design products or craft items justifies their positions. So, right off the bat, they are biased towards liking you and wanting to help you and your business.

If they feel that you are serious about your business and determined to succeed, even if you are completely failing again, if they believe your goals are to succeed in business, they will go out of their way to help you.

So, when I filled out the property assessment form for the Tax Assessors Office, I got a call to come into the office. When I got there, one of the tax assessors sat down with me, and we re-filled out the form together. He explained what they were looking for, and what I needed to provide. no penalties. No penalizing. Just sincere help and consideration.

And when I made a mistake on a payroll tax submission, I received a letter from the IRS to call them. I called them, and, as with the Tax Assessor, they went over the form with me, helped me correct my mistake, and waived the late penalty.

And when the state forced a change in the business tax form — a single form, rather than three separate forms, used to calculate taxes due to the local, county and state revenue offices, I completely missed the mark. I didn't get anything right. Our city clerk called, and asked me to come in. We filled out the form together. She said not

one person in Berry Hill had completed the new form correctly, but I was one of the few to at least put in some numbers. The following year, I returned to the clerk's office, so that we could fill out the form together from the start. And then the third year, I was able to do it myself.

This situation happened to a friend of mine. She was unable to pay the monthly sales taxes to the state. Within 3 days from when they were due, she received a letter from the state. The letter informed her that she was going to get punished for not submitting the sales taxes, why it was so unconscionable on her part, and that a court date had been set up already. Further, she would be contacted by a State Revenue Agent.

The letter made her nervous.

Bureaucratic letters do make people nervous. One thing I've noticed over the years is that the letters you get from these government agencies read very punitively. They sound scary. But their bureaucratic writing and tone are very different than when you deal with these people in person.

The State Revenue Agent came by and spent 3 hours with her. He went over the basic problems. He worked with her on a strategy for getting caught up in paying. He evaluated her ongoing business to identify problems and opportunities for making positive changes. No court date had actually been set. He coached her on getting back on the right track. He made himself available by phone to answer her questions over the next several weeks. He knew his stuff and did right by her.

Everyone in these local, state and federal agencies, you'll find, is very helpful. If they believe you want to succeed, they will go out of their way to help you succeed.

If they think you're not serious and merely taking advantage of regularly laws, then watch out.

Certifications

At some point, you may want to get certified in certain jewelry-related specialties. For example, you might want to get certified as a gemologist. While you do not need to be certified to become a jeweler, certification gives you broader legitimacy, may increase the pay or reimbursement you will get, and may open more job opportunities.

[Jewelers of America. Certification for jewelry professionals \(https://www.jewelers.org/ja/careers-education/certification\)](https://www.jewelers.org/ja/careers-education/certification)

[GIA. Various certifications, including gemology, diamond grading, bench jeweler, CAD/CAM \(https://www.gia.edu\)](https://www.gia.edu)

[American Gem Society. Various certifications](#)

(<https://www.americangemsociety.org>)

DCA. Various certifications (<https://www.dcalearning.org>)

14. GETTING STARTED: What Form of Business?



Guiding Questions:

1. What form of business will work best for me?

<p>Keywords: <i>hobbyist</i> <i>solo proprietor</i></p>	<p><i>partnership</i> <i>limited liability</i> <i>corporation</i> <i>incorporation</i> <i>liability</i> <i>taxation</i></p>	<p><i>Doing Business As (DBA)</i> <i>tax identification number</i> <i>(TIN)</i> <i>Federal Employer</i> <i>Identification number</i> <i>(FEIN)</i> <i>Social Security Number</i></p>
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What Form of Business?

Your business must be recognized as a type of organization if it is to qualify for various government licenses and registrations.

If you want to remain unrecognized, you would list yourself as a hobbyist.

If you want to be recognized as a business, you would choose one of the following business organizational types:

Sole proprietor
Partnership
Limited Liability Corporation
Incorporation

As A Hobbyist

One way you can set up your business is as an unofficial *hobbyist*. Here you do not need to register your business or get any local, county, state, and federal licenses and accounts.

Typically, your state or province that you do business in will have some kind of benchmark. In Tennessee (circa 2020), if you were going to make less than \$4500. per year in sales, you would not have to register your business. You could make sales and not worry about collecting sales tax. You would not pay a business income tax to the city, county and state. You would not pay business property taxes. You would still, however, have to report your income to the government entities which collect personal income taxes. Virtually no paperwork. No worries.

As An Official Business Entity

Another way you can set up your business is as an official *business entity*. As you make your sales, you would also be accumulating money, such as sales taxes, which you would have to transmit on a regular basis to one government agency or another. You will begin to incur some monetary costs (business income and property taxes, and some bookkeeping / accounting costs, for example). You will begin to incur some time costs (securing and maintaining licenses and registrations; monthly, quarterly and annual reports to fill out; more time spent bookkeeping and accounting). However, a ***BIG ADVANTAGE!!!*** Is that you will be positioned to buy your inventory (and displays and furnishings) at steeper discounts, thus, make more money.

If you plan on becoming more than a hobbyist, you will need to organize and register your business as to its tax structure. Again, your options are:

- 1. sole proprietorship**
- 2. partnership**
- 3. limited liability corporation**
- 4. incorporation**

If you are a *sole proprietorship*, your business name is your own name, and the name you use for your business is your DBA (*Doing Business As*) name. On various tax forms and registrations, you would list your own name where it asks for the business name, and there usually is a DBA line under this to type in your actual business name. These forms will often also ask you for your TIN (Tax Identification Number), and here you could put either your Social Security Number or your Federal EIN Number (*my preference*). Whichever TIN number you use, you will continue to use on all forms you fill out.

If you are a *corporation* or *partnership*, your business name is your actual business name, and you would use your Federal EIN Number as your TIN.

Sole Proprietorship: Here you are the owner of the business and solely in charge. *Advantages:* You will have less accounting and associated costs to contend with. Completing

your state and federal tax forms will be easier. The business profits are your income, and are taxed as an individual. *Disadvantage:* This form of business does not protect you from liability damages. However, you can use your business insurance policy to provide a lot of protection here.

Partnerships: Here 2 or more people get together and form a business. Partnerships, like marriages, are fraught with the potential for disharmony. Who makes what decisions? How are disagreements adjudicated? What happens to the relationship over time, particularly if the interests of any one partner begin to change?

Things partners should think about:

1. You have a deep, honest series of discussions about each of your strengths and weaknesses, and what you can bring to the business
2. You write up a partnership agreement which details:
 - who will do what when
 - how you will distribute profits
 - how you will cover losses
 - how decisions for the business are to be made, especially when there are disagreements
 - rules for what happens when a partner wants to leave the business, or if all the partners want to dissolve the business
 - rules for how to handle growth, expansion, taking on new partners, managing employees
3. You notarize the agreement, and everyone gets a copy

Partnership Advantages: Two heads are better than one, usually. Share a lot of the administrative burdens. More accounting requirements and costs, but not as much as incorporation. Your business profits are your income as this profit is allocated among the partners, and taxed as an individual.

Partnership Disadvantages: This form of business does not protect you from liability damages. However, you can use your business insurance policy to provide a lot of protection here. It is difficult to share the responsibilities as partners.

From my experience, while one partner might be the *creative* one, and the other partner might be the *business* one, partnerships work best when both partners learn and take on both creative and administrative tasks.

Incorporation: Incorporating a business is essentially creating a separate entity (as if it was a person), thereby making the business separate from the owner (*in a sense, the business has a life of its own*). As a separate entity, the corporation exists independent from the shareholders/owners and its employees.

Incorporating Advantages: The advantages of **incorporating** a small **business** include: Personal asset protection. Both corporations and LLCs (*limited liability corporations*) allow owners to separate and protect their personal assets. In a properly structured and managed corporation or LLC, owners **should** have limited liability for **business** debts and obligations.

Incorporating Disadvantages: The administration costs are more expensive with a corporation than with a partnership or a sole proprietorship. Administration costs include **incorporation** costs, annual financial statements and annual corporate income tax return. If you are not an accountant, paying someone to do these can be very costly. Losses in an **incorporated** business can't be personally claimed. The corporation is taxed first, and if it distributes profits to its owners, they are taxed again on the same money for their personal income taxes – a double taxation.

Limited Liability Corporation: Small businesses can avoid this double-taxation by taking advantage of the options given to a corporation by the states. Some options include incorporating as an S-corporation or filing as a Limited Liability Company (LLC). These options allow the taxable income to flow directly to the shareholders/members without being taxed twice, while at the same time, maintaining the benefits of incorporation. You still end up with a lot of accounting requirements and expenses. You are protected from liability damages incurred by the business, but you can also use your business insurance to cover a lot of this liability protection without all the accounting issues.

15. GETTING STARTED: Retail, Wholesale, Consignment



Guiding Questions:

1. What are the differences among retail, wholesale, and consignment?
2. What is a consignment arrangement or agreement?

<p>Key Words: retail consignment wholesale</p>	<p>manufacturer jobber distributor rep</p>	<p>arrangement agreement contract exclusivity</p>
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Retail vs. Wholesale vs. Consignment

Jewelry is sold in different settings. Each setting has its own rules and expectations for how things are priced, and how much money you can make, and how easily you can get access to this money.

Retail:

Here, you have an original *manufacturer* (called the *jobber*), usually a go-between called a *distributor or rep* (called the *wholesaler*), and a *seller*, in this case, a *retailer*.

Wholesalers buy from jobbers, usually at a mark-up of 25-40% (that is, the wholesale price is 25-40% above the jobber price).

Retailers buy from wholesalers, usually at a mark-up of 100% (that is, the retailer usually marks-up prices at 100 or more % (that is, the retail price is typically at least twice what the wholesale price was – this is called “keystone”). In jewelry, the retail mark-up is often 3x the

wholesale cost (this is called “triple keystone”).

The typical jewelry designer plays all three roles – makes the jewelry, distributes it, and sells it. This makes pricing a bit confusing because each role requires a different cost/revenue calculus. Overall, your retail prices will be in the ballpark of 2.5 – 3 times your costs.

Wholesale:

When you sell wholesale, you usually drop your price (thus, gross profit), considerably, in exchange for selling more pieces (volume). When you sell wholesale, there is a great savings to you in selling more pieces, and knowing ahead of time that you will be selling more pieces and having a greater cash flow. So, it’s easier to lower your price in exchange for volume. A reasonable wholesale price for a jewelry designer is a 40% markup over costs.

As a guide, you are ready to sell “wholesale” when you are selling 10 or more similar pieces at a time to a particular business. They do not have to be the same. But they should be similar in the parts used and the amount of time it takes to make each piece.

This adds another confusing element to pricing. My rules of thumb here:

1. If you are selling *only one piece at a time* (or, my rule is *less than 10 similar pieces*) to someone else who intends to again resell this piece (or pieces), then you will set a full retail price, (that is, 2-3 times your costs). The re-seller will be expected to pay this full retail, undiscounted price. In some situations, that re-seller will be able to double or triple that full retail price when setting a new price for that seller’s customers. If the re-seller cannot at least double that price, then you the jewelry designer need to walk away. This won’t be a good deal for you (or the re-seller). If you do this too many times, you’ll run out of money and be out of business. The risk is too great.
2. If you are selling *10 or more similar pieces at a time*, then you can lower your price to the re-seller, typically about 40% above your costs. This increases the chances the re-seller can at least double this cost to their own customers. The risk is manageable.

[Also see the chapters on 60. SELLING IN LOCAL SHOPS, BOUTIQUES, AND DEPARTMENT STORES and 61. CONSIGNMENT and 71. WORKING WITH SALES REPS AND AGENCIES, 72. TRADE SHOWS and 74. OTHER SELLING VENUES.]

Consignment:

Here you bring items to a shop or gallery, and work out a deal with the shop’s owner. In exchange for the shop taking a risk and taking up shelf space (and in a few cases, costing advertising dollars) with your pieces(s), you agree to receive a certain percentage when the piece sells. You don’t get any money up front, and it may be months before you get any

money.

A typical “deal” is to get 40% and the store keeps 60%. In consignment, the store always is taking the greater risk. A 60/40 split in favor of the store reflects this risk. Any split greater than 40/60 or 60/40, such as 70/30 or 30/70, is a yellow flag. This yellow flag suggests the business owner does not understand consignment and its risk for their store. Because of this, it suggests to the artist that s/he may never get paid, or that the business won't put any effort towards selling/marketing your pieces, or even keeping them clean and displayed well.

Consignment may be the only option for getting started. If your pieces do well on consignment at a particular location, try to re-negotiate your arrangement to a wholesale one.

Just because you confront a potentially bad consignment situation doesn't necessarily mean that you should walk away, however. There are a few prominent boutiques in Nashville that offer a 70/30 split between the store and the artist. They rarely pay their artists when the pieces sell. It takes a lot of screaming, “*Bloody Murder!*” before you get paid. But these are very prominent shops. Letting other stores and galleries know that you have pieces in these shops will open many doors for you. You might view the delayed payments and the effort to get your money as “marketing expenses.”

Other reasons you might settle for a bad situation:

- You're just getting started, and saying your pieces are in a shop anywhere has some marketing cache that goes with this
- You can direct customers to this shop. At least you have a place to send people to view and purchase your work. You might not have a central base from which to work. Your main business might be doing craft shows, and here you can direct people to your jewelry between shows.
- This might be the only game in town.

When you negotiate consignment terms with a shop, try to:

1. Get a feel for the amount of consignment they do (and how long they have been doing this), the range of artists, the range of types of merchandise on consignment, and the types of customers they have
2. Get a 60/40, 50/50 or 40/60 split
3. Work with store or gallery owner on final retail pricing of your pieces. In fact, be prepared to come into the store with a preconceived idea of the prices each of your pieces should sell for.
4. Get a written contract, if possible. The contract will lay out your agreed upon terms. These would include,
 - Listing of consigned pieces

- Shop agrees to keep the pieces, display them, train employees about selling points, that pieces will be returned in good order and condition.
 - When pieces may be removed / returned by whom, and what triggers this.
 - Exclusivity arrangement.
 - Keeping records of sales, and to make payment within 30 days of any sale (or other arrangement). The revenue split between store and designer.
 - Any discounting agreement.
 - Statement that designer owns the pieces until sold.
 - If agreement is to be modified at any time, how this shall occur.
 - This agreement is binding under the laws of (your state). Disputes to be adjudicated in (your state and county).
 - Who is responsible for covering the cost of damaged, missing or stolen jewelry.
 - Any agreed-upon display and maintenance understandings.
5. Get in writing if possible, but an oral agreement would suffice, to convert the situation to “wholesale terms”, if your pieces sell well. (Be sure to define what “selling well” might mean. Example: sell 10 pieces within next 6 months.)
 6. Determine a specific date when to take your pieces out, or trade them out for new pieces. Usually it’s good to trade them out every 3–6 months. A shop may require that pieces be held for a certain period of time, say 6 months, so that it might recoup its marketing expenses. Otherwise, the shop will have an *at-will* arrangement where either you or the shop can remove pieces at any time.
 7. Determine exactly how and when you will get paid, after any one piece sells. A 30-day waiting period is reasonable.
 8. The store may ask about discounting. To what extent can they reduce the price in order to make a sale, without first contacting you? Buyers sometimes expect to negotiate on price. You can tell the store that you do not want to discount. But it is probably a better idea to say that they can discount the price up to, say 15%, and if the buyer wants a greater discount, the store should contact you first.
 9. The shop will probably require some kind of exclusivity clause. This limits where else you can sell your work or at least similar lines of jewelry. The limits might be neighborhood or zip code or county or certain mile radius or even states. They might refer to selling the same pieces online as in their

store. You want any grant of exclusivity to be reasonable under the circumstances.

10. When it comes to loss, theft or damage, the store should be the responsible party. It is unusual for a store to require the designer to insure their consigned pieces.
11. Shipping your pieces to the buyer, or covering shipment back to the store for repairs or adjustments. The store should be responsible for shipping costs. But do not be surprised if some stores want you the designer to cover these costs. Any costs of shipping your pieces to the shop should be at your expense. The costs of the store shipping your pieces back to you may or may not be at your expense.

16. GETTING STARTED: Your Business Model



Guiding Questions:
 1. What is a business model?
 2. How can I reduce all the variables needed managing into a business model?

Keywords: <i>business model</i>	<i>input-thruput- output outcomes</i>	<i>business plan</i>
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Thinking Things Through

When you start your jewelry making business, you won't have the luxury like many weather forecasters do of missing the mark, but without suffering consequences.

You need to sell jewelry that people want to buy. If you anticipate things incorrectly, your business will go belly up.

But there are so many variables to manage. It can seem overwhelming. So, in your jewelry-making business, you will need to manage and coordinate information about materials, costs and prices, fashions, styles, measurements, inventory, revenues and expenses. You will need to be able to choose parts, assemble them into appealing pieces, get these pieces out into the public where people buy jewelry. You will need to understand shopping behaviors and entice people to actually purchase them at the price which makes it profitable for you to continue making things. You need to anticipate the competition. You will need to keep very close watch on revenues and costs, and assets and liabilities.

How you conceptualize all this is called your "*Business Model*". Your business model describes what you intend to make, how you intend to make it, how you intend to price it, where you intend to sell it, all the tangible things you need to make this happen, all the *intangible* things you need to make this happen, and what you hope to achieve when you are done – money, wealth, status, satisfaction, self-esteem.

You want your business plan to be realistic. Not pie-in-the-sky. Not weighed done with a lot of useless information. Targeted on how you plan to secure the parts, make the jewelry, introduce the jewelry into the marketplace, and sell, sell, sell to make a profit.

Input-Throughput-Output Business Model

One easy way to get a handle on all this information, and how to strategically conceptualize and organize it, is the *Input-Throughput-Output model*. This is one easy way of thinking through your “**business model**”, and helps you describe in simple words your conception of how you intend to do business.

Here you reduce each type of activity you plan on doing into three categories – inputs, throughputs and outputs.

Think about everything you need to have on hand in your business to make it work – Inputs.

Think about everything you need to do in your business to make it work – Throughputs.

Think about everything you want to end up with in your business to make it work – Outputs.

The model describes:

CONTEXT AND LOCATION: where you intend to make and/or sell your products

INPUTS: All the tangible things which must come together, or you must have on hand, in order to make and/or sell your products Ex: beads, jewelry findings, people, furniture like table and chairs, storage shelves and containers, cash, computer, phone, credit card machine, tools, displays, equipment.

THROUGHPUTS: All the intangible and/or strategic, process-type things, which you have to have in place, in order to make and/or sell your products. Ex: marketing, selling, securing inventory, time/timing, administrating, making jewelry, traveling, researching, evaluating, managing, analyzing, computing, phoning, communicating, designing, assembling, marketing, promoting, writing, designing, selling. They also include having energy, motivation, inspiration, and aspiration.

OUTPUTS: What kinds of things you want to result or happen or achieve. Ex: designing, making or selling a certain number of units of jewelry, maintaining a certain level of inventory, having a certain amount of money in the bank, having repeat business of say 30% or more. You may want to add one new site that sells your jewelry each month. You might want to have a certain amount of free time available for yourself.

OUTCOMES: What kind of gross and net profit you want to make. What kinds of ultimate self-satisfaction you want to achieve. Do you want to achieve a certain status level or reputation?

I find it useful to reduce all the complexity around me to inputs, throughputs and outputs. I think about these every day. It helps me visualize what seems to be working, and what seems not to be working. It helps me to quickly evaluate alternative strategies and their implications. This is a skill I suggest you learn and practice and master.

I use a small series of business models, one for each major activity I'm involved in. So I have an input-throughput-output model for retail brick and mortar sales, for online sales, for classes, for jewelry making and design, and for jewelry repairs services. Again, I think about these every single day.

Below are a couple of examples of re-defining major activities as input-throughput-output. In reality, these would be much more detailed and fleshed-out.

BUSINESS MODEL EXAMPLE 1:

Goal #1: To sell 100 pieces of jewelry per year

Objective #1: To place 30% of my jewelry in 3 stores on consignment

Activity #1: To Make 10 Necklaces For Re-Sale Immediately

<i>Context/Location:</i> Boutique 10 miles from my house that takes jewelry on consignment		
<i>Inputs</i>	<i>Throughputs</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Inventory of parts and stringing materials	researching suppliers, contacting them, arranging terms, ordering from them	100 pieces of jewelry/year sold; price estimates
Computer, phone, table, chair, lighting, tools, stationary supplies	researching consignment shop possibilities, contacting them, visiting them, contracting with them	10 necklaces made immediately
Car		30% of my pieces in 3 stores on consignment, with pieces in 1 store immediately
General ledger	administrating, accounting, break-even and other cost analyses; evaluation/monitoring of progress and success	Self-satisfaction
Email address		Profit
Customer database	designing	Up-to-date general ledger data
Packaging for individual pieces	marketing, contacting customers to let them know where to find my pieces	
Display system to take when visiting stores		
Sample jewelry pieces		
At least 100 finished jewelry pieces		
<i>Seat-of-the-Pants Costs Estimates for Time, Personnel, and Dollars:</i>		
\$3000.00		
<i>Feasibility Evaluation:</i> Step back. Given your resources (time, money, people, supplies), and all the other activities you want and need to get done, are you able to reasonably complete Activity #1? <i>Explain here the possibilities, limits and contingencies:</i>		
Feasible. If I can't complete my goals within a year, I will not incur a significant loss. Should be able to spread activity into a second year, perhaps showing a profit, with little extra expenses incurred		

BUSINESS MODEL EXAMPLE 2:

Goal #1: To sell 100 pieces of jewelry per year

Objective #1: To place all pieces in my store

Activity #1: To Make 10 Necklaces For Re-Sale Immediately

<i>Context/Location:</i> My own store which is 1/2 mile from my house.		
<i>Inputs</i>	<i>Throughputs</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
Physical space	researching suppliers, contacting them, arranging terms, ordering from them	100 pieces of jewelry/year sold in my store; priced; packaged
Inventory of parts and stringing materials	researching consignment shop possibilities, contacting them, visiting them, contracting with them	10 necklaces made immediately
Computer, phone, table, chair, lighting, tools, stationary supplies	administrating, accounting, banking and credit card services; , break-even and other cost analyses; evaluation/monitoring of progress and success	30% of my pieces in 3 stores on consignment, with pieces in 1 store immediately
Car		Self-satisfaction
General ledger	designing	Profit
Email address, website	marketing, contacting customers	Up-to-date general ledger data
Customer database	pricing	
Packaging for individual pieces	cleaning	
Display system to take when visiting stores Store Displays.	renting	
Sample jewelry pieces		
At least 100 finished jewelry pieces		
Price tags, cash register, credit card machine, credit card account		
Cleaning supplies		
<i>Seat-of-the-Pants Costs Estimates for Time, Personnel, and Dollars:</i>		
\$19,000.00		
<i>Feasibility Evaluation:</i> Step back. Given your resources (time, money, people, supplies), and all the other activities you want and need to get done, are you able to reasonably complete Activity #1? <i>Explain here the possibilities, limits and contingencies:</i>		
Will need to get a loan from my family. Will have considerable loss, if I do not make my goal. The rent will continue to have to be paid, so extending my goal to the 2 nd year will be of considerable risk.		

To put your Business Model into effect, you first identify your **CONTENT** and **CONTEXT**.

What do you want to sell? What are your products? Where to you intend to sell them? Are there timing or seasonal considerations?

Say you are beginning your jewelry-making business, and have decided to put some of your jewelry on consignment, and sell other jewelry at home shows.

Consignment might make you more reliant on a car. It ties up money and inventory. It usually requires a lot of effort to collect your money from the stores to which you've consigned your jewelry. While you initially have to sell yourself to the store, it is the store that is expending the effort to maintain your jewelry, display it, market it, train their staff about it, and sell it.

Home shows might make you less reliant on a car. Successful home shows require clever marketing – particularly in gathering and maintaining mail and email lists and finding a good location to hold the home show. You will usually need to make a lot of inventory for the show. You will be the marketer and seller. You'll make more money, and have more control over how your jewelry is showcased to the public. You may have more need for equipment, like a computer, telephone, copy machine. You will need display supplies, invoice/statement forms. You probably will want to buy refreshments.

Next, translate your activities into **INPUTS**, **THRUPUTS** and **OUTPUTS**.

CONSIGNMENT

Inputs: jewelry supplies, finished jewelry, car, list of consignment shops, consignment agreement

Thruputs: researching consignment opportunities, making jewelry, keeping abreast of when your pieces sell and collecting your money

Outputs: number of pieces sold; number of stores where you consign your jewelry

HOME SHOWS

Inputs: jewelry supplies, finished jewelry, home setting, email/mail lists, invoice forms, refreshments

Thruputs: finding a good location, marketing your home show, making jewelry, setting up your home shows, tracking sales

Outputs: number of pieces sold; percent of contacts who show up; number of home shows you conduct

As we begin to elaborate on both activities – consignment and home shows – it becomes clear that each requires a different set of marketing and administrative skills, even though for both, you will be creating jewelry.

And things **change**. You need to anticipate this. It turns out that your **Business Model is never static**. It is not a one-time exercise. It is something that you have to think about *every single day* of your business life. The world changes, fashions change, the business cycle changes, the competition changes.

During the next year or two, you might find that two or three of the consignment shops in your area have gone out of business. You might find that people are getting bored or otherwise resistant to return to your home shows or to the specific place where you've located your home shows. You may have established an initial reputation using Czech lampwork beads, and now these once very popular beads are no longer in fashion. You may have assumed that the typical customer profile was a working woman in her late 30's, and that profile has changed to college age girls, some who work and some who don't.

By reducing all your activities to inputs/thruputs/outputs, it makes it a lot easier to visualize and think about all the things you have to do, and all the adjustments and adaptations you have to make to your model, day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month and year-by-year, to stay in business.

You can more easily visualize what goes with what. And more easily visually what sets of things are interdependent, and which are not.

And you never have to worry about getting caught in the rain.

Translating Your Business Model Into A Business Plan

As you reduce your major activities to inputs-thruputs and outputs, this becomes, in effect, your Business Model. It tells you in simple terms what you need to do, how you need to do it, what resources you need on hand, and what you hope to achieve. It also helps you clarify if some of your activities are competing with each other for time and resources or complementing each other for time and resources.

If you wanted to get a loan from a bank or some kind of agency grant, you would translate your business model -- that is, the delineation of inputs-throughputs-outputs -- into a more **formal business plan**.

You would list the major goals, objectives and activities that need to get done.

You would show that you did an input-throughput-output analysis, and that you clearly know, given your cash and personnel resources, the limits of what you can and cannot accomplish.

You would develop a workable budget.

If you are asking for a loan or grant, you would show how the additional dollars directly relate to accomplishing/expanding any of the activities you specified in the plan.

Your explanation about inputs-thrputs-outputs would justify that you would expect a positive return on investment.

The Allan and George Show

Allan and George – Mobile, Alabama boys -- make names out of colored copper wire, and hang them from 16” and 18” chains. They offer a broad selection of color choices, but the brightest and shiniest colors sell the best. They’ve been able to sell in a lot of venues and make a lot of money. Yet they are always struggling and always feeling that their business is about to fall apart.

They began their trade out of their homes. They made things for students at the local high schools and community colleges. They set up at events like school fairs and proms. Then they took a big leap, and rented a kiosk in a major mall in Birmingham, Alabama for November and December. Again, success knocked on their door.

They began traveling, setting up at large exhibits and conventions all over the Southeast. Again, things seemed successful. Yet they were bleeding cash, and having difficulty replacing their wire inventory. With lower inventory, they found it too risky to commit to too many venues. And looking forward, they didn’t think they would end up with enough cash to re-commit to a kiosk in the Birmingham mall.

Jeff and Bryan needed a business model.

Their shot-gun path to success was losing its legs. They needed to deliberately figure out which resources led to what outcomes, and why. They needed more focus. More think-through. Before they ended up working around the clock, and getting deeper in debt.

17.
GETTING STARTED:
Custom Work



28 COINS NECKLACE for poker player, includes coin pearls and jade good fortune carving

Guiding Questions:

- 1. What are the challenges of custom work?*
- 2. How do I deal with design time, apart from production time and learning time?*

<p>Key Words: <i>custom work</i></p>	<p><i>one-off fitting time frame / completion schedule</i></p>	<p><i>design time production time learning time</i></p>
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The Challenges of Custom Work

Some jewelry designers prefer to do what are called *one-offs*. That is, they like to work with particular clients, rather than a mass market, and design for their individual and professional needs.

Here, unlike with more production type work, your pricing will also include the costs to you of your *designing time* in addition to everything else. *When doing production work, you usually do not include your design time in your pricing calculations.* With custom work, again, you do. However, design time would equal that amount of time an *experienced* designer would take to design a new piece, given the client's wishes and circumstances. Design time would not include any time spent to learn a skill, or any time spent in trial-and-error

activities. Basically we price out both production and design times, with custom pieces: because they involve a much higher risk, thus necessitating a much higher price.

When you do custom work, I think you need an especially steeled personality to deal with everything that can go awry.

First comes the fitting. You take some initial measurements, but after the piece is made, the perspective changes, and so do the desired measurements.

Then comes a lot of customer indecision – colors, lengths, beads, silhouettes, overall design.

Or they want to use several gemstones, but want them all to have the exact same markings and coloration.

Not to mention the sometimes questionable taste.

Or the possibilities of infringement of other jeweler's designs, when the customer wants you to re-produce something they saw in a magazine or on-line. Identically.

And then time-frame. Can I finish the piece by the time the customer wants it done?

We discuss pricing, where many customers seem resistant to paying anything for my time.

And last, payment. It's not so easy to get some people to pay.



SOUNDTRACK::Color for folk musician who wanted something similar to a piece worn by Alanis Morissette. Client wanted all these colors (with raspberry as the dominant color) incorporated into this micro-macrame piece.

I still do a lot of custom work. But I delay a bit before sitting down and actually

constructing the piece. It is critical to get as accurate a picture as possible of the client's desires, assumptions and understandings.

I have a lot of discussions with the client. If there are color or materials questions, I usually present the client only 3 colors or materials at a time, and ask them to choose which they prefer. Then another 3-at-a-time forced-choice exercise, until things get narrowed down.

I photo-shop a lot of images – different colors, designs, beads – with the client, and get a lot of feedback. As I assemble all the information, I sketch/photo-shop what a final piece might look like. I superimpose this image on a mannequin to show the customer what it might look like. I have the customer formally sign-off on a final design. And only then, do I begin to construct the piece.

I require a 50% deposit up front.

I agree to make some adjustments at my expense for 6 months after the customer has the piece in hand. At that point, if something goes wrong, it is at the customer's expense.


I have a .pdf Certificate of Authenticity which I sign and give to the client. I name each piece (and if it is part of a series, that series will have a name as well), and this information is included in the Certificate. The Certificate also states my 6-months of adjustments policy.

[You also might be interested in reading the chapter on 78. SAYING GOODBYE TO YOUR JEWELRY and the chapter on 87. CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY.]

18.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

How Am I Going To Control The Flow Of Money and My Return on Investment (ROI)?

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do I control the flow of money and inventory?2. How do I manage the tension between risk and reward in my business goals and operations?3. How do I foster a growth-mindset in myself and my business?
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<p>Keywords: money inventory data collection / management record keeping breakeven analysis parts / labor / overhead gross profit / net profit rates / trends velocity / rate of velocity</p>	<p>return on investment (ROI) cost-benefit employee independent contractor getting terms leverage inventory parts / works in progress / finished pieces suppliers net terms / trade credit</p>	<p>risk reward growth mindset opportunity cost general accounting financial management impression management pricing storage timing forecast prioritizing evaluation / feedback</p>
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Financial Management and Return On Investment (ROI)

Financial management includes all the things you need to do in order to control the flow of your money and determine your Return On Investment (ROI). It mostly involves a system of data collection, monitoring and analysis methods employed by any successful business. This system relates revenues to costs, assets to liabilities and, most importantly, risks to rewards.

Activities in this kind of system include things such as general accounting and

bookkeeping, inventory management, and record keeping. These include things you do to establish and maintain formal relationships with employees, independent contractors and suppliers. These include things you do to secure your money, such as with banks, financial institutions, and even such things as crowd-funding online.

This is a lot of numbers and activities, and often, when we look at why people fail in business, it is often because of a generalized fear of losing control of all this. But gaining control really isn't that difficult. It takes some organization and there are plenty of human online resources to help you here.

Successful business people and successful businesses need to foster a culture which promotes a growth mindset. Simply this is a culture where you have permission and encouragement and confidence to take risks.

A Focus On Your Return On Investment (ROI)

You put a lot of time, effort and resources into designing pieces of jewelry and building up your business. This all has a cost to you in time, money, and even relationships. You want a Return On Investment (ROI). You want to see some benefits that exceed your costs. These additional benefits include joy, happiness, contentment, money, security, less stress, more opportunities and more challenging opportunities to be creative, more fulfilling relationships.

When you take your creative endeavors and turn them into a business, the core focus primarily rests on increasing your returns on investments (ROI's) through smartly and strategically managing your finances. You want to set into place various management structures and routine data collection procedures to assist you in managing risk and maximizing rewards. You want to minimize the effects of uncertainty on your business.

Sometimes, creative people think that some people are born to take risks, manage them and live with them, and others are not. This is not true. Having a business sense is not something innate or genetic. It's something that is learned over time, often with a lot of trial and error, many failures, but key successes, as well. There is no reason, if this is something you want to do, to shy away from thinking about or attempting to monetize your jewelry as a business.

Towards this end, you want to get a good handle on such things as:

1. **Understanding Return On Investment (chapter 18)**
2. **Understanding Risk and Reward (chapter 19)**
3. **Tracking Your Costs and Revenues Through Bookkeeping and Accounting (chapter 20)**
4. **Dealing with Other Record Keeping (chapter 21)**
5. **Fixed and Variable Costs, Budgeting and Break Even Analysis (chapter 22)**


6. **Managing Your Inventory (chapter 23)**
7. **Achieving Effectiveness, Efficiency, Component Design (chapter 24)**
8. **Managing Employees and Independent Contractors (chapter 25)**
9. **Setting Up Banking, Insurance and Credit Card Processing (chapter 26)**
10. **Getting *Terms* (chapter 27)**
11. **Getting *Paid* (chapter 28)**
12. **Setting Up Crowd-Funding (chapter 30)**
13. **Fostering a *Growth Mind-Set* (chapter 29)**

NOTE: About Pricing – see chapter on 39. PRICING

19.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Understanding Risk and Reward

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is risk? 2. How does risk relate to reward? 3. What kinds of things does someone do in order to optimally manage risk and reward?
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<p>Keywords: <i>risk</i> <i>reward</i> <i>management</i> <i>standardization</i> <i>summary indicators</i> <i>routines</i> <i>general ledger</i> <i>parts / labor / overhead</i></p>	<p><i>systems</i> <i>data collection</i> <i>real numbers / trends</i> <i>/ rates</i> <i>impacts</i> <i>opportunity cost</i> <i>general accounting</i> <i>financial</i> <i>management</i> <i>inventory</i> <i>management</i> <i>pricing</i> <i>impression</i> <i>management</i></p>	<p><i>growth mind-set</i> <i>probabilities</i> <i>tangible / intangible</i> <i>fear</i> <i>rate of return</i> <i>diversification</i> <i>velocity</i> <i>leverage</i></p>
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Understanding Risk and Reward

It is important to understand *risk* and *reward*, and how to manage these. Part of managing these is putting into place systems which collect necessary data – primarily about costs and revenues – and evaluating the data – real-time numbers as well as trends -- and the desired impact(s) on everything you are trying to achieve in your business. Anyone can do this. But jewelry designers who foster a *growth mind-set* are often better at managing risk and reward.

What Is Risk and What Is Reward

Risks and rewards are gambles. They are probabilities. Chances. They help define the

likelihood for determining whether what happens next will hurt you or help you.

Risks are the likelihood that you will lose either or both tangible rewards (money) and intangible rewards (success, happiness).

Rewards are the profits, again tangible (money) or intangible (success, happiness), you receive from taking risks.

Usually, the greater the risks you take, the greater the rewards earned. But this is not a guarantee. Losses can occur, usually resulting from the failures to properly manage the relationship between risks and rewards.

Risk management is important in every business because without it, that business cannot clarify what goals it needs to set, and what steps it needs to take towards meeting those goals. There are more things to do on a day-to-day basis than you could possibly do and get done. Risk management helps you narrow down the tasks to those most likely to have the greatest rewards.

Risks (and rewards) are different for each person and business. There may be year-to-year or season-to-season variations. Ambitions vary. Time budgets and time frames vary. What makes people feel happy and successful vary. But we can begin to delineate some risks and rewards most jewelry designers might face as they pursue their businesses.

RISKS	REWARDS
1. Losing money or not making any money at all	Gaining money and seeing a profit
2. Losing job or contract or client	Getting job or contract or client
3. Loss of time	Control over time and activities
4. Negative impact on personal life or relationships	Positive impact on personal life or relationships
5. Stagnation	Growth
6. No steady income or cash flow problems	Able to pay bills on time
7. Becoming insular, isolated or mistrusting others you need to rely on	Your creative products become more visible, can delegate or collaborate with others
8. Skills become stale or outdated or unfashionable	Learn new skills
9. Missing a critical deadline	Meeting a critical deadline
10. Making jewelry people do not want to buy	More in touch with the kind of jewelry people want to buy

11. Not anticipating effects of uncertainty	Good control over the effects of uncertainty
12. Business may become an emotional roller coaster	Feel confident managing the ups and downs of business
13. Business may grow and scale up too fast, and feel out of control	Growth and scaling is managed successfully
14. Might be bored, dull, afraid of new challenges	Excitement, joy, happiness
15. Feeling stuck in a daily routine	More flexibility, variety and challenges
16. Money made does not reflect your time, effort and costs	Money made reaffirms and reflects your time, effort and costs

Risks and Rewards must be managed in a deliberate, rational, and day-by-day way. Routinely. With fore-thought and organization. This means collecting data. This means analyzing data. This means closely looking at risk and evaluating whether it makes sense, or not, to continue doing what you are doing, or what you want to be doing. Is it sufficiently rewarding or profitable? What is the *opportunity cost*? That is, you could be expending the same amount of resources (time, motivation, money) doing something else that might have a greater return.

Any business is fraught with risk. If it were easy to start a business, everyone would do it. But it is not. Again, it requires routinely collecting and evaluating data. It takes you out of that creative mode and way of thinking, and plops you down into a very different administrative one. In order to sell a piece of jewelry, you have to begin to deal with things like marketing and promotion, production, distribution, inventory management, investments in tools, parts, displays and equipment. You need to closely track all your costs and all your revenues. It means taking chances you might lose money or fail. This is scary.

When managing risks, it is important to remember:

1. Don't confuse Risk with Fear. Fear keeps you from doing things. Risk aids you in asserting some control over uncertainty.
2. Simply be aware that both Risks and Rewards exist. Where there are greater rewards, there are usually also greater risks.
3. Yes, risks are risky, but you should not be reckless.
4. Make decisions based on the relationship of risks to rewards. It is *not the number of pieces of jewelry you make*. Rather it is *the average return* you get from each piece of jewelry you make, given the costs and investments you made in order to finish that

piece of jewelry and sell it. This type of information will clue you into such things as what might happen if you too aggressively seek rewards, or too timidly accept risks.

5. Don't put all your eggs in one basket. *Diversify* the types of jewelry you make, designs you do, parts you use, markets you seek to exploit.
6. Keep things simple. There is a lot of data, systems and subsystems of information to manage. Things which help keep things simple:

Standardization of forms, collection procedures, the ways data are organized

Use of summary indicators like totals, averages, means, mediums, rates, trends

Routines developed for procedures and administration

How Do You Measure Risk and Reward

As a jewelry designer, you will be measuring risks and rewards in a few different ways.

1. *Measuring Risk and Reward: General accounting*
2. *Measuring Risk and Reward: Financial Management*
3. *Measuring Risk and Reward: Inventory Management*
4. *Measuring Risk and Reward: Pricing*
5. *Measuring Risk and Reward: Impression Management*

1) *Measuring Risk and Reward: General Accounting*

You will set up a *General Ledger (G/L)* to track your revenues and expenses, and liabilities and assets. This is like setting up a giant table or spreadsheet. You enter every piece of information into this table or spreadsheet that represents some kind of expenditure to you or some kind of revenue received. In **chapter 20. TRACKING COSTS AND REVENUES**, I go into more detail about setting up a General Ledger.

2) *Measuring Risk and Reward: Financial Management*

Here you try to reduce things you do to a series of **rates** and **trend-lines**. It is *NOT* the number or dollar amounts of your sales. Instead, it is your *rate* of sales. Your *rates* of inventory reduction and replenishment. Your accumulated debt to earnings. Breakeven analysis. Trends in gross profit and net profit.

For some rates, management means maintaining a constant **velocity** or turn in the rate. For example, if you need to sell a minimum of 6 pieces of jewelry each week to breakeven, are you able to *maintain at least this rate* every week in the year? If not, for those times in the year where the velocity of this rate might slow down, what else can you do instead to

maintain your business at least at the breakeven point?

For other rates, management means *maintaining an upward trend* or trajectory, even though some weeks the data may decline. Especially when you first get started in business, your gross profit and net profit might be low or even negative numbers. The trend line is more important than the specific monthly numbers.

Leverage. A related concept in financial management is *leverage*. This is the degree you leverage someone else's money to make money for yourself. You might be paying for some of your inventory, equipment, furnishings or other business expenses using a credit card or relying on a bank loan or leasing where you do not have to front all the costs all at once.

You might be listing your jewelry on someone else's website or marketplace where they are paying internet and website maintenance costs. You might be co-marketing your jewelry with someone else who sells a product which can be integrated with yours where you thus are sharing the costs. You might be buying inventory on terms, say NET 30, where you do not have to pay for the inventory for 30 days. You might maintain bare minimums of inventory items, where you depend on your suppliers to provide just-in-time shipments, thus having your suppliers foot the bill for a lot of storage costs.

In each case, someone else has made investments in things that either you do not have to, or you do not have to all at once. Sometimes, you pay for some of these over time. Other-times, the synergistic effects create payments for all parties above and beyond what each could do on their own. All of this is called leverage.

We have to monitor leverage, as well, to be sure the rewards we get do not exceed the risk we undertake to get those rewards.

3) Measuring Risk and Reward: Inventory Management

There are three important things to understand about inventory up front:

1. Inventory is a placeholder for money. You paid for your inventory, and you get that money back when you sell it.
2. As a jewelry maker and designer, you will have a bi-furcated inventory, a) an inventory of finished pieces ready for sale, and, b) an inventory of parts and pieces of jewelry not ready for sale.
3. An inventory of digitized files and applications.

Holding inventory ties up a lot of money. This money is in the form of parts, perhaps restricting and constricting you in what colors, styles, materials, components and the like you will be able to use when designing a piece of jewelry. Too much or too little of inventory – or the right inventory for the moment – can break your business.

This all means that inventory is something that needs to be monitored and managed. Your goal is to minimize the cost of holding inventory. This involves figuring out ways to know when it is time to replenish inventory, change out and update inventory, or buy more materials to manufacture inventory.

After all, you want to prevent these kinds of things from happening...

- Lose sales
- Hurt cash flow
- Buy too many things which don't and won't sell
- Create storage problems, including prevention of deterioration, such as plated finishes which fade over time
- Needing cash, but it's all tied up in inventory – you can't eat beads
- Reduce your profitability
- Reduce your resiliency – that is, an ability to adapt to fashion, style, demand and culture changes
- Losing that balance between efforts directed at inventory management with efforts required for general administration, marketing and promotion

See the subsequent chapter on 23. MANAGING INVENTORY.

4) *Measuring Risk and Reward: Pricing*

The price you set for each piece of jewelry has to be based on all the costs you incur. Not just the costs of the parts. Not just the time you put in. All the costs. These include, *parts, labor* and what is called *overhead*. Overhead is everything else: electricity, heat, rent, business travel, wear and tear on tools and equipment, and the like. It is not cost-effective to have to track each and every one of these overhead costs separately, so we typically estimate them using a formula. From a management standpoint, this formula needs to make sense and come close to its approximation. It has to be defensible.

See the subsequent chapter on 39. PRICING.

5) *Measuring Risk and Reward: Impression Management*

Much of what we do these days is digital. We promote and sell our pieces online. This might be directly through a website. It might be through social media. It might be through an auction site.

In the digital world we track and manage impressions (often referred to as *eyeballs*).

Measures of risk in the digital world include concepts like *Costs Per Click (CPC)*, *Costs Per Impression (typically 1,000 impressions)(CPI)*, *Adds To Cart (ATC)*, *Cost Per Add To Cart (CATC)*, *conversion rate* (relates number of visitors to visitors who actually buy something), *costs to maintain current conversion rate*, and so forth.

Given the velocity or trends in these rates, and the returns on investments for you (such as costs of maintaining a website, marketing and promotion, supporting an inventory, handling money and credit cards, costs of shipping), you ask yourself questions about your various business and marketing strategies, your user experiences, and user impressions. What is it costing you to persuade people to take a look and to buy?

Some of these analytics will be provided to you in stats packages you can integrate with your site. Others will involve collecting data yourself, and analyzing them, usually in spreadsheets you create.

Next, you need to translate your understanding of risks and rewards into systems of data collection and analysis, beginning with the basics of tracking the flow of money in terms of costs and revenues.

20.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Tracking Costs and Revenues With Bookkeeping and General Accounting

<i>General Ledger</i>					
	Revenue-Sales	Revenue-Classes	Consumable Supplies	Telephone	Rent
1/1/18	0.00		12.00		
1/2/18	63.00	35.00	6.00		
1/3/18	42.00				
1/4/18	190.00		29.00		
1/31/18	43.00			150.00	750.00
Jan Totals	338.00	35.00	47.00	150.00	750.00
Jan Avg	67.60 (/5)	7.00 (/5)	9.40 (/5)	4.84 (/31)	24.19 (/31)

Guiding Questions?
 1. How do you track costs and revenues?
 2. What are acceptable business expenses?

<p>Keywords: <i>costs / expenses</i> <i>revenues</i> <i>assets</i> <i>liabilities</i> <i>managing credit card expenses</i></p>	<p><i>general ledger</i> <i>accounting</i> <i>bookkeeping</i> <i>chart of accounts</i> <i>cost of sales</i> <i>audit / audit trail</i></p>	<p><i>business use of home</i> <i>legitimate expense</i> <i>good financial</i> <i>management</i> <i>conforming to IRS rules</i> <i>gross profit</i> <i>net profit</i></p>
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Tracking Your Costs and Revenues

You set up an accounting **General Ledger (G/L)** to track *revenues* and *expenses*, and *assets* and *liabilities*. Your goal here is to adequately account for your expenses and revenues, and your liabilities and assets.

What are business revenues?

Business revenues include all the money coming into your business, including payments for products and services, interest on bank accounts and investments, rent you charge others to use your space or equipment, royalties you get from intellectual property.

What are business expenses?

**Business expenses are:
ANYTHING THAT HAVE TO DO WITH, OR
RELATE TO, OR
CONTRIBUTE TO
MAKING A PROFIT**

You might want to secure copies of IRS publications that define each business expense and how it should be accounted for.

What are business assets?

Business assets are the current values of your physical property, from desks to chairs to computers to printers to major software packages. Many of these things depreciate, that is, lose value over time.

Often when people get started in business, they bring used displays, furnishings and equipment from home, or friends and family donate some things. From a business standpoint, you need to assign a current value to each of these. Even though you might not have paid for these, the value cannot be \$0.00. It has to have some asset value. If you had to sell them at a garage sale or on Ebay, what would they bring? Use this amount as the current value.

A key asset, which does not necessarily depreciate over time, is your inventory. If you are selling finished jewelry, your inventory will include all your works-in-progress as well as your finished pieces.

For some jewelry businesses, it might become a little confusing to differentiate between your supply of parts and your jewelry, especially if you only assemble pieces after orders are made. On a yearly basis, the IRS only lets you deduct the costs associated with finished jewelry pieces actually sold. The rest of the inventory is treated like it is cash. You will need to decide what exactly you call inventory and what other supplies you call supplies. (*See COST OF SALES section below*).

What are business liabilities?

These are things the business owes money on, from short term net-30-day payments to suppliers to long term credit card bills and bank loans and leases.

If you lent money to the business, say some starter funds or funds to overcome a cash flow problem, you would show these amounts as liabilities to yourself and for which the business would pay you back from business income or the sale of your business.

BUSINESS USE OF A HOME

Many jewelry designers work out of their homes. While these expenses are red-flagged by the IRS, tax courts have consistently ruled that Congress intended to be very liberal and kind to these expenses.

You would compute the proportion of “business use” space in your home relative to your home’s total space. This space could be a whole room or part of a room. This space must only be devoted to business, not personal use. Based on this proportion, you allocate your mortgage or rent, your heating, A/C, water, sewer, and other maintenance costs to your business expenses.

Example: Your home is 1000 sq ft. The room you use for your business is 100 sq ft. So your business “use” expenses would be 10% of your rent/mortgage, 10% of your utilities, 10% of you lawn maintenance, 10% of repairs, etc.

For some expenses, given IRS rules, you cannot use the straightforward proportion percentage. If you use a *computer*, it is a better idea to have a separate one that you use for business, than for personal. If you use one for both, you have to maintain a *use log*, and, based on “time the machine is used for business vs. personal”, you allocate the costs and depreciation of the machine to your business. *Telephone* costs are allocated based on the proportion of business calls to all calls each month.

Don’t be shy about what to call a legitimate business expense at your home. Picture a real store. If they have to mow the lawn, you would have to mow the lawn at your home. If 10% of your home were devoted to business, then 10% of your lawn mowing expenses would also qualify. Home repairs, fixing the roof, mortgage, insurance and the like would be legitimate. At the same time, if you have little income, do not declare these expenses with the sole purpose of gaming your tax liability.

SETTING UP A GENERAL LEDGER (G/L)

When you are just starting, you can set up a spreadsheet to track your expenses and revenues or even use a ledger book bought at a local office supplies store. Or you can purchase some inexpensive software apps. Many accounting apps have been moving to a “rent” rather than “purchase” model, where you pay a monthly fee to use their apps.

With a General Ledger, you are basically creating a giant table for the year. The rows are the days of the month. The columns are your revenue and expense categories. You may also want to build in some summary formulas, such formulas as the Total Revenue for each month or Average Monthly Revenue.

There are single-entry accounting systems and double-entry accounting systems. If you are just getting started and using a ledger book or spreadsheet, using a single-entry system where you record revenues and expenses only is fine. If you are using an accounting application, these typically are set up as a double-entry accounting system. Here, part of the ledger

accounts for revenues and expenses and the other part of the accounting system will duplicate this information in the form of assets and liabilities. When you are making \$6,000 – 10,000 per year in sales, you will want to graduate to the double-entry system. It is a straightforward step to evolve a single-entry to a double-entry system.

IN A SINGLE-ENTRY ACCOUNTING SYSTEM, you set up a spreadsheet, and track each of all your revenues and all your business expenses. The rows are days of the month and the columns are your various revenue and expense accounts. Each different revenue and cost is referred to as an *account* (or *line item*). All together, these accounts get assigned unique ID codes, and get organized into a *Chart of Accounts*. Each revenue or expense entry gets tagged with a specific ID code, and entered into a *General Ledger (of Accounts)*.

Picture your G/L as a very large table. Again, the columns of the spreadsheet are these revenue and expense accounts. The rows are the days of the month. You should compute subtotals for each column at least once a month. If your business is a busy one, you should compute subtotals for each column weekly. You should also keep a running subtotal of year-to-date information.

General Ledger

	Revenue-Sales	Revenue-Classes	Consumable Supplies	Telephone	Rent
1/1/18	0.00		12.00		
1/2/18	63.00	35.00	6.00		
1/3/18	42.00				
1/4/18	190.00		29.00		
1/31/18	43.00			150.00	750.00
Jan Totals	338.00	35.00	47.00	150.00	750.00
Jan Avg	67.60 (/5)	7.00 (/5)	9.40 (/5)	4.84 (/31)	24.19 (/31)

What Accounts and How Many Accounts Do I Need?

You set up a sufficient number of accounts in order to satisfy two sometimes competing results – (a) good financial management, and (b) conforming to Internal Revenue Service tax rules.

You should be able to glance over your general ledger each month and come away with some good understandings of how your revenues and costs relate to your business strategies and programs. This is called good financial management. If you have too many accounts, financially managing them becomes more and more difficult.

You also want to anticipate issues of IRS auditing. You want clear categories, and maybe

more categories than is easily managed from a financial standpoint. The IRS will suggest specific categories. You are not required to use them. You can use some of them, all of them or none of them. For example, I use one category I call OCCUPANCY, where the IRS has separate categories for INSURANCE, UTILITIES, MAINTENANCE.

Examples of Types of Accounts

a) Revenue (sales, rents, royalties, teaching)

b) Cost of Sales (special packaging, shipping inventory to you, commissions)

c) Employee (wages, benefits, federal taxes, state taxes)

d) Other Expenses (supplies, travel, marketing, fees, shipping things to others)

f) Assets (Cash, Inventory, Bank Accounts, fixed like computer or table)

g) Liabilities (Credit card debt, bank loan; money you owe your suppliers)

Below I suggest some various types of accounts, with some editorial comments added. This is by way of illustration, and to give you some ideas about getting your financial data organized. This is not a substitution for talking with an accountant and/or tax lawyer, either of whom will be more current about the laws and regulations, and how these laws and regulations relate to the locality you are doing business in.

REVENUE ACCOUNTS

The IRS has one revenue account. From a financial management standpoint, I like to have several revenue accounts. I like to be able to look at the numbers (and the rates of change) and be able to figure out if any of my revenue-generating strategies is working well or not.

REVENUE ACCOUNTS

REV101 Retail Sales – Taxable

REV102 Retail Sales – Nontaxable (something shipped out of state)

REV103 Retail Sales – Online

REV103A Retail Sales – Online Etsy

REV103B Retail Sales – Online Personal Website

REV104 Wholesale Sales – Nontaxable

REV105 Consignment Sales – Nontaxable

REV105A Consignment Sales - McClures

REV105B Consignment Sales - The Open Window Gallery

REV106 Home Shows

REV107 Craft Fairs

REV108 Interest Earned (such as from a business savings account)
REV109 Teaching Revenue
REV110 Workshop Fees
REV111 Rent Earned (if you were renting out some space or equipment)

COST OF SALES

This is the most confusing part of the general ledger, because you have to make some rules and be clear about what you are calling “Supplies-Jewelry Making” and what you are calling “Inventory”.

As a Jewelry Making business, you wear many hats – you are the manufacturer, the distributor and the retailer. The tax laws are written in a way that assume you are one or the other – not all three at the same time.

COST OF SALES

COS201 Supplies-Jewelry Making (*WHAT YOU HAVE ON HAND*)
(this is all non-inventory costs that relate to the parts of the finished product, such as wire, beads, jewelry findings, gas, and that are not long term expenses; these expenses include all jewelry-making supplies assumed to be used up within the year. For jewelry designers, this is more of a “as if they would be used up within a year.”).

COS202 Inventory Expenses at Cost (*WHAT YOU HAVE SOLD*)
(excluding what you pay for shipping costs)

Here you indicate the cost only of your inventory that has sold. You can calculate this number for every piece sold. This is NOT ALL YOUR INVENTORY COSTS. This is ONLY THE COSTS OF THOSE PIECES WHICH HAVE SOLD.

Some people keep detailed records of the exact costs of each piece they have made.

Other people create defensible standards they use to estimate the costs of a piece. For example, each crimped necklace or bracelet would use cable wire, crimp beads, horseshoe wire protectors and crimp covers at \$3.00 per piece. No matter what type of crimp or cable wire, or whether wire protectors and crimp covers were actually used, \$3.00 would be added to the cost of each piece for the “crimp set.”

NOTE: You need to clearly coordinate how you transition any “costs” between your Supplies-Jewelry Making (COS201) line item and your Inventory Expenses at Cost (COS202) line item. You want to be able to track your parts, your partially finished jewelry, your unsold finished jewelry, and your sold finished jewelry.

COS203 Commissions (if you paid anyone on a commission basis to sell your stuff)

COS204 Shipping Costs of Inventory Sent to You

COS205 Packaging Costs for the merchandise you sell (such as tubes, zip lock bags, labels, price tags, gift boxes). These are things which have to be part of the product in order to sell the product.

GROSS PROFIT

At this point in the ledger, you can calculate the first of two *Magic Numbers* – **Gross Profit**. If using a spreadsheet, you can put the formula into one of the cells of the table.

MAGIC NUMBER (Gross Profit):
Your REVENUE minus COST OF SALES equals GROSS PROFIT.

If your GROSS PROFIT divided by your REVENUE is greater than .50, then you're doing well.

With the Magic Numbers, you have some easy to access and interpret information to help you financially manage your business. You look at month-to-month and year-over-year trends. When you first get started, some of these Magic Numbers might be on the not-so-good-looking-side, but again, pay attention to trends.

EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

(These are the minimum number of employee line items you will need to be able to fill out all the Federal, State and Local payroll tax related forms. You can always add more categories than those stated here.)

If you have employees, it may make sense to pay for a payroll service, that both cuts the checks and does your quarterly and annual payroll taxes.

EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

EMP301 Salary
EMP302 Bonuses
EMP303 Other Wage Expenses (such as employee FICA/SS/MCARE)
EMP304 Payroll Taxes – Federal Withholding
EMP305 Payroll Taxes – Employer’s FICA/SS
EMP306 Payroll Taxes – Employer’s FICA/M’CARE
EMP307 Payroll Taxes – Fed Unemployment (FUTA)
EMP308 Payroll Taxes – State Unemployment (SUTA)
EMP309 Fringe Benefits (Employer contribution)

EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

Your expense accounts are how you track what happens when you spend money.

EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

EXP401 Advertising, Marketing, Promotion, Printing (IRS has these as separate categories, but for the jewelry design business, these represent that same activity)
EXP402 Depreciation – 3yr equipment
EXP403 Depreciation – 5yr equipment
EXP404 Depreciation – 7yr equipment
EXP405 Dues and Subscriptions
EXP406 Employee Benefits *(Need this extra employee-related category here. Will only be used if you have employees)*

EXP407 Entertainment
NOTE: IRS lets you take 50% of these as costs on your tax returns, but in your G/L, you keep track of 100% of these costs.
NOTE: If the benefit is available to everyone who works at your business location or participates in an activity, these can be booked as regular supplies expenses (EXP417). Example: If you hold a workshop and buy lunch for everyone, these become supplies expenses (EXP417) at 100% of cost. If you only buy lunch for yourself, or yourself and only one of several employees or activity participants, these become

entertainment expenses (EXP407) at 50% of cost.

EXP408 Fees – professional and otherwise

EXP409 Finance charges, bank fees, credit card interest, credit card settlement costs

NOTE: If paying a credit card bill, you book the merchandise or supplies or equipment charge the month you incurred this expense. If paying this charge over time, you book the added interest charge each month. You do not keep booking the initial full amount each month – only once in the month you incurred the expense.

EXP410 Freight, shipping, postage

*NOTE: Shipping **to you** gets booked as Cost Of Goods Sold (COS204);*

*Shipping **to a customer** gets booked here (EXP410).*

EXP411 Licenses, registrations, copyrights

EXP412 Miscellaneous expenses (You want this to end up as \$0.00 or near \$0.00). If this is a substantial number, then you need to create some new expense category(ies).

EXP413 Rent (TN tax law makes it better to separate out rent from other occupancy costs; otherwise, I would have combined EXP413 and EXP414 as one Occupancy category)

EXP414 Other Occupancy, insurance, security costs, maintenance of space, repairs (IRS shows these as separate categories, and you might want to break these out for more manageability and clarity)

EXP415 Supplies – Business and Administrative (IRS has one SUPPLIES category; from a financial management standpoint, I like to use several supplies categories. Basically comes down to tracking supplies I have to have, and separating these from those supplies I do not have to have.)

EXP416 Supplies – Display

EXP417 Supplies – Other

EXP418 Taxes – Property, business

EXP419 Taxes – State Sales Taxes

EXP420 Telephone, internet, fax, communications (IRS has these as separate categories)

IRS has these Travel related expense accounts which are each important and require special data collection expectations:

EXP422 Travel – Auto (either standard mileage rate or actual expenses allocated)

You pick which method of expense tracking you want to use. You have to use the same method all year. You can, if you want, change the method from one year to the next.

In 2021, the IRS standard mileage rate was 56.0 cents per mile.

You will need to keep a mileage log in your car(s) and record 1/1 beginning mileage, beginning and ending mileage for each business related

trip, and 12/31 ending mileage.

If you go to the bank and make both a personal deposit and a business deposit, that trip is 100% business mileage.

Actual expenses allocated: If your business use of your car is 25%, then 25% of your gas, car washes, car accessories, GPS system, car registrations, car depreciation, etc are deductible.

EXP423 Travel – Ticketed (*If you don't get a receipt, make your own receipt with date, purpose, description*)

EXP424 Travel – Lodging (*either per diem or actual expenses*)

Within any calendar year, you can only use one way to calculate these expenses. You can change from year to year.

Per diem: IRS maintains allowable food and lodging rates for every city in the US.

Actual expenses: Whatever you spend

EXP425 Travel – Meals (*either per diem or actual expenses*)

EXP426 Travel -Other

IRS RULE: You should be able to live your life on the road the same way you live your life at home. If you have a personal trainer come to your home 3 times a week, then you can have a personal trainer come to your hotel 3 times a week, and this would be a legitimate Travel-Other expense. If you don't, it's not. If you purchase the New York Times each day at home, you can purchase it while away, and declare this as a legitimate Travel-Other expense. If you don't, it's not.

Sometimes it gets a little confusing how to enter credit card expenses into your general ledger.

EXAMPLE OF MANAGING CREDIT CARD EXPENSES:

You purchase \$100.00 of business related supplies (EXP416) on 1/6.

You get your bill mid February and it shows you owe \$100.00. You have not yet been assessed any interest charges on the bill.

You pay \$50.00 in February.

You get your March bill, and it shows you owe \$51.00. (\$50.00 remaining on supplies plus \$1.00 of interest charge EXP409).

On your G/L, you book \$100.00 of supplies cost in January.

On your G/L, you book \$1.00 of finance charges in March.

If you paid down \$25.00 in March (leaving \$26.00 due), then your April statement might show you owed \$26.50. You book \$0.50 of finance charges (EXP409) in April.

In your Liabilities section, you would book \$100.00 of credit card liability in January. In March, you would add \$1.00 to the liability and then reduce this by \$25.00 (your payment) so it would reduce to \$76.00 as the liability. You would be paying this out of a cash account, which would be reduced by \$25.00 (the payment).

NET PROFIT

Now you are positioned to calculate the next *Magic Number* – **Net Profit**.

MAGIC NUMBER (Net Profit):
Your REVENUE minus COST OF SALES minus EMPLOYEE EXPENSES minus all other EXPENSES equals your NET PROFIT.

You want Net Profit to be a positive number. However, for your first year or two, it might be negative. Again, it's most useful to look at trends.

NOTE: There is NO IRS rule that says you have to show a profit in 3 of the last 5 years, or any rule about the frequency of profit. As long as you are trying to run a business as best you can, even if you are failing miserably, there are no consequences for showing continued losses.

When you get started, especially with beads and jewelry, you might show negative earnings for awhile. Initially you have to purchase much more jewelry-making supplies and make more jewelry than will turn over in a year's time.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

In a double-entry system, the other part of the general ledger will account for

- 1. ASSETS**
- 2. LIABILITIES**

ASSETS

Example: You buy \$10.00 of beads. Your inventory is an asset. You would make the following two entries into your G/L.

Debit Inventory by +10.00 <i>(increases inventory total by 10.00)</i>	Credit Cash by -10.00 <i>(decreases your cash by 10.00)</i>
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Assets are things you own and have value for your business.

ASSETS501 INVENTORY (*See subsequent chapter for discussions about inventory management*)

502PREPAID EXPENSES

503PEOPLE WHO OWE YOU MONEY

504NON-COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

505COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

506FURNITURE

507ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION

LIABILITIES

Liabilities are things you owe to others, which until these are paid off, decrease the value of your business.

Example: You charge \$10.00 of beads to a credit card. What you owe to a credit card company is a liability. You would make the following two entries into your G/L.

Debit Inventory account by +10.00	Credit CREDIT CARD account by - 10.00
<i>(increases inventory total by 10.00)</i>	<i>(increases your credit card liability by 10.00)</i>

LIABILITIES

601PAYROLLTAXES

602OTHER TAXES

603SALES TAXES COLLECTED

604GIFT CERTIFICATES OUTSTANDING

605NOTES PAYABLE – BANK

606CREDIT CARD #1


607CREDIT CARD #2

You now have in place a system for gathering information about money costs and money revenues. You need to expand this system to gather even more detail, specifically about your inventory.

21.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Other Record Keeping

	Guiding Questions? 1. What kinds of records do I need to keep, and how should I organize them?
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Keywords: record keeping per diem / actual costs standard mileage rate ticketed other travel per diem / actual costs	travel log auto expenses meals and lodging	entertainment expenses
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BACK AND FORTH TO HAITI

Alliune had an in. She was able to fly back and forth between the US and Haiti for free. While in Haiti, she bought up folk art, Dominican amber and larimar, both in the rough as well as in finished jewelry. She had a little shop back home, and usually sold everything she could put her hands on.

Her first income tax season was approaching, and she knew she needed to find someone to do her bookkeeping and accounting. Because she did none of this. She had saved all her receipts for things she had bought, and threw them in an old box. She kept no other business records. Nothing about transportation and travel. Nothing about costs of supplies. Nothing else.

To her surprise, she couldn't find a bookkeeper or accountant to accept her as a client. No one wanted to take her on because she would be too much work. With the hourly rates they charged, the cost of their services would have put Alliune out of business.

Below I suggest some various types of expense records you need to organize and store, with some editorial comments added. This is by way of illustration, and to give you some ideas about getting your record keeping in order. This is not a substitution for talking with an accountant and/or tax lawyer, either of

whom will be more current about the laws and regulations, and how these laws and regulations relate to the locality you are doing business in.

Other Record Keeping

You want to keep all your receipts together for *each* calendar year. You do **NOT** want to keep all your receipts stored in a shoe box. File your receipts, say in an accordion file, *organized alphabetically by company*.

If part of the transactions listed on any receipt are personal and some are business, then circle the business related ones and write something like “business” next to these.

If you did not get a receipt for something business related, write out your own receipt, with the date, purpose, description, and amount.

You must store these receipts (and your other business documentation) for 10 years. Some places list 7 years, but you will need to store these for 10 years.

Don't rely on paying an accountant to sort through all your receipts in order to calculate your tax liabilities each year. The cost of this would be prohibitive. You yourself need to do that kind of leg-work, and being very organized will help you do this efficiently and effectively.

You probably will also be generating these kinds of forms and documents in the course of doing business, and you need to maintain files of back up copies:

- Purchase orders
- Invoices
- Packing slips
- Order sheets / line forms
- Catalogs
- Checkbooks, and copies of checks written or check requisition forms with check numbers of checks written documented
- State, local and federal tax documents
- Leases / rental agreements for property and equipment
- Account numbers and agreements with each of your suppliers and creditors
- Travel logs
- General Ledger entry forms

TRAVEL LOG

All your business travel is deductible, but the IRS has different rules for how you handle various business expenses. So, you keep separate accounts of the following:

Auto expenses (gas, depreciation, mileage, car maintenance and repairs);

NOTE: On your income taxes, you can use either a *standard mileage rate* or *actual expenses allocated*. You pick which method of expense tracking you want to use. You have to use the same method all year. You can, if you want, change the method from one year to the next.

***Meals while traveling, and
Lodging while traveling***

NOTE: Within any calendar year, you can only use one way to calculate these expenses. You can change from year to year. Either use Per diem (IRS maintains allowable food and lodging rates for every city in the US) or Actual expenses (whatever you spend).

Ticketed travel (plane, boat, railroad, uber/lyft, taxi, limo, ferry);

Other travel expenses (newspaper, shoe-shine, gym).

NOTE: IRS RULE: You should be able to live your life on the road the same way you live your life at home. If you have a personal trainer come to your home 3 times a week, then you can have a personal trainer come to your hotel 3 times a week, and this would be a legitimate Travel-Other expense. If you don't, it's not. If you purchase the New York Times each day at home, you can purchase it while away, and declare this as a legitimate Travel-Other expense. If you don't, it's not.

Keep a travel log in all your cars, and record:

DATE, BEGIN MILEAGE, END MILEAGE, subtract to get TOTAL MILEAGE.

Write down the business purpose of each trip.

For example, if you're in business selling beaded jewelry, you can deduct all your mileage for all your trips to any bead or craft store, any bead society meeting, any bead-related or jewelry-making classes, any trip to a museum to see jewelry on display, any trip to a store to do research on jewelry, check out the competition, mail bills at the post office, go to the bank to make a deposit, and the like.

If you are relying on the standard mileage rate to compute your travel auto expenses, then this is all the information you need.

If you are relying on using all your actual expenses to compute your travel auto, then you will need to write down all your gas, car maintenance and repairs, interest if you have financed your vehicle, annual depreciation, and the like.

ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

Periodically you will want to treat a client or supplier or colleague to drinks or a meal. If you conduct any business during the encounter, and this can be minimal, you can claim your expenses on your General Ledger under entertainment.

The IRS assumes, since you will have to eat anyway, that you can only declare 50% of entertainment expenses on your federal tax forms. On your own G/L, you would record the full 100% of these expenses.

BUSINESS CARDS

A must!

I would also suggest printing up BUSINESS CHECKS.

LOGO

This can simply be how you print the name of your business – font choice, layout, positioning of words. Or it can be a fancy image.

There are Logo-Maker apps online that you can try.

Once you get your logo, you will want to place it on all your forms, documents, marketing materials, and online webpages.

You will want to trademark your logo.

MORE RECORDS TO KEEP

I keep separate records, organized by client name, sometimes year-by-year, but other times I let them accumulate over several years for these kinds of things:

- Online orders
- Custom orders (usually a separate file folder for each client)
- Repairs

- Local taxes and registration fees
- State taxes and registration fees
- Professionals-Service Agreements/Contracts-Leases, like lawyer, accountant, landlord, plumber, insurer, electrician, telephone, internet host, (usually a separate file folder for each professional)
- Trademarks, copyrights, service marks, domain name registrations

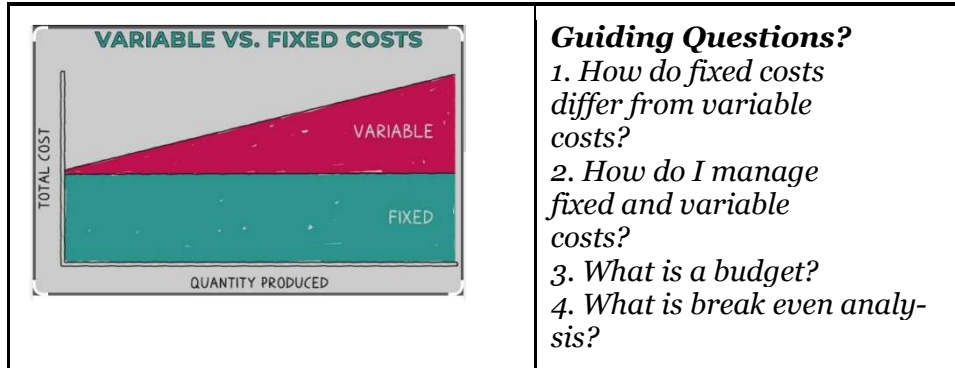
If you have employees or use independent contractors, you will also be keeping records such as:

- Employee files (interviews, evaluations, write-ups, usually a separate file for each employee)
- Time sheets
- Check register
- Payroll taxes (FUTA, SUTA) and correspondence
- Workers Compensation

22.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Fixed and Variable Costs, Budgeting, Break Even Analysis



<p>Keywords: <i>fixed costs</i> <i>variable costs</i> <i>investment costs</i></p>	<p><i>budgeting</i> <i>break even analysis</i></p>	<p><i>cost of goods sold</i></p>
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THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF COSTS TO ACCOUNT FOR:

Fixed Costs and Variable Costs

FIXED COSTS:

You have to pay these, whether you make any money or not

Fixed costs include things like:

- *Rent*
- *Utilities*
- *Staffing*
- *Taxes*
- *Payment on loan and credit card debt*
- *Insurance*

VARIABLE COSTS:

You only pay these based on the number of items you sell

Variable costs include things like:

- *Display supplies*
- *Consumable supplies*
- *Packaging supplies*
- *Credit card fees*
- *Costs of any inventory that you have sold*
- *Marketing and promotion*

You carefully look at your revenues and expenditures (fixed costs and variable costs), say each month, and prepare a reasonable annual *budget*. Your budget will reflect how much you think you should spend, given what you project your revenues and costs to be. A budget helps you stay on track. It helps keep you from going wild on your spending.

If you are just getting started with your business, your budget will reflect your best guesses about your cash flows during the year. In this case, you more likely will need to modify your budget a few times during the year, as you get more experience with how your business is unfolding.

After creating a budget, you are positioned to do some simple *Break Even analyses*. Break Even analysis helps you identify the point where your revenues will equal the sum of your fixed and variable costs.

BUDGETING

A budget is a plan for how to spend every dollar you have. It may seem daunting, especially if just getting started in business, but budgeting is a very useful exercise. Basically, given your business goals for the year, you begin to interrelate what you anticipate to be your revenue stream and what you anticipate to encompass your fixed and variable costs during the year. Usually, you would present your budget picture either month-by-month or quarter-by-quarter for a one-year period.

BUDGET TABLE, YOUR JEWELRY BUSINESS, 2022

BUDGET TABLE, YOUR JEWELRY BUSINESS, 2022

SUMMARY	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
INCOME	4180	4180	4180	4180	4280	4280	4280	4180	4180	4280	4380	5000
EXPENSES	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310	3310
Rent	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000
Utilities	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Inventory	1385	1385	1485	1485	1555	1385	1385	1485	1555	1600	1455	1385
Supplies	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
Postage	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Travel	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
	3310	3310	3410	3410	3480	3310	3310	3410	3480	3525	3380	3310
NET INCOME	870	870	870	870	970	970	970	870	870	970	1070	1690
Expected Income	51580											
Expected Expenses	39720											
Expected Net Profit	11860											

A budget benefits a business by increasing efficiency, assisting you in allocating moneys, identifying left over funds that can be used elsewhere, predicting slow months, helping you manage your debt load, estimating that point of profitability, and giving you more control over your business.

First, you want to set reasonable, achievable *goals and objectives* for your business. How many of pieces of jewelry do you want to make? To sell? What kinds of things do you want to do to reach your target market? What will it cost you to make the jewelry, market it, and distribute it?

Second, distinguish between short-term and long-term goals. Your budget will encapsulate your short term goals. Thinking forward, you might want the budget to reflect some longer term goals, as well.

For example, you will want to take some of your revenue and reinvest it in long-

term things like more displays, more inventory, broader marketing or set aside some money for savings and emergencies. You do not necessarily have to have these things in the current year, but you know you will need them down the road as your business continues to mature.

Rely on your G/L to track your revenues and expenditures. Develop some standards based on this data. For example, *marketing expenditures reflect 5% of revenue*; or *consumable supplies reflect 8% of revenue*. Obviously, the longer you have been in business, the more reliable your data assessments and projections will be.

Third, clearly distinguish within the budget the fixed costs separated from the variable costs. You cannot do much about fixed costs. But you can manage your variable costs to increase your profitability.

Fourth, set some boundaries. For example, *rent should not exceed 25% of revenue*, or *payroll costs should not exceed 35% of revenue*, or *5% should be put aside for savings*, or *2% should be set aside for reinvestment*..

Fifth, track your progress. Compare your budget month-by-month to your G/L reports on actual revenues and expenses.

Sixth, if you are failing to stick to your budget, revisit it. Revise it accordingly all-the-while trying to maintain the full annual perspective.

BREAK EVEN ANALYSIS

**Your Break Even point is when
*your revenues = your costs.***



REVENUES = COSTS

How much money do you want to make?

At the very least, you want to come home from the show and Break Even. That is, you want to cover all your costs.

So, in your budget, you have begun to list all your costs.

NOTE: If you have reliable, actual data about fixed and variable

costs, then your breakeven point is simply the total of your *FIXED PLUS VARIABLE* costs.

If, however, you do not know what your variable costs would be, you will need to estimate them. We estimate each type of variable cost using what is called a multiplier. The multiplier represents a standard idea of what percent of total revenues each type of variable cost would be. For example, we might use .05 as the multiplier for consumable supplies costs, representing that these consumable supplies costs would be 5% of total revenues.

BREAK EVEN ANALYSIS

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{\$\$ AMOUNT} & & & & & & \\ \text{INVENTORY} & & & & & & \\ \text{YOU NEED} & = & \text{FIXED} & + & \text{ESTIMATED} & & \\ \text{TO SELL} & & \text{COSTS} & & \text{VARIABLE} & & \\ & & & & \text{COSTS} & & \\ \\ X & = & Y & + & .zX & & \end{array}$$

I want to introduce you to a quick and dirty Break Even analysis. I call this “Quick and Dirty” because we are using imperfect information about which multipliers or standards should be used to estimate the various variable costs. However, this imperfect information is good enough to help us make a decision whether your business is worth the risk.

Your Break Even point is where you have sold enough inventory (that is, total revenue) to cover both your fixed and variable costs. That is,

The total retail dollars you have taken in equals the sum of your fixed plus your variable costs.

In the absence of good data, we often *estimate variable costs using some industry standards or standards based on historical data (typically 3-years) in our own business* about the percent of total retail price these costs are associated with. This saves a lot of time instead of diligently tracking the cost of each and every bead, stringing material, clasp, and other components used.

NOTES:

For purposes of developing a budget and calculating a Break Even analysis, to help us decide whether a particular business endeavor is worth the risk, we focus ***only on the inventory estimates based on what we sell (thus, actual revenues)***. We do not include information about the wholesale costs of each item we sell.

So, if we sold two necklaces at \$10.00 each for a total of \$20.00, then the \$20.00 becomes our total revenue. If the cost of the parts for creating these two necklaces was \$5.00, then the \$5.00 becomes a variable cost we label *cost of goods sold*.

INVESTMENT COSTS

There are some additional costs you will incur which are also not included in our Break Even analysis. I'm going to call these *investment costs*.

Investment costs are things you pay for which have to last a very long time (much longer than 1 year).

These include *long term assets*, such as buying tables and chairs, a tent, display cases, cash register.

These also include *long term liabilities*, such as paying down loans and credit card charges over a longer period of time.

We do not include these investment costs in our Break Even analyses.

TABLE OF REALIZED REVENUES, YOUR JEWELRY BUSINESS, 2021

REVENUES	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Jewelry Sales-Realized	\$4,000.00	\$4,010.00	\$4,020.00	\$4,120.00	\$4,320.00	\$4,400.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,400.00	\$4,320.00	\$4,020.00	\$3,780.00	\$4,925.00
Jewelry Sales-Breakeven	\$3,896.00	\$3,870.20	\$3,677.40	\$3,553.40	\$3,803.40	\$3,866.00	\$4,034.00	\$4,069.00	\$4,183.40	\$3,763.40	\$3,421.60	\$3,660.00
FIXED EXPENSES												
Rent	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Other occupancy	\$435.00	\$440.00	\$395.00	\$440.00	\$495.00	\$625.00	\$700.00	\$725.00	\$695.00	\$495.00	\$390.00	\$385.00
Debt payments	\$155.00	\$154.00	\$153.00	\$152.00	\$151.00	\$150.00	\$160.00	\$165.00	\$164.00	\$163.00	\$162.00	\$161.00
Telephone	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00
TOTAL FIXED	\$2,139.00	\$2,143.00	\$2,097.00	\$2,141.00	\$2,195.00	\$2,324.00	\$2,409.00	\$2,439.00	\$2,408.00	\$2,207.00	\$2,101.00	\$2,095.00
VARIABLE EXPENSES												
Supplies	\$66.00	\$192.00	\$40.00	\$55.00	\$180.00	\$20.00	\$60.00	\$45.00	\$195.00	\$40.00	\$25.00	\$30.00
Travel	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$35.00	\$25.00	\$110.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Professional fees	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$35.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$35.00	\$55.00	\$80.00	\$25.00	\$20.00
Marketing	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$25.00	\$75.00	\$25.00	\$75.00
Cost Goods Sold	\$843.00	\$837.00	\$796.00	\$755.00	\$808.00	\$826.00	\$861.00	\$871.00	\$903.00	\$809.00	\$734.00	\$748.00
Income/Prop Taxes	\$480.00	\$481.20	\$482.40	\$494.40	\$518.40	\$528.00	\$540.00	\$528.00	\$518.40	\$482.40	\$453.60	\$591.00
Finance charges	\$43.00	\$42.00	\$12.00	\$38.00	\$52.00	\$33.00	\$49.00	\$56.00	\$54.00	\$45.00	\$33.00	\$76.00
TOTAL VARIABLE	\$1,757.00	\$1,727.20	\$1,580.40	\$1,412.40	\$1,608.40	\$1,542.00	\$1,625.00	\$1,630.00	\$1,775.40	\$1,556.40	\$1,320.60	\$1,565.00
PROFIT / LOSS	\$104.00	\$139.80	\$342.60	\$566.60	\$516.60	\$534.00	\$466.00	\$331.00	\$136.60	\$256.60	\$358.40	\$1,265.00

Fixed and variable costs laid out within this table

For the year shown in the table above, in this business, we would have the following results:

YEARLY

Revenues-Realized	\$50,815.00
Revenues-Break Even	\$45,797.80
Fixed Expenses	\$26,698.00
Variable Expenses	\$19,099.80
 Profit / Loss	 \$5,017.20

Again, our quick and dirty analysis is keyed off our retail prices (=revenues), and not our wholesale costs. The actual wholesale costs of items sold becomes a variable cost in our model.

I am assuming that you already know how to set fair and reasonable prices for your merchandise. If not, I would suggest reviewing my PRICING AND SELLING video tutorial (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/pricing-and-selling-your-jewelry>) .

BREAK EVEN FORMULA

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \text{\$ \$ AMOUNT} & & & & \\ \text{INVENTORY} & & & & \\ \text{YOU NEED} & = & \text{FIXED} & + & \text{ESTIMATED} \\ \text{TO SELL} & & \text{COSTS} & & \text{VARIABLE} \\ & & & & \text{COSTS} \\ \\ X & = & Y & + & .zX \end{array}$$

OUR BREAKEVEN FORMULA HAS 3 VARIABLES:

X

Y

and

.zX

X stands for the amount of inventory we will need to sell to Break Even. This will, in effect, be the total of all retail prices of our merchandise we need to sell, that is, it will be our **total revenue**.

Y is the total of all our **fixed costs**.

.zX is our last variable. This is our estimated **total variable costs**.

If estimating, we compute total variable costs as a *percent* of the total of all retail prices of merchandise sold, that is, as a *percent of revenue*. *More details below. One of our variable costs will be the wholesale cost of those items sold.*

If we have our actual data on fixed and variable costs, as in the table above, then breakeven revenue is simply that point of the sum of our fixed costs and our variable costs.

LET'S TRY SOME MATH:

Look back at our developing budget table above.

Y, WHICH IS OUR FIXED COSTS TOTAL = \$26,698.00

.z IS THAT PERCENT OF REVENUE REPRESENTING TOTAL VARIABLE COSTS.

In our business example above, we have actual data for variable costs, so we do

not have to estimate these. Our Break Even point is simply the sum of our fixed and variable costs.

If we did not know our current variable costs, we could estimate them. We could do this in two ways.

1. We could use industry standards (easily found through a Google search online). or,
2. If we had some reliable, historical data (say 3 years worth) from our own business experience, we could create standards or multipliers for each variable expense category.

**ESTIMATED VARIABLE COSTS
AS PERCENT OF REVENUE
USING STANDARD MULTIPLIERS**

	Our Own	Industry
Supplies	0.02	0.05
Travel	0.01	0.01
Professional fees	0.01	0.02
Marketing	0.02	0.12
Cost Goods Sold	0.21	0.4
Income/Prop Taxes	0.13	0.15
Finance charges	0.01	0.01
TOTAL VARIABLE	0.42	0.76

*So, in this case study, we expect our variable costs to total 42% of our total revenue, based on consistent, reliable, historical data we've actually accumulated over a 3-year period for our particular business. So, **.z in our model would equal .42.***

*However, if we did not have this data, we could estimate what our variable costs might be. If we used generally accepted industry standards, our estimate of variable costs would total 76% of our total revenue. So **.z in our model would equal .76.***

In this case, the actual data, rather than industry standards, would be much more reliable in our Break Even analysis.

***MAJOR POINT:** This analytical model, and this is true for all analytical models, is a tool. It is not an absolute. After you apply all the data, you need to step back and do some reality-testing. In this example, the national industry standards were not a good substitute for the real experiences of this business at this point in time.*

SOLVE FOR X

Next, using our Break Even formula, we solve for **X**.

To solve for **X**, we need to re-organize our formula so that the **X** variable, which occurs twice in our formula, is *all put on one side of the equation*.

THIS IS HOW WE SOLVE THIS FORMULA:

$$X = Y + .zX$$

Using Current Year Data (see table above)	Using Standards Based On Our Own 3-year Experience	Using Industry Standards
<p>We start with:</p> $\text{Revenue} = \text{Fixed} + \text{Variable Costs}$	<p>We start with:</p> $X = 26,698.00 + .42X$	<p>We start with:</p> $X = 26,698.00 + .76X$
<p>We already know that our variable expenses are \$19,099.80</p> <p>So we do not have to use the formula to estimate them.</p> <p>And our fixed expenses are \$26,698.00</p>	<p>We move the $.42X$ to the left side, by subtracting it from both sides. This, in effect, zero's out the $.42X$ on the right side.</p> $X - .42X = 26,698.00$	<p>We move the $.76X$ to the left side, by subtracting it from both sides. This, in effect, zero's out the $.76X$ on the right side.</p> $X - .76X = 26,698.00$
	<p>We combine both X variables, which, in effect, let's us subtract the $.42X$ from $1X$, leaving us with $.58X$. When we write X, this is the same as writing 1 times X, or $1X$.</p> $.58X = 26,698.00$	<p>We combine both X variables, which, in effect, let's us subtract the $.76X$ from $1X$, leaving us with $.24X$. When we write X, this is the same as writing 1 times X, or $1X$.</p> $.24X =$

		26,698.00
<p>Our Total Revenue (Break Even) equals the sum of our Fixed Costs plus our Variable Costs</p> <p>$\\$26,698.00 + \\$19,099.80$</p>	<p>We solve for X. We divide both sides of the equation by .58. This leaves 1X on the left side.</p> <p>$X = 26,698.00 / .58$</p>	<p>We solve for X. We divide both sides of the equation by .24. This leaves 1X on the left side.</p> <p>$X = 26,698.00 / .24$</p>
<p>And, we get our Break Even Point of $\\$45,797.80!$</p>	<p>And, we get our Break Even Point of $\\$46,031.03!$</p>	<p>And, we get our BreakEven Point of $\\$111,241.66!$</p>
<p>In our current year, we actually made $\\$50,815.00$</p> <p>So we had a profit of $\\$5,017.20$</p>	<p>In our current year, we actually made $\\$50,815.00$</p> <p>So we had an estimated profit of $\\$4,783.97$</p>	<p>In our current year, we actually made $\\$50,815.00$</p> <p>So we had an estimated loss of $\langle \\$60,426.66 \rangle$</p>
<p>We have done well in our current year.</p>	<p>Our 3-year data probably gives us a more realistic idea than using current data alone of what our Break Even point would be.</p>	<p>Using industry standards does not appear to line up with the realities of our business.</p>

The Next Question To Ask Ourselves: How Much Profit Do I Want To Make?

How much more money do you want to make above and beyond your Break Even point?

You don't just want to Break Even. You want to make a *profit*. At our Break Even point, we have covered both our fixed costs and our variable costs. Our fixed costs are now all paid for.

As we bring in more addition revenues, we will have more variable but no more fixed costs to cover. Our additional revenues will only be based on how much more we sell, after subtracting our variable costs.

How much of a profit goal you want to set is your personal choice. For my students who do craft-shows, I tell them that breaking even at the show itself is OK, if you also have strategies in place to generate follow-up sales, either through repeat sales between shows, or repeat sales at the next show.

Think About Reinvestment

As we go beyond our Break Even point, and become profitable, we could have used that remaining amount of additional revenue to pay for some of our investment costs, as well as pay ourselves something.

Investment costs are things you pay for which either have to last a very long time, or which involve expanding your core jewelry making supplies inventory beyond what you need to replace the parts represented by the items sold. These include “long term assets”, such as buying tables and chairs, a tent, and display cases. These also include “long term liabilities”, such as paying down loans and credit card charges.

We do not include these investment costs in our break-even analyses.

FOOTNOTES

N26, Budgeting Tips, 10/26/2021. As referenced in: <https://n26.com/en-eu/blog/budgeting-tips>

Meredith Turits (<https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/author/mturits/>)
Oct 30, 2020

How To Create A Business Budget For A Small Business
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23.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Managing Inventory



Guiding Questions?

1. In a jewelry business, what do you consider 'inventory'?
2. How is inventory best managed?

Keywords: <i>inventory inventory management tickle system what if analysis product values</i>	<i>par levels storage and track- ing FIFO first in first out suppliers data SKU number</i>	<i>resiliency auditing prioritizing forecasting timing pricing</i>
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Inventory Management

The Kinds Of Things You Want To Be Doing In Inventory Management

Monitoring and managing inventory involve several interrelated activities. These activities will place time and cost burdens on you. Luckily, much of this can be computerized. There is inventory management software available, some of it specialized for jewelry. If you are selling things online, your shopping cart system will accommodate a lot of this.

These activities include:

1. *Par Levels*
2. *Storing and Tracking FIRST IN, FIRST OUT*
3. *Supplier Relationships*
4. *Resiliency*
5. *Auditing*

6. *Prioritizing*

7. *Forecasting*

8. *Timing*

To the extent that you can systemize all this, relying on a central, computerized database, the more efficient and effective you will be. Ask yourself, as well, whether your inventory management system will grow with you as you continue to develop and expand your business. You always want to have the right stuff, in the right place, at the right time, at the right cost.

1. *Inventory Management:*

Establish Par Levels

What is the minimum inventory needed on hand at all times? For example, when doing craft and art shows, you will need to have 4x the amount of inventory from what you want to sell (thus, \$1000.00 of inventory to sell \$250.00 of merchandise).

Do you have a tickle system signaling times to reorder?

What have you based your par levels on? Sales rate? Time it takes to acquire items?

If demand changes, do you have strategies for adjusting your par levels?

Do you need to maintain any samples of your work which never get sold, but are used for displays, promotions, or photography?

Do you need to have finished pieces on hand, or will you make pieces to order on demand?

2. *Inventory Management:*

Storing and Tracking your FIRST IN, FIRST OUT (FIFO)

You want your oldest stock to get sold first.

Are your things stored and displayed to meet this principle?

Do you have adequate storage space? Containers?

What is it costing to you maintain your desired storage levels?

When stock doesn't sell within a reasonable time, what are your plans? Deconstruct finished pieces and re-use the parts? Discount or write-off dead parts inventory?

**3. *Inventory Management:*
Maintain strong relationships and
communication with your suppliers**

What is it about some suppliers that you like, or that you dislike?

Will they accept returns?

Can they handle special orders?

If something is not currently available, can they tell you when it will be in stock again?

Will they work with you to waive minimums?

Do you have back-up suppliers in case your primary supplier can't come through?

**4. *Inventory Management:*
Maintaining Resiliency and
Doing Contingency Planning**

You need to actively and continually do *What If Analysis*.

What if...

An item becomes especially popular?

You run out of cash?

Storage becomes an issue?

Your tracking and data system somehow goes awry?

Parts become unavailable or are discontinued?

Parts or merchandise are damaged or spoiled?

Customer wants, needs, demands, desires or shopping behaviors change?

Other unforeseen circumstances?

Do you have any part of your inventory set aside for use in case of an emergency?

**5. *Inventory Management:*
Auditing your inventory on a regular basis.**

Auditing will include a mix of big, scheduled activities and some spot checking. Auditing means establishing a baseline. It means identifying current inventory challenges. It means evaluating your current procedures and data systems, and identifying their strengths and weaknesses.

Besides *identifying each item and its description*, you might want to collect and audit data related to one or more of these variables:

- *Product SKU (product code)* Create code numbers where each number/letter in the code will make ordering easier and faster.
Example: 600-523.131AB where the 600 represents glass bead series, the 523 the specific product item, and the .131AB the color code.
- *Weight*
- *Dimensions*
- *Source(s)*
- *Price Paid per unit* (unit might be a specific part or it might be a finished piece of jewelry)
- *Date last price paid per unit increase*
- *Amount in stock*
- *Minimum units which must be ordered*
- *# of units typically ordered at one time*
- *Rate of units ordered or sold per year*
- *Selling price*
- *Total cost per piece* (for finished jewelry)
- *Production time* (for each finished piece)
- *Photo / image*

NOTES: (additional information you want to associate with any particular product)

6. Inventory Management: Prioritizing Inventory by Value.

Some value might have to do with how much something contributes to revenue and profitability. Items with higher mark-ups would get more attention.

Some value might have to do with the rate of turnover. Items more popular and sell faster would get more attention.

For management purposes, it might be useful to establish 3 groups of value.

Group A might represent things contributing 50% of value.

Group B might represent things contributing 35% of value.

Group C might represent things contributing 15% of value.

7. Inventory Management: Forecasting.

You want to be in a position where you can predict future demand, perhaps over the next year or two. You want to be able to define seasonality fluctuations. You want to anticipate the impacts of any upcoming promotions or advertising. Much of forecasting involves tracking your orders/sales and relating this back to inventory.

8. Inventory Management: Timing.

What time issues/management would be associated with maintaining the lowest inventory possible to meet your demand. Here you tried to understand if you can shift the costs of storage and securing supplies over to your suppliers. However, customers these days often demand immediate satisfaction, so shifting some costs to supplies may be problematic for you.

The systems you have built to track, maintain and analyze your money flows and your inventory are sustained by a whole set of receipts and admin-istrivia related to banking, insurance, credit card processing, travel, and working with employees and independent contractors.

FOOTNOTES

Campbell, Casandra. *What Is Inventory Management? How To Track Stock For Your Ecommerce Business*, Inventory Management, 6/19/20.

As referenced in:

[Inventory Management](https://www.shopify.com/blog/topics/inventory-management) (https://www.shopify.com/blog/topics/inventory-management)

Caramela, Sammi, *10 Essential Tips For Effective Inventory Management*, Business News Daily, 4/15/2020.


As referenced in:

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/10613-effective-inventory-management.html>

24.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Efficiency, Effectiveness, Component Design Systems

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do I achieve both efficient and effective success in my design process? Could the same piece be done in less time with as successful a result?2. What is component design, and how does it reduce design debt?
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<p>Keywords: component design debt</p>	<p>efficiency effectiveness design system</p>	<p>standardization variation</p>
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Jewelry designers do not necessarily think of efficiencies when organizing and arranging their designs or production processes. They primarily focus their thinking and energies on how to effectively and successfully go from one end to the other to achieve an object of beauty and appeal. But the next question becomes: Is this the most efficient, as well as most effective, way? Could the same piece be done just as well in less time? With less effort? With just as good of a result? An example of a strategy for balancing efficiency with effectiveness is called a Component Design System.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

For most jewelry designers, the primary focus on their work is on creating pieces which are beautiful and desirable. The focus is on *effectiveness*. But as a business, you have to repeatedly ask yourself, *But At What Cost?* That is, you need to think about *efficiencies* in the design and production processes, if you are to make a sufficient profit and survive and thrive as a business.

Design Debt:

Something Serious Which Needs To Be Managed

In more jargoned, but eye-opening, language, things the jewelry designer can do to increase efficiency will also reduce what is called *Design Debt*.

Design Debt refers to all the inefficiencies in your design and production processes which

add more time and effort to what you are trying to accomplish, as you are designing or producing any piece of jewelry. Design Debt continues to accumulate and increase as a project matures over time. Even after the designer has relinquished the project to the client, Design Debt will continue to accumulate if the designer fails to deal with it head on.

Design Debt includes things like...

- *Taking too much time to meet your goals*
- *Having to do too much research or experimentation when figuring out how to proceed*
- *Spending too much time thinking how to make a particular piece of jewelry unique or special for a certain client*
- *Failure to adequately streamline the steps in the production process*
- *Failure to match each step in production with the skill and pay level of the person doing it*

Design Debt also includes all the good design concepts or solutions you skipped in order to complete your project on time. Design Debt includes all the additional time and effort you will have to make, should you have a backlog of projects which keep accumulating and accumulating as you are trying to finish the particular project you are now working on.

Some designers might approach the ever-accumulating Design Debt by cutting corners or relinquishing the project to the client prematurely. The designer might settle for a lower fee or less profitability. The designer might find that negative word-of-mouth is building too quickly with unsatisfied clients or demanding business stakeholders.

There are many sources of Design Debt, some very tangible, others less so. Examples of these sources of Design Debt include...

- The designer relies on an overabundance of non-reusable materials, or too much variation in inventory, or, inconsistent styles and conventions, all difficult to maintain
- The designer might start a project with assumptions, rather than research
- The designer might not have sufficient time or budget to implement each choice and step with care
- The designer might not have a full understanding of how each design element, form and component should best be arranged and interact within a particular composition
- The designer might be working with a partner or assistant, with incomplete information passing hands, as each works on the project
- The designer might not have a chance to test a design before its implementation or sale
- The designer might not get the opportunity to find out what happens with a

particular piece after it has left the studio and the client wears it

- The designer might not have in place any formal or informal time and procedure for reflection and evaluation, in order to understand how various choices led to good or bad designs, or whether there is an improvement or degradation in the designer's brand due to good or bad performance
- The designer might rely on published patterns without the wherewithal to adapt or customize them, or otherwise approach unfamiliar situations

Ultimately, Design Debt is measured in how satisfied our clients are with the products we design, (also understood as revenues and profits) and how that satisfaction affects what is referred to as *contagion* – the spread of word of mouth and its positive or negative impacts on our brand and reputation (again, also understood as revenues and profits). Over time, Design Debt accumulates and becomes a great burden on any designer and design business.

Anything which unifies the design process and reduces variability in the numbers and types of choices we make as designers will help us tackle Design Debt.

Can Jewelry Designs Be Both *Effective* And *Efficient*?

Jewelry designers do not necessarily think of *efficiency* when organizing and arranging their designs. They ponder how to go from one end to the other, focusing their efforts on achieving an *effective* level of satisfaction and appeal. They think a lot about the use and placement of colors, textures and patterns. They figure out ways to attach a clasp. They jump from selecting design components to arranging them. And in this sense, visually, they tend to see their designs as a Gestalt – that is, they appreciate and evaluate their satisfaction with the piece as a whole. That piece as a whole should evoke a greater satisfaction, sense of finish and success moreso than the individual parts. And in general, that's the way it should be. Designers want to be effective as designers. This is what effectiveness is about.

But the next question becomes is this *efficient*, as well as *effective*? Could the same piece have been done just as well in less time? With less effort? With less thought about design elements and their arrangement? With less investment in all the beads and other pieces which eventually become finished pieces of jewelry? Is this a piece which could be created over and over again for multiple clients and larger productions? Could we be just as creative and just as effective by building in more efficiency into the process of design? Would adding an intervening step – that is, using design components to build components and then using components to build compositions – be smarter?

ONE TYPE OF SOLUTION BY WAY OF EXAMPLE: COMPONENT DESIGN SYSTEMS

Re-thinking the design process in terms of components and component design systems provides one intriguing set of answers. Approaching design as a Component Based Design System is an especially good option for designers to incorporate, and for those designers who want to build their designing into a profitable business. Even if you are not headed in a business direction, thinking of design in terms of components and component systems offers a whole new way of creative thinking and design possibilities.

Component Based Design allows the designer to deal with a smaller number of pieces and variables at any one time.

Component Based Design leverages previous thinking and exploring, reducing the number of tasks which have to be done for each subsequent piece of jewelry.

And Component Based Design allows the designer to more easily and directly relate any kind of feedback to specific project design choices.

Keep It Simple Stupid (KISS). There is an operational business principle that states: If you minimize variation, you'll minimize errors. And of course, if you minimize errors, you'll have more profits and success.

The more you can standardize procedures, the less error in:

- How things get designed
- How things get made
- How things get stored
- How things get organized

This doesn't mean you have to restrict yourself to making the same thing over and over again. But you might, for example, want to make 10 similar bracelets at one time, rather than bop around from bracelet to necklace to lanyard to a completely different type of bracelet, and so forth.

This also doesn't mean that you lower your standards in order to increase your output. You are lowering variability, not standards. As a designer, you always want to maintain high expectations for your work.

What Is A Component?

A component is a something well-defined that feels like a whole unto itself. It can be a form. It can be a shape. It can be an object. It can be a set of steps or procedures. It has these kinds of characteristics:

- Modularity
- Replaceability
- Portability
- Re-usability
- Functionality encapsulated within the component's design
- Is minimally dependent on the use or presence of other components
- Anticipates its implementation
- Intended to interface and interact with other components
- Not context specific
- Can be combined with other components to create new possibilities

If we think of a piece of jewelry as an architectural object, then it would be made up of a set of components which in some way conform to one another and interact with one another in a common, predictable way. The designer would create sets of components. Then any finished composition and design would be assembled from these components.

Components will range in complexity. In general, the more complex the component, the more limited its applications. The more re-usable your components are, the easier they are to design with. The more re-usable your components are, the easier it will be to scale your projects larger or smaller, longer or shorter, more volume or less volume. Components allow you to take something apart which isn't selling or no longer useful, and re-use all the parts.

What Is Component Based Design?

Component Based Design is a process of building a piece of jewelry in pieces, sections or segments.

These pieces are combinations of design elements.

These combinations of design elements become a set of smaller, manageable parts, which themselves are assembled into a piece of jewelry.

Systems of re-usable design components will allow any number of design possibilities. A component based design system provides a commonality within a visual language.

Instead of focusing on designing a particular product, the designer concentrates on creating a *design system*. The designer's principal responsibility in the formation of style is to create meaningful forms. These forms are more than shapes. These forms contain the essential elements which contribute to the jewelry's aesthetic and functional structure and composition. Some forms will be able to stand on their own; others, may be dependent on the presence and organization of others.

Component Based Design Systems enable the designer to build better products faster by making design re-usable. Re-usability allows designs to more easily be adapted to different body types, context-requirements, and/or scales.

Component Based Design Systems require clear documentation for each component, and a set of rules or standards for their use and assembly. Standards govern the purpose, style, and usage of these components. Documentation and standards help the designer avoid situations where you find yourself reinventing the wheel, so to speak. It helps the designer deal with such things as backlog, adapting different versions of a particular design, and concurrently managing both short-term and long-term goals and aspirations. It allows the designer to spend more time and focus on the trickier and more difficult part of coming up with designs specific or unique to each client.

How Is Component Design Helpful For Jewelry Designers?

Component Design allows for the designer to...

- *Design consistently*
- *Prototype faster*
- *Iterate more quickly*
- *Improve usability*

Design consistently. Standardized components used consistently and repetitively create a more predictable outcome. Standardized components also allow designers to spend less time focused on style, and more time developing a better user-experience and client outcome.

Prototype faster. Working within a coherent design system allows you to more quickly and easily organize your work flows. It allows you to experiment over and over again with the amount of prototypes and variants. Working with and within a design system should also provide greater and faster insights into design dilemmas and solutions.

Iterate more quickly. Design systems reduce the effort in design, from having to try out myriad colors, patterns, textures, scales and other design elements, to only having to try out a few components in the design system.

Improve usability. Should reduce inconsistent, unworkable or illogical combinations of things within any composition. In return, this should increase client satisfaction when wearing any piece of jewelry so created.

Creating A Component Based Design System

A Component Based Design System has...

- *Visual elements*
- *Modular elements*
- *Standards*
- *A voice and tone*
- *A relationship to client needs*

Your Component Based Design System can either be

1. *Decoupled from any specific project*, which is effective for establishing a brand identity, or
2. *Coupled to a specific project*, which is more effective for developing a line of jewelry made up of individual pieces.

Creating a Component Based Design System involves Six Key Task-Activities, which are...

1. **Conducting Visual Audit of Current Designs / *Inventory***
2. **Determining Your Voice and Tone / *Brand Identity***
3. **Designing A Component / *Modular Elements***
4. **Creating Component Based Design System(s) / *Library of Documentation and Standards***
5. **Defining Rules of Scale / *Size, Volume, Distribution and Placement***
6. **Relating To Customer Needs / *Shared Understandings and Desires***

(1) Visual Audit of Current Designs / *Inventory*

You will need to carefully review the visual elements you use in your current jewelry design practice.

You want to create a visual design language of discernable design elements, shapes, forms and components you are using now.

You will in effect be creating two inventories:

- First, a ***Visual Inventory*** of design elements which are visual features, and
- Second, a ***Functional Inventory*** of those beads, findings, shapes, forms and/or other component parts which are functional and interface with the wearer, such as

clasp assemblies or things which allow a piece to move, drape and flow, or things which make a piece of jewelry adjustable, or things which allow a piece of jewelry to maintain a shape or position.

For each discernable set of design elements, (*such as, color, pattern, shape, form, movement, dimensionality*) or completely formed component, you would generate a description based on auditing the following *design elements*:

1. color, finish, pattern, texture
2. point, line, plane, shape, form, theme (typology)
3. sizing and spacing and scale (2-4 sets of standards of utilization; or by body type)
4. movement and dimensionality
5. canvas (*stringing materials; foundation*)
6. principles of composition, construction, manipulation; layouts
7. support systems (*allows movement, drape and flow*), structural systems (*allows maintaining shapes or positions*) and other functional elements
8. plans, guidelines, icons

Your inventories can be a simple check-list, or more narrative descriptions.

By creating a 2-layer Inventory of Design – Visual and Functional -- you will be able to visualize the possible design components and patterns you might have at your disposal, as well as quantify what you are working with. Cataloging these details puts you in a better management/control position. This makes visible many of the consequences of your choices and selections in terms of managing Design Debt.

After you have finished creating your initial Inventory, review it. Identify where inconsistencies are. What things are must-haves? What things are superfluous?

Then look for things which go together or will be used together. Develop a simple system of categories to group things into. Keep the number of categories short. Examples of categories might include Patterns, Templates, Themes, User Interface, Foundations, Center Pieces, Color Palettes, Linkability.

(2) Determine Your Voice and Tone / *Brand Identity*

You want your parts, components and groupings of components, when used in the design of a piece of jewelry, to give the impression of you as a designer and/or your business's personality.

Look at your inventory and ask yourself: What are the more emotional, intangible qualities these seem to evoke? Do they evoke things, not only about my design sense today, but about what I aspire to be as a designer? How do I want my clients to respond to my pieces?

There should be a high level of coherence within your groupings of components. They should express a voice and tone, either of your entire brand, or of a particular line of jewelry you have created.

If there is not a high level of coherence, determine why not. What adjustments do you need to make in your inventory to achieve this?

(3) Design A Component / *Modular Elements*

Begin to take your visual inventory and re-imagine it as one or more collections or categories of components.

Types of components to think about:

- Re-usable
- Repeatable
- Build-upon / Connectible / Linkable
- Scale-able
- Evolvable over time
- Has necessary function
- Has necessary shape, form or theme
- Can easily interface with customer as the jewelry is worn

Some components will be ***modular and self-contained***, thus not dependent on the presence of other components. Some components will be ***compositional*** in that they fit or coordinate well with others. Some components will be ***generic***, thus usable in many different kinds of situations. And some components will be ***flexible*** because they can be tweaked and made to work in a variety of situations.

Now, actually begin to develop components. Towards this end, start with developing one component.

1st: List the key design elements, such as color, pattern, texture, shape, movement, dimensionality, and the like. These are the particular design elements you want associated with your core brand identity.

2nd: Define the smallest re-usable parts, such as beads, bead clusters, connectable links, stringing material and the like.

3rd: Scale up and define a complete component

4th: Scale up and define a composition consisting of several arranged components

5th: Fully layout the piece of jewelry, which will consist of one or more components and one or more compositions.

As you develop components, you will always need to keep in mind two things:

- a) How you want the component to behave within your piece, and
- b) How you want the component to interface with the client wearing the jewelry

(4) Component Based Design Systems / *Library of Documentation and Standards*

Your design system is much more than a pattern library. It is a collection of re-usable components which can be assembled together in any number of ways, and used to clearly signal and cement the identify of your brand as a whole, or of a particular line of jewelry you have developed.

As such, the system has *meaning*. It has *structure*. It embodies a *system of concepts* relevant to and representative of you as a designer and your design business or avocation. It is *resilient*.

Towards this end, to build in these meanings and intentions and expectations, you will develop a set of standards. Adhering to standards is how we manage and maintain consistency with how these meanings / intensions / expectations are expressed within any piece of jewelry we create. Following the standards is how we influence our clients to consistently come to share these understandings. Standards remove a lot of the arbitrariness in our design decisions. These standards should be put in writing, and be part of your documentation library.

Regardless of what materials, tools and techniques specific to your jewelry design practice, a successful design system will follow a core set of standards developed by you. These standards will inform you how components should be designed and how they should be organized within any composition.

These standards will focus on the following:

Brand touch points. What design elements or their arrangements evoke immediate associations with your jewelry designs?

Consistent client experience. What design elements, components or their arrangements result in a consistent client experience? When your client buys your jewelry and wears it, how does the client feel? How does the client want others to react, and does the client in fact get these reactions? When your client wears your jewelry, what needs, wants and desires does s/he want to be fulfilled, and how successful has your jewelry been towards this end? How do you maintain consistency in construction, functionality and durability of your pieces?

Coherent collection. To what extent do all the pieces in your collection similarly represent your brand and result in a similar, consistent client experience?

Naming conventions. What names should we give to our components, our pieces of jewelry, our lines of jewelry, our business and brand identity as a whole? How will these names resonate with our clients? Which names do you want to be universal, and which iconic?

Emphasis. What aspects of your jewelry do you want the client to focus on? Which aspects of your jewelry are most likely to trigger a conversation between you and the client, and between the client and that person's various audiences? Is that the conversation about your jewelry you want people to have?

Utility. What is each component, and how should you use it? What rules should you follow for building modular, composable, generic and flexible components? For linking and connecting them? How do you manage modifying any one component?

Potential. What determines if a component is to have a high potential value? Does the component have great commonality in use and/or re-use? Does the component have great business potential, whether or not it can be commonly used? Does the component have great potential in creating patterns or textures or shapes or forms or themes? Is the component technically feasible to create? Can this component be created within a certain timeframe, if there are time constraints? Does this component have the potential to excite others?

Codify, thus standardize, how components are described and detailed. Include information about basic design elements, such as color, pattern, texture, finishes. Give your component a name. Describe how you can adjust for scale – making something larger, smaller, with more volume, with less volume. Elaborate on any assembly considerations. Also anticipate in writing any situational or contingency requirements. Provide insights into how this component fits in with other components, or becomes the core component from which additional components might be fashioned. Write some notes about how the component is consistent with the standards for your brand / jewelry lines which you have developed. Last, take a picture of your component and include this image in your database.

(5) Scale / Size, Volume, Distribution and Placement

Scalability has to do with size and volume, and your strategies for adapting your

component to different scales. You might think about a larger version for a necklace and a smaller version for a bracelet. You might think of modifying the component to increase its volume for use as a center piece pendant.

Scalability in jewelry will also refer to the ease of placing or distributing variations in size and/or volume.

Scalability begins with taking a modular approach to your jewelry design work. Additionally, your component must express some characteristics which are both generic as well as flexible. You want your components to be able to grow and shrink with the content of your pieces. I like to develop both a larger and a smaller version of each component, which I get very specific on and document. This usually gives me enough information should I still want to change size or volume.

(6) Relate To Customer Needs / *Shared Understandings and Desires*

For any design, it is a long journey from idea to implementation. This journey involves different people at different times along the way. The designer's ability to solve what is, in effect, a complex problem or puzzle becomes a performance of sorts, where the designer ferrets out in various ways – deliberate or otherwise – what the end users will perceive as making sense, having value and eliciting a desire powerful enough to motivate them to want to wear a piece of jewelry, buy it, utilize it, exhibit it or collect it. The designer, however, wants one more critical thing to result from this performance – recognition and validation of all the creative and managerial choices he or she made during the design process.

People will not use a design if their agendas and understandings do not converge in some way. They will interact with the designer to answer the question: *Do You Know What I Know?* If they get a sense, even figure out, that the answer is *Yes, they share understandings!* – they then become willing to collaborate (or at least become complicit) with the designer and the developing design.

A Component Based Design System forces the designer to incorporate these shared understandings into the development and organization of components. Component choices must be justified according to a set of standards. This set of standards relates design choices to how the client will perceive and respond to your brand identity or the identity you want any line of jewelry to reflect. A Component Design System creates tight guidance and boundaries, increasing not only the efficiency of your operation, but your effectiveness at developing jewelry which is consistent, coherent, user-friendly, user-desirable, and contagious.

Re-orienting your design practice towards a Component Based Design System may seem daunting, at first. But it gets easier and faster as the system grows and evolves. It is well worth the effort.

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25.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Employees and Independent Contractors



Guiding Questions?

1. What do I need to do when hiring employees?
2. What is the difference between an individual working for me as an employee vs. as an independent contractor?

<p>Keywords: employee independent contractor</p>	<p>W-4, W-2, W-3 forms 1099 and 1096 forms W-9 form</p>	<p>modeling behav- iors commissions base salary</p>
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Employees and Independent Contractors

Sometimes you need to work with help. You might hire part-time or full-time employees outright. You might pay someone on commission or per piece where that person works as an independent contractor rather than an employee. You might barter and trade teaching someone some skills in exchange for some work, like hiring an unpaid intern or apprentice.

In these situations, you will need to anticipate if, after paying someone, and with employees also paying additional taxes, you can still make a profit.

Some IRS forms to pay attention to:

With hired employees:

forms **W-4** (when hired)

Form W-4 tells you, as the employer, the employee's filing status, multiple jobs adjustments, amount of credits, amount of other income, amount of deductions, and any additional amount to withhold from each paycheck to use to compute the amount of federal income tax to deduct and withhold from the employee's pay.

forms **W-2** and **W-3** (annually)

A W-2 tax form shows important information about the income each employee has earned from you the employer, amount of taxes withheld from their paycheck, benefits

provided and other information for the year. Employees use this when submitting their income taxes.

Form W-3 is a tax form used by employers to report combined employee income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Social Security Administration.

With independent contractors:

forms **W-9** (before contract gets implemented)

Form W-9 is used to provide a correct Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) to the person (in this case, you) who is required to file an information return with the IRS to report, for example: Income you paid to someone else who was not one of your employees.

forms **1099-MISC** and **1096** (annually)

Form 1099-MISC reports payments made to others in the course of your trade or business, not including those made to employees or for nonemployee compensation. The independent contractor uses this form when submitting their income taxes.

Form 1096 is a summary of non-employee compensation which you the employer submit to the federal government. This summarizes all the 1099-Misc forms you distributed.

You will need to have an employer account set up with your state department of employment. You will be responsible for submitting SUTA payroll taxes to this agency. You will need to have a federal EIN number. You will be responsible for submitting FUTA payroll taxes to the IRS. If you have 5 or more either part-time or full-time employees (which means bodies, not full-time-equivalents), you will have to contract with an insurance company to provide Worker's Compensation insurance.

Employees

It is never easy finding employees who have the skills and attitudes you need. Be prepared to provide a lot of training. Remember to very visibly and repeatedly model all the behaviors you want the employee to copy and internalize.

Have handy a copy of all your business policies and procedures.

Be clear about your basic expectations, particularly about reliability, honesty and motivation to start and complete tasks.

Commissions

Instead of hiring staff, you might rely on people to sell your jewelry and get a commission.

A fair commission would be 15-25%.

If they are on the road, you might consider reimbursing some travel expenses.

Sometimes it makes sense to offer a base salary plus a commission for any sales they make.

Independent Contractors


Hiring and managing staff as well as all the payroll accounting involved can sometimes feel overwhelming. One option is to farm out some of your production work to other independent businesses. Technically these would be called Independent Contractors. They become responsible for their own staffing and payroll accounting.

Legally, however, you cannot hire someone who, in effect, works as a regular employee, but you pay them as if they were an independent contractor. This would make it appear that you are avoiding providing benefits that regular employees get.

26.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Banking, Insurance, Credit Card Processing

	<p>Guiding Questions? <i>1. What do I need to consider when setting up banking, insurance and credit card processing?</i></p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>banking insurance credit card processing</i></p>	<p><i>DBA doing business as name transaction fees discount rate contract lease</i></p>	<p><i>liability zoning code restrictions merchant cc account vs. shared account</i></p>
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Banking, Insurance and Credit Card Processing

BANKING

BANK ACCOUNT: It is better to have a separate bank account for your business than for personal. If you use a personal bank account for your business, it is a good idea to have your bank-checks printed up in the business-check size. If you are a solo proprietorship, you would print your name (which would in this case be your business name) on the checks, and under your name, you would print your doing business name as (DBA), as in:

*Janet Jackson
 DBA Retro Jewelry Designs.*

If you have employees, it is useful, from a financial management standpoint, to have a separate business bank account that is dedicated to all payroll expenses (salaries and taxes).

Whether you are using a personal or business banking account, be sure to print

your checks using the Business Check format. On your business checks, it is a good idea to have checks with your business name on it. You can either open a Business Checking Account, or have your business name printed on your Personal Checking Account checks. If printed on your personal checks, then again, you list your own name (which is your official business name) on the check, and under your name, you list “DBA, *Your Business Name*”, where DBA stands for Doing Business As.

INSURANCE

At some point, you will need to purchase business insurance to cover liability and theft or loss of property (inventory and equipment) issues and medical issues (you or an employee getting hurt in the context of the job).

In most places, running a business out of your home violates local zoning codes. You may not qualify for a company’s business insurance package if you are violating these laws. Check your homeowners insurance policy.

REMEMBER: When working with any insurance agent, that agent is professionally obligated to report any violation of the law, including these zoning laws, to the authorities. This is true, even if your insurance agent is your sister!

So, when you discuss insurance with your insurance agent, you will need to pose your questions as “*What If?*” questions – “What If I were to start a business in my home” -- rather than indicate you already have or absolutely intend to locate a business in your home.

USE OF A CREDIT CARD

It is a better idea to use a separate credit card for your business than for your personal uses. If you do use one card for both personal and business, be sure to mark all original charged invoices and receipts as to which use they refer to.

CREDIT CARD PROCESSING

Whatever location your business is in – home, storefront, craft show – you will need to be able to take credit cards. Very few customers use cash nowadays.

You will need to be able to accept a lot of different credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express. Ideally, you want to use a processing company that lets

you accept all these cards.

You will need to be able to swipe a card, insert a card to have its chip read, as well as manually enter a card number without the card present. You might need to be able to let someone touch their phone or their card to your credit card machine to do the transaction.

You may want to open a credit card processing *merchant account*. Or you might use a company that doesn't require you having your own merchant account. In this case, you would be using that company's *shared account*. Some prominent companies which do shared accounts include PayPal and Square and GoPayment and Stripe. With the internet, competition for credit card services has gotten so fierce, that many of the rates and combined costs have been converging. Using a company with shared accounts will reduce the various certification and reporting requirements associated with having you own account.

Check your options online and do some serious comparisons here. Comparisons will not be straightforward because different companies which offer credit card processing services make their money in different ways. They will be inexpensive on some things, and more expensive on others. Some companies make money by leasing equipment. Others by charging you a fee for each sale (per transaction fee). Others by charging you a rate per dollar volume of each sale (discount rate).

Sometimes you can get used/rebuilt equipment very cheaply online. But how cards are processed can change frequently, sometimes necessitating the purchasing of new equipment.

If you are locked into a multi-year lease on equipment or on credit card processing through a particular company, you will be liable for the expense through the end of the contract, even if you close your business before then. No-contract options are very appealing. One-year contracts are OK. Three-year contracts start to get risky, but may be an appealing option, given their whole package.

It is a good idea to check whether the credit card processing company has credit card scanning attachments that connect to your phone or tablet or operate with Wi-Fi. This is especially important if you are doing sales off site, like at a craft show.

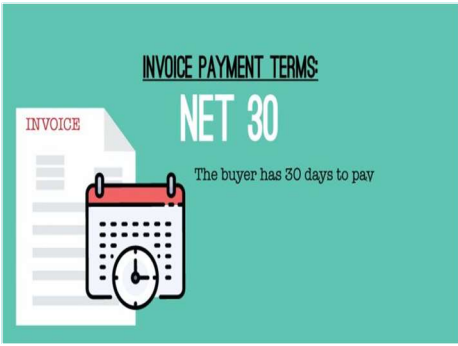
Data systems are in place. Procedures are in place. Basic business relationships are in place. Now you need to create mechanisms to secure all this, that is, to secure the in-flows and out-flows of money so that you are taking the risks you want to take and achieving the rewards

you believe you should get in return. These mechanisms include formal and informal arrangements and contracts, such as getting terms, getting paid, and crowd funding your business.

27.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Getting Terms

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <p>1. What do I need to do to get payment terms from my suppliers?</p>
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<p>Keywords: terms net 30 / net 10</p>	<p>trade credit COD cash on delivery</p>	<p>credit sheet</p>
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Getting Terms

Whenever possible, I suggest trying to get *net terms* with your suppliers. Net terms is a form of *trade credit*. Instead of paying upfront for your supplies, your suppliers will give you some predetermined period of time to pay for these goods. You get your supplies right away without having to pay until an agreed-upon future date.

Usually, you would get Net 30 terms, meaning you would pay within 30 days. Sometimes, if you have not paid within the terms set, you might get assessed a penalty fee.

To apply for net terms with any supplier, you would submit a *Credit Sheet*.

In a similar way, you might want to offer some of your wholesale customer terms. You would specify the rules and expectations in your FAQ. [**See chapter 88. FAQ.**]

CREDIT SHEET

You will want to prepare a *Credit Sheet* which lists the following information. You give this sheet to businesses where you want to apply for terms.

When you buy things from businesses, you can pay *cash* (sometimes check or credit card) – this is considered Pre-Payment.

You can pay *COD* (cash on delivery), but there is usually an extra COD charge tacked on.

Or you can pay on *terms* or “on account”, usually signified as Net 30 or Net 10, where you

would have 30 or 10 days to pay your bill. If you don't pay within that time, the business may take away your privilege to buy on terms, or charge you a late fee.

CREDIT SHEET

Name of Your Business goes here

The information which goes into the credit sheet includes:

- Your Name
- [If you have a partnership, you will have to list all the names and their home address]
- Your Business Address, Phone, Email, Web-site address.
- A paragraph which summarizes what your business is about. *Use keywords the companies you are applying to use in their own marketing materials and website home pages.*
- The date your business was founded
- Whether your business is a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or a corporation
- Your Personal Address, Phone
- Your State Resale Number
- Your Federal EIN number, if you have one; otherwise put your Social Security Number
- Your Business-Related Bank Account Numbers (checking account, savings account)
- At least 3 Business References -- their Names, addresses, phones, fax numbers, and your customer account number with each of these businesses. It's important to have the Fax number and your Customer Number. Many businesses will not communicate credit information by phone. [The more business references you have, the better.] Ideally, you would list 3+ other businesses that you already have terms with. When you are just getting started, sometimes you have to use some fuzzy-logic here.

FOOTNOTES

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28.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Getting Paid

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <p>1. What do I need to do to make sure that I am getting paid on time for my pieces or services?</p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>getting paid</i></p>	<p><i>deposit</i> <i>terms</i></p>	<p><i>invoice</i> <i>statement</i> <i>payment policy</i> <i>penalty</i></p>
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[Also see the chapter on 88. FAQs]

Getting Paid

Getting paid for your work can range from the straight-forward to the nightmare.

If you are doing a lot of custom work, your clients will probably pay you in increments, say 50% up front, and 50% upon completion.

If you are doing a lot of consignment, the shops may pay for anything of yours that sells perhaps quarterly. Beware that often consignment shops are slow to pay their consignees.

If you are selling wholesale to other retailers, you might have extended them terms, say Net 30, where you expect to get paid at the end of the term period. If you extend terms to someone, get them to complete a credit application ahead of time.

For each piece sold, or for several pieces sold at the same time, you will be generating some kind of *invoice*.

Each month, you might also be following up with your customers with a *statement form*, showing what has been paid, and what still needs to be paid.

INVOICE or STATEMENT FORMS (2-part forms – one for you and one for your customer). You can get a blank pad at a local stationery store, or have these pre-printed with your business name, address and phone.

More Advice

1. Establish a clear payment policy, put it in writing, post it on your website.
2. Find out in advance when the client or business will pay you.
3. Ask if the client needs a W9 form from you in order to pay you.
4. Be clear on whom in the company is responsible for paying you, and be sure to send your invoice to that particular person. If there are also special procedures for you to follow, in order to get paid, get clarity on these right up front.
5. Don't be shy about using a collection service – even if this means you'll only receive a portion (say 50%) of the money originally owed you.
6. Invoice your customers promptly.
7. Stay on top of your receivables. If a customer is late, send a reminder note. If a customer is very late, assess a penalty, say 1.5 or 2% per month. Be sure if you charge penalties that these are clearly specified in your written and posted payment policies.
8. Don't worry about losing the customer. If you are polite but firm, the customer will probably stay with you. If the customer is a dead-beat, then you do not need to continue to do business with them.
9. For large orders, you might ask for a deposit, say 25-50%.
10. Accept multiple payment options. If someone is having difficulty paying you on time, perhaps they can pay you with a credit card.
11. You might offer early payment discounts.
12. Do not payout any commissions or royalties to sales or design staff until the full invoice is paid by the customer.

29.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Developing a Growth Mindset



Guiding Questions?

1. What is a growth mindset?
2. Why is having a growth mindset important to the success of my business?

Keywords:

growth mindset
fixed mindset

taking risks

failure
doubt / self-doubt

rewards

power of Not Yet

[Also review chapter 81. RESILIENCY.]

What Does It Mean To Foster A Growth Mindset

Failure is uncomfortable. Disconcerting. Too often, we do everything we can to keep ourselves out of situations where we might fail. We focus on what could go wrong, instead of what could go right. We think we don't have the abilities to do the task. We get paralyzed. We do nothing. Or we keep repeating ourselves, producing the same-ole, same-ole, whether there is a continued market for these items, or not. Or we begin to visualize any risk as insurmountable, way bigger than it really is.

But allowing any fear of failure to become some kind of insurmountable wall works against us. If we are trying to make a go of it by selling our jewelry, we can't build these kinds of walls. Successful business people and successful businesses need to foster a culture which promotes a *growth mindset*. Simply, a growth mindset is a culture where you have permission and encouragement and confidence to take risks.

Risks are OK because they bring rewards. Rewards allow the business to maintain itself, sustain itself, grow and expand.

Failures are OK, as well, as long as they become learning experiences.

Doubt and self-doubt are OK only if they are used to trigger reflection and new ideas to overcome them.

Not having the skills requisite for the moment is OK because we are all capable of continual learning.

Temporary setbacks are OK because you have had them before and overcame them.

Carol Dweck wrote the seminal book on growth mindsets called ***Mindset: The New Psychology of Success (2006)***, with a series of related books to follow. People have either a *growth-mindset* or a *fixed-mindset*.

Those with a *growth-mindset* believe their abilities are developed through continual learning and hard work. They are more willing to experiment and try new things, and see failures as opportunities rather than setbacks.

Those with a *fixed-mindset* believe that abilities are innate – you’re born with talents or not. They seek out opportunities where specific talents, rather than effort, leads to success. They prefer to repeat tasks and apply skills they are already familiar with.

Developing a *growth mindset* means such things as...

1. Understanding the power of “Not Yet”.
2. Setting learning and continual learning goals
3. Being deliberate and constantly challenging yourself
4. Asking for honest feedback and criticism
5. Always reflecting on and being very metacognitive about your thoughts and actions, successes and failures
6. Recognizing if you are stuck in a fixed-mindset, and acknowledging your weaknesses
7. Focusing on the process, and less-so on the result
8. Getting comfortable with self-affirmation, rather than needing the affirmation and approval of others


FOOTNOTES

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30.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Crowd Funding

	Guiding Questions? 1. What is crowd funding? 2. How is crowd funding advantageous to my business?
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Keywords: <i>crowd funding</i>	<i>angel investor</i> <i>grants / loans</i>	
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Crowd-Funding

Crowd-funding is when you seek funding from angel investors, government grants, loans or crowdfunding campaigns online, like with [Kickstarter](https://www.kickstarter.com) (<https://www.kickstarter.com>), to fund your creative pursuits.

Crowd-funding creates financing opportunities. You might be looking to start a line of jewelry and mass produce and distribute it. You might be looking to franchise your business. You might have a product idea that you believe has great market potential. Jewelry products can be costume, semi-precious stones and metals (bridge jewelry), or fine jewelry.

Another crowd-funding platform is [Indiegogo](https://www.indiegogo.com) (<https://www.indiegogo.com>). This provides a great opportunity for upcoming and small jewelry businesses who have an especially marketable idea.

Each site has rules, requirements and fees. It is important to research what types of jewelry projects are most successful and are least successful on each site.

The most popular crowd-funding campaigns offer a reward to the backers. This could be in the form of product, money, or an opportunity to participate in an event.

Crowd-funding gives the designer an opportunity to pre-test his or her ideas and how the market will respond to these ideas.

Some pointers:

- Pitches with video presentations work best
- Have clear and concise goals; any potential backer should be very clear about the parameters of your project and what their money should be going towards
- You want your audience to be able to visualize your project; show them in images

what you have done before, and what you hope to do with this project; make them want it

- Reach out to your inner circle first, and evidence of their backing will legitimize and validate you and your project as you reach out to the larger market; enlist them as *deputized marketers*, asking them to spread the word, increasing your visibility and exposure, through their own social media connections
- Name your donation levels in a clever and tied-in way; you might point out that they could donate the price of a coffee or price of a cab fare to make it easier to understand how to donate to your campaign
- It helps to offer samples of your work or promotional items like stickers, posters, autographs, even T-shirts with your products branding on these
- The campaign will be a commitment of time and energy; you will always be hustling; no time to sit back and watch
- Keep your backers up-to-date with posts, newsletters, whatever
- If your donations slow down to a trickle, try a new approach to your marketing
- Remember, many campaigns reach their final goal in the eleventh hour

Accounting, bookkeeping, inventory management, record keeping, business relationships with financial institutions and suppliers are in place. You still won't be able to achieve that sweet spot between risk and reward without the appropriate business growth mind-set. In the creative marketplace, where your success relies on both your artistic/design, as well as your business, acumen, this can be difficult for you. But it can be done. With that right mind-set.

FOOTNOTES

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As referenced in:

<https://betterdiamondinitiative.org/crowdfunding-the-jewelry-business/>

31.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

What Are You Going To Sell?

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What am I going to sell? 2. What is the market for my products? 3. How do I position my products within the market? 4. How do I achieve a market fit? 5. What does it mean to “manage design”? 6. How do I price my products? 7. How do I get my products to my customers? 8. How will you get evaluation and feedback on your products and their desirability and success?
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<p>Keywords: <i>product production assembly line pricing / price points cost / labor / overhead design manage- ment product develop- ment</i></p>	<p><i>need / want / demand / buy competitive ad- vantage supply chain quality control time management rate of production limits to production</i></p>	<p><i>market / market niche shopping behav- iors product distribu- tion promotion / positioning keystone / fair pricing / what market will bear</i></p>
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Product Development

The development of bracelets, necklaces, earrings, rings and the like into saleable products is a multi-layered endeavor. You are not merely making a piece of jewelry. You are making a piece of jewelry that has some sufficient value for someone else that they will want to buy it and wear it. Of course, they need to be able to find it. You need to be able to get it to the place or places where they might find it. And your jewelry is not the only jewelry available for purchase.

Again, all products including jewelry must have a perceived value by those who covet and

buy them. It is important, then, as part of the design process, to be able to dissect the product into its component parts and attributes and judge how each plays a role in the perception of value and in feelings of desire.

It is necessary to distribute the products to places where the people most likely to buy them will see them, perhaps touch them, try them on, share them with their friends.

The products themselves will sit next to other jewelry products designed by other jewelry designers. So, things like pricing, packaging, and display gain in importance in the product development process.

Lastly, once the products are out there and sales begin to occur, it is just as important to gather feedback and evaluation to know if you should continue with these products, or go onto something else.

Sometimes time is of the essence. You need established ways to produce within a set period of time, and to replace sold merchandise within a set period of time.

Product development is a managed set of activities which asserts some degree of control over the creative design process. This set of activities is comprehensive. This set must be conducive both to the creative side as well as the administrative side of the business. Design gets integrated with management. The result is that products get produced, distributed and promoted. Effectively and efficiently.

If you plan to produce on volume, then part of the product development process is your ability to respond rapidly to follow-up orders. Can you get the materials again? Can you manufacture the product easily, or do you want to work with a secondary producer?

In the next several chapters in this unit about PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, I cover these topics:

1. ***Product development (chapter 31)***
2. ***Product goals (chapter 32)***
3. ***Product target market (chapter 33)***
4. ***Product design, development and coherency (chapter 34)***
5. ***Developing a line of jewelry (chapter 35)***
6. ***Product production (chapter 36)***
7. ***Product distribution (chapter 37)***
8. ***Product promotion and positioning (chapter 38)***
9. ***Pricing (chapter 39)***
10. ***Product launch (chapter 40)***
11. ***Product evaluation and feedback (chapter 41)***

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32.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Goals

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you want to sell? 2. What are your customer's needs, and how can your product meet those needs? 3. What is your "competitive advantage"? Why should your product be perceived as better than anyone else's?
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<p>Keywords: needs / wants / demands competitive advantage</p>	<p>customer / client value / desire attractiveness uniqueness rarity price access</p>	<p>product goals attributes one of a kind / mass market / custom costume / bridge / fine</p>
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YOUR PRODUCT'S GOALS: MEETING CUSTOMER NEEDS

Yes, products have goals. Product goals involve having a set of attributes which are perceived as consisting of sufficient enough value so as to meet customer needs, wants and desires. Sufficient enough, that is, so the customer will buy and wear the products and ultimately share the experience about buying and wearing.

Product goals, then, involve things like:

- Product attributes
- Anticipations of customer understandings and desires
- Competitive advantages
- Recognition of customer shopping behaviors
- What items you want to sell
- How original you want each piece to be

- Whether you do all the work yourself
- Your price points
- Your target market or market niches

Jewelry has attributes, some physical, some perceptual, and some emotional. These might be color, pattern and texture. They might be a price point. They might be something to complement an outfit, be suitable for a party, show power and status in a situation, reaffirm self-identity, and the ... you get the idea.

Jewelry should be designed in anticipation of how the customer will understand and desire it.

Your jewelry should be perceived as a better option than any other competitor. It might be less expensive, have more value, be more accessible, be especially rare or unusual.

Your jewelry should demonstrate that you have a clear idea of who your customer is, where they reside, what their shopping behaviors are, and what price points are most enticing. Design is a visible statement about your target market or market niche.

Your product goals include the kinds of things you want to sell and how much attention and effort you want to expend designing and making each one.

The kinds of things you want to make: necklaces, bracelets, anklets, earrings, rings, eye glass leashes, and the like.

How original you want each piece to be: custom, limited-edition, one-offs, small production, mass production.

Whether you do all the work yourself or farm some or all of it out: in-house, out-of-house, model makers, casting, metal fabrication and finishing, stone setting, stone cutting, metal plating.

Your price points: costume jewelry, bridge jewelry (such as sterling silver or gold-filled metal with stones), fine jewelry (precious metals and precious gemstones).

Your target markets/market niches: individual clients, particular industry, other specific market, mass market.

FOOTNOTES

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As referenced in:

<https://www.managementstudyhq.com/production-management-its-functions-importance.html>

33.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Target Market / Market Niche

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where do your customers live and shop? 2. What are their typical shopping behaviors? 3. What are your market boundaries (by location, by age, by lifestyle)? 4. Are you targeting a narrower market segment within these boundaries? How do you narrow your target market? 5. What kinds of things do you need to think about when marketing to your target niche or audience?
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<p>Keywords: <i>target market</i> <i>market niche</i> <i>audience</i></p>	<p><i>need</i> <i>want</i> <i>demand</i></p>	<p><i>shopping behaviors</i> <i>marketing message</i> <i>segmenting</i></p>
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Target Market / Niche

Where do your customers live and shop? What are their typical shopping behaviors? What are your market boundaries? Are you targeting a narrower market segment within these boundaries?

Before you begin to design your jewelry, or at least, concurrent with it, you need a very clear and dynamic understanding of who your potential customers are and how and where they shop.

That means, an ability to define each type of customer you hope will buy and wear your jewelry in terms of:

- Their needs
- Their wants
- Their demands
- Their actual buying behaviors
- How they will find you

- What defines the boundaries around their shopping behaviors (such as geography, access, comfort online, time/timing, competing demands on them, etc.)

Your target market or niche (that is, segment) will be a group of people who share some similar characteristics which will influence whether you are more or less successful in selling your jewelry to them.

Once a target market is identified, it can affect your product's design, packaging, price, promotion and distribution. For example, you would probably not want your men's line of bracelets sized for women, packaged in pink boxes, priced too high or low, and only available in women's clothing stores.

You will need to carefully tailor your marketing message for each of your target markets. If each market can be further segmented, you may have to come up with different messages or message delivery strategies for each market segment.

[More information in the later chapter about 38. PRODUCT MARKETING, PROMOTION AND POSITIONING.]

Market Niches (Segmentation)

You may find it useful to further narrow or segment your target market into smaller, tighter groups which would more likely buy your products.

One way of segmentation is by demographics:

- Age
- Gender identity
- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Income level
- Household size
- Education level
- Geographic location

Another way to segment your market is by using socio-psychological criteria, such as:

- Personal values
- Religious beliefs
- Opinions

- Attitudes
- Aspirations
- Politics
- Lifestyles
- Self esteem

Still another way to segment your market is to take into account some economic factors.

- Industry
- Location
- Size of cohort
- Status
- Financial Structures
- Financial Performance

Another way to segment your market, but by no means the last way, is by behaviors.

- Usage frequency
- Time and timing
- Occasion or Context
- Brand loyalty
- Benefits needed
- Color, Pattern, Texture preferences
- Style and silhouette preferences
- Materials preferences
- Techniques and technologies preferences
- What types of places they shop in

Needs, Wants, Demands

Jewelry design is not only about making beautiful, wearable things. If you want someone to buy your pieces and wear them, you have to delve deeper into things about your customer, about the markets they meander in, and about how they make decisions to part with some money. The initial thing about each market or market segment, no matter how they are defined, that the designer should get a handle on are customer needs, wants and demands.

A *need* is something required by a person to ensure safety, health and welfare. While jewelry is not considered a basic need for survival, we can begin to understand it as a social, psychological and/or societal need. Jewelry can often assist in creating a sense of belonging and connection, or of social identity, or of self-affirmation.

A *want* is something that a person desires or aspires to. A person may need a piece of jewelry for some reason, but not actually want it. If we are to sell our jewelry, we need to assist our customers in translating needs into wants. We want to signal to them in some way – it might be the look or style of the jewelry, the presentation and packaging, the marketing messages, an article written about the designer – how this piece of jewelry will help solve some problem for the customer. It might be an overall, very general problem, such as how to get noticed at work. It might be a day-to-day problem, such as a piece of jewelry to go with a specific outfit.

The customer, however, may recognize that they want a piece of jewelry, but may still be unwilling to part with some money to purchase it. The ability to use purchasing power to meet needs and wants is called *demand*. For the jewelry designer, this might involve how you price your products. How you style them. Where you sell them. How you message about them. The degree the customer sees the product as solving their specific or overall concerns. How accessible they are, given your customers' likely shopping behaviors.

FOOTNOTES

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34.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Design Management and Design Coherency

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are your product attributes? 2. What are your product benefits? 3. What are the costs associated with your product? 4. What kinds of things (tangible and intangible) have to be in place in order to make your product? 5. What should you name your product? 6. Should your product be part of a series or collection? 7. Given your product, what specifically will your customer most likely focus on? 8. How are the products you present to the world understood as coherent and having value?
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<p>Keywords: <i>product attributes physical emotional coherency design management</i></p>	<p><i>perceptions desirability value</i></p>	<p><i>contribution to decision spec sheet inventory sheet design schedule</i></p>
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Let's Reflect A Bit On Your Jewelry As A Product

<p><i>What about your jewelry do you think is especially desirable to others – desirable enough to make them want to wear it, perhaps, even buy it?</i></p>	
<p>Attributes Underlying “Desire”</p>	<p>% Contribution to decision to wear or buy</p>
<p>a. b. c. d.</p>	<p>a. b. c. d.</p>

e. f.	e. f.
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A product is made up of a set of physical and emotional attributes. These attributes are things which you have designed into your jewelry to create a customer reaction, typically a positive reaction.

You are in the design stage of product development. Management involves selecting, arranging, and constructing product attributes in such a way as to anticipate customer perceptions of value and desire. Will your design choices enhance or impede these perceptions? Will your choices, as they come together as a whole, feel coherent? Will your full collection of products feel coherent with each other, as well?

Picture this: you have a potential customer interacting with a piece of jewelry you have designed. Think about what kinds of things your customer will focus on? Which things will they see of value? Which things are most desirable? What is the trigger or triggers which influence the customer to wear and purchase your piece?

Is it...

- Materials
- Finishing
- Wearability, given what they would wear it with
- Packaging
- Venue within which it is sold
- Seasonal or timing relevance
- Access

Turn your product around, then upside down, then inside out. How does this affect perceptions of value and desirability.

Take some time to imagine some negative reactions. What would your customer's reaction be if your jewelry arrived in a diaper box?

Do some What-If thinking. Ask yourself this: Can you identify three specific changes you could make which would improve perceptions of value and quality in your work?

Do some pretesting. Test the products for function and comfort. Market-test your designs for appeal, desire, attractiveness and willingness to buy at a particular price. Be open to critiques, reviews and responses.

Design Management:

Working Towards Ever-Greater Coherency In Your Work

Creatives in business apply similar thinking routines when managing each aspect of their business. And in turn, creatives allow business fundamentals to influence them in their creative design decisions. Both creativity and product require anticipating the customer's understandings and desires. Both require a disciplined way of approaching the design of jewelry and the management of production. Both employ strategy. Both require a set of technical skills. Both require an ability to problem solve in the face of difficult or unknown situations.

The objective of design management is to create and maintain an environment both conducive to the creative process as well as management goals. It is important to consider both efficiency as well as effectiveness goals. It is necessary to take a comprehensive approach and include all aspects of the operations from inspiration to aspiration to implementation, and from design to production to distribution and marketing, pricing and promotion.

Business should be approached as *enabling*. Creativity should be approached as *cost-effective*. In this way, design maintains its central focus, and as such, becomes a strategic asset in product development, product quality, and branding.

Product design. Design is seen as a process to be managed. Aspect of our business we want to manage include,

- **Product Design:** What people, processes and things need to be coordinated and facilitated for the product design process to run smoothly?
- **Brand Design:** How do you create the reliable, trustworthy, emotional connection between your product and your customer audience?
- **Service Design:** In what ways can you make visible and credible how your product serves the needs / wants / demands of your customers?
- **Business Design:** How can you organize your business processes so that they operate more efficiently and at higher levels of effectiveness? How can you influence people and processes on the business side of things to recognize and incorporate understandings of the utility and usefulness of your product for the organization as a whole?
- **Engineering design:** In what ways do all the mechanical requirements and people skills have to be in place for the products to be designed and then implemented according to plan?

Develop a SPEC SHEET For Each Product

Your spec sheet will detail all the important information you yourself need to know about each product, what any employee or person producing the product needs to know, things you might want the customer to know, and things you might want some other business who is selling this product to know, things you would want a shipper to know.

So first, jot down everything you can think of that is important about the product.

Assume any reader will have no idea about the product.

Then, translate this into a more standardized write-up, table or spreadsheet.

Information to include:

TECHNICAL

- dimensions
- materials, including acceptable substitutes if any
- color(s), including specific manufacturer color code #s or pantone code #s
- list of component parts
- weight (in both grams and ounces)
- packaging and shipping requirementsunconscionable
- design details: instructions, diagrams, sketches, CAD requirements
- sizes /sizing (if using a formula to adjust sizes up or down)

PRODUCTION

- in-house, farmed out, mix
- lead times
- contingencies: what depends on something else to occur or be available
- suppliers for each component; secondary suppliers if primary supplier out of stock
- costs of each component
- any minimum purchase requirements for each component
- Inventory / shelf / bay / warehouse storage location

MARKETING

- product name, name of jewelry line product is a part of
- photos (for print, for online)
- product attributes

- target audience(s)
- what customer desires product attributes tap into
- what customer problems this product is designed to resolve
- points to include in any marketing message

- short description
- notes about key competitors
- display requirements / aids if needed
- list of companies / customers product has been sold to
- date / quantity of last sale(s)

PRICING

- price: how calculated, assumptions, if a pricing range and how to pick price within range
- contingency pricing: price depends on where product is sold, such as store vs. online
- discount schedule, such as discounts based on quantities purchased
- retail price / wholesale price

COMPLIANCE

- compliance with any safety measures or considerations, such as lead content / lead free designation or nickel content
- fair trade considerations

LABELING

- for in-house, for sales floor, for shipping
- SKU numbers, bar coding
- manufacturer codes
- shipping label

EVALUATION / FEEDBACK

- customer reviews
- staff reviews / opinions / experiences

Develop an INVENTORY SHEET For All Products

Your Inventory Sheet, typically a spreadsheet or multiple coordinated spreadsheets, gives you a way to monitor the flow of all your products. You need to know what is in stock, what

is on order, a way to determine how many you need to order, the primary source, an alternative source(s), and a record at least of the last 3 purchases.

You will probably want to differentiate how you track the inventory of your finished designs from the inventory of the parts you use to make those designs.

Your inventory sheet should have sufficient data, easily accessible, for you to determine rates of sales and trends.

Develop a DESIGN SCHEDULE

You use a Design Schedule mostly to keep your production process on track, particularly if you have deadlines, or there are any contingencies, or you want to have some more visible way to tell yourself how to find that balance between creative tasks and business tasks.

You want to track such information, usually in coordination with monthly, annual and tri-annual calendars, as:

- Market dates
- Seasonal requirements (For most designers, 50% of their sales will be in the fall)
- Any other requirements related to timing (Wholesale customers may need the product 3-6 months to a year before their peak selling times)
- Create time to make samples
- Create time to develop new products
- Anticipate any requirements your retail and/or wholesale customers have
- Create a balance between creative activities and production and marketing
- Anticipate all the deadlines and requirements of craft show applications
- Anticipate paperwork requirements, such as listing your products online with Ebay, Etsy or Amazon, or selling to a large department store or catalog
- Remember that you will need times for logistics – packing, shipping, tracking, creating product displays
- Create time for product feedback and evaluation

FOOTNOTES

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35.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Build A Distinctive Line Of Jewelry



Guiding Questions?

1. What goes into creating a line of jewelry?
2. What does 'coherence' mean and how do I achieve it?
3. What influences my customer to feel an emotional attachment to what I create?
4. How does my jewelry line reflect my signature style?
5. What do I need to think about if I have more than one line of jewelry – especially if they are very different from each other?

Keywords: <i>jewelry line collection display packaging</i>	<i>coherence emotional connection signature style show-stopper sizing issues</i>	<i>functional parsimonious names story</i>
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Build A Distinctive Line Of Jewelry

As you become more comfortable making and designing jewelry, you will probably want to create a distinct line of jewelry. This jewelry line would be something that your customer would recognize and appreciate as

1. **COHERENT**
2. **FUNCTIONAL**
3. **PARSIMONIOUS**

The customer should also feel an **EMOTIONAL CONNECTION** to your line of jewelry. Concurrently, the customer should understand and share your **SIGNATURE STYLE** and design intentions.

How you **NAME** your line of jewelry (as well as the individual pieces within it), and how

you craft a **STORY** about your line to use in your marketing and promotional materials goes a long way to focusing your client's attention on these critical variables: coherency, functionality, parsimony, emotional connection and signature style.

Anticipate how your line of jewelry will be **DISPLAYED**, both in a physical store, as well as online. Your various display easels, boards, trays and the like should coordinate in look and be very supportive of your pieces.

PACKAGING is the final touch to any jewelry line. It should be supportive, not competitive with your jewelry. The jewelry should always be the star. Clients appreciate attractive, thoughtful packaging. But they do not want to be overwhelmed by it.

What Makes a Cohesive, Thus Marketable, Collection?

Usually your line of jewelry will consist of 20-30 (but it could be more or less) cohesive pieces. Cohesiveness can mean many things, such as:

- Common inspiration
- Use of Design Elements, such as shape, color, texture, movement
- Similar Techniques
- Compatible Materials
- Composition and Arrangements, which should be similar but do not have to be the same
- Coordinated Price Points or Groupings of Price Points
- Similar in how customers will share understandings about the pieces as finished and successful

Within your line, you should have a few *show-stoppers* to attract attention.

Your line should anticipate all sizing issues, including how to adapt your pieces for different size requirements.

Sometimes it is helpful to review your pieces using criteria which represent the opposite of coherence. These include, *confusing, chaotic, all over the place*.

If you have more than one line of jewelry, from a branding standpoint, they should have some relationship to one another.

Special Functional Considerations May Define A Line

Sometimes, it is not the look per se that is the key to a line of jewelry, but rather how it *functions* for the client. This might mean something as simple as choosing an especially easy to use clasp, say a magnetic clasp. It might mean something a little more involved, such as a

piece's ability to be adapted for different situations, say a short necklace or a long necklace or a multistrand bracelet. One piece, but many configurations. It might mean that your jewelry is especially comfortable to wear, or easily adjusts to any body type.

Pieces Within Your Line Should Come Across As Parsimonious

Your pieces should feel *finished* and *successful*. This usually means you have found that point of *parsimony* where the addition (or subtraction) of any one design element would make the piece feel less appealing or less satisfactory.

You do not want your pieces to feel under-done or over-done. Edit carefully.

Your Line Should Evoke An Emotional Connection Between The Product And The Customer

Clients often experience the idea of cohesiveness as a feeling of *compelling*. They feel compelled to touch, to wear, to buy, to show off, to collect your pieces.

That means you need to know who you are designing for. You do not design for *anybody*. You design for *somebody*. You need to be able to anticipate their assumptions, perceptions, needs, values and desires for the qualities of what you are creating. You need to establish an emotional connection between your clients and your jewelry.

This also means you need to listen to your client. Your client is the only one who can tell you what they love and what they hate.

Your Line Should Reflect Your Signature Style

When people view your line of jewelry, you want them to associate the *look*, whatever it is, with you as a jewelry artist and designer. Designers often help this process along of making that connection by doing such things as (1) using a particular bead in every piece, perhaps placing it near the clasp, (2) adding a small tag with their initials, name, or logo and attaching this near the clasp, (3) using special packaging, (4) having a distinctive logo, (5) using rememberable names for your jewelry line as well as the pieces of jewelry within it, (6) relying on particular palettes of color or pattern or texture, (7) using reusable, repeatable components.

Naming Your Line Of Jewelry

[See the earlier chapter about 12. NAMING YOUR JEWELRY for more details.]

I find it useful in increasing attention and sales to name my jewelry. I name each piece of jewelry, and organize similar pieces of jewelry into collections and series, to which I assign names, as well.

This helps people relate to the various pieces I make. They get ***connected*** to my pieces

because the “titles” give them meanings to relate to. Naming allows me to segment all the jewelry I make into smaller subsets. This enables me to explain techniques and materials pertinent to particular pieces, so I don’t end up, in my sales pitches, making broad generalizations about what I sell. And I find people often like to own more than one piece within any series or collection. People are natural “collectors.” The familiarity these names generate seems to encourage people to want to own a second or third piece of mine.

Pointers:

Keep your names short.

Relate the names to your design work, but not necessarily too literally.

Have fun with your names.

Write Up A Short Story About Your Line

Buyers of your jewelry and other craft creations will want to know a lot about your inspirations. They will want to know how you translated these inspirations into your designs. How you thought about them, what kinds of techniques you used, where the materials come from, what makes the pieces special or original. The more they know about you, the more **connected** they feel towards you. And the more comfortable they will feel about doing business with you.

Write up a 3-4 paragraph story about yourself. It could be a true story, or it could be a fantasy you want associated with your line of jewelry.

How Will Your Line Of Jewelry Be Displayed, Both In A Physical Store Setting, As Well As OnLine?

In a physical store, always think of levels. You want to display pieces at various heights. You want to be sure there is a recognizable foreground, medium ground and background. Online, you want to have excellent images of your pieces. It is often helpful to show you piece as displayed on a fixture, as worn by someone, and 2 or 3 closeup detailed images of the piece.

Think About How You Want To Package Your Pieces

Things related to packaging:

- A tissue or cloth bag or pouch in which to place the piece
- Tissue paper or cotton or velvet lining inside a jewelry box
- Jewelry box or a suspension jewelry box
- Ribbons and bows

- Thank-You card
- Tag with your logo and/or signature
- Care, cleaning and storage instructions
- Business card
- List of materials card
- Card telling a story about the history, the use, the materials and/or the techniques
- A display stand
- Hot wax stamp
- Image of the piece, on a display and/or as worn
- Your logo or name stamped or printed on the packaging
- A gift bag within which to place some tissue paper and the jewelry box with the piece of jewelry in it

You want the colors of the packaging to be coordinated with the colors in your jewelry.

You want the materials and textures of your packaging to be consistent with any message you want to send about your jewelry and its use.

You want the experience of opening the packaging to get to the piece of jewelry to be full of wonder and excitement.

You want to think about how your packaging might protect your jewelry, particularly if it is to be shipped somewhere.

You want to use some ideas, but not all the ideas about packaging for any one piece of jewelry. Remember, the packaging is supportive and supplemental to the jewelry. You do not want the packaging to get more attention than the piece of jewelry. The jewelry should always remain the star!

Final Words of Advice: Don't let your line get stale. Your customers will always want to keep coming back for something new

CASE STUDY: Jennifer K, Change It Up

Jennifer created a line a jewelry where all the pieces were interchangeable and adjustable. You could buy a necklace that could be quickly converted to 3 different sized silhouettes. You could also turn the necklace into 1 or more bracelets. One bracelet, which was part of the necklace, could be turned into a pair of earrings. You get the idea.

Originally Jennifer named her business *JenK Designs*. I felt the customer would not feel any special connection to the name. After brainstorming awhile, we came up with the name *Change It Up*, the tag line: *Interchangeable Jewelry By Jen K*, and a logo which was a stylized version of the letters *JenK*.

We specified a set of rules her jewelry line had to adhere to. These included things like:

Each piece had to be convertible (long/short, necklace/bracelet, bracelet/necklace, bracelet earrings)

Visually organic, almost camouflaged, magnetic clasps were to be used to create this interchangeable functionality

There would be a wide use of chains in the designs

The color palette and materials used would be limited: a 5-color color-scheme, various gemstones and fancy Czech glass fitting that color scheme

The metal finishes would be limited, at least initially, to silver and antique copper

RE: Packaging. Originally, she tried to use too much stuff. There was a jewelry box, inside thank-you card, inside list of materials card, tissue paper inside the box, tissue paper to wrap the box, ribbon tied around the box, tag card attached to the ribbon. The materials used all 5 colors of the 5-color color scheme. We reduced that to a jewelry box, one color tissue paper inside, a ribbon, and a logo on a tag card on the outside.

RE: Marketing. It would have been foolish to assume, just because a client might appreciate the idea of interchangeability, that they would automatically understand how to use the products. We decided that pieces would be juxtaposed with 3 images showing how they might be worn and interchanged. In a physical store setting, there would be 3 larger images attached to a display of the entire line. Online, each piece would have 3 images associated with it.

CASE STUDY: Masali

Marsha was from Turkey and she was determined to name her business the Turkish word for *fairy tale* – Masali.

Her line of jewelry was influenced by classical Greek and Turkish jewelry. She organized her overall line into three collections, which she labeled as *Expensive*, *Moderate* and *Inexpensive*.

I suggested that clients would have a difficult time understanding what her line of jewelry was all about, let alone feel connected to it, given her preferred business name and the names she used for her jewelry line. I pointed out that many jewelry stores and websites use the generic naming related to price points. It would be difficult to differentiate herself from these.

I had her write a story about fairy tales and how these related, in her mind, to the antiquity / classical look of the pieces in her collection. She began with images from Greek mythology.

I suggested relabeling the three parts of her line something like *Olympian Classic*, *Odyssey On Trend*, and *Helen of Troy*. Then I had her come up with names for each piece of jewelry with a referent to the new price point category labels and somehow related to characters in various Greek myths. Each of the 3 collections within her line of jewelry had a unique story-related inspiration, origin and something special to be discovered when wearing these pieces.

**An Exercise For You:
CREATIVE FOUNDATIONS**

Take a favorite piece, either one you made, or one that inspires you. How many different designs you can create based on this piece? Write your ideas done here:

NOTES: Think about

- Colors, textures, forms, materials, components, silhouettes, the person you think might buy and wear these pieces, what contexts you think the pieces would be worn.
- Variety: necklaces, bracelets, earrings, pendants
- Price points; create high, medium and low price-point jewelry items

Then, take it from here. Sketch out some ideas for how to develop a line of jewelry from your Creative Foundations.

Begin to define the boundaries of what to include within your collection: Start with 10-15 different pieces. Evaluate them in terms of coherence, emotional connection with client, functionality, and parsimony.

Plan on making each of your pieces in 2-3 different sizes.

Do some pretesting: try selling your pieces; which work, which do not work well?

Over time: Expand collection: more metal finishes and colors; more sizes; new designs; more items in the collection (aim for 20-30 pieces per collection)

Develop...

- Logo
- Tag line
- Elevator pitch
- Forms, components, themes
- Packaging
- Pricing
- Merchandising and display; importance of visuals (color, texture, décor, communication, atmosphere); maximize aesthetics of product; lighting; displays, dealing with walls; levels on counters; signage which presents your product to greatest effect.
- Jewelry Photography and Photo-editing
- Technical drawings, CAD
- Producing jewelry in quantity; who will be making your jewelry, how and where; how to do small scale production
- Prototyping your product; cohesive line: re-usable, repeatable components; market test
- A note about social and environmental consciousness; fair trade
- Leveraging the design (t-shirt, ashtray, facemask, pen, post-its, webinar, podcast, blog, co-marketing)
- Timing: design schedule; develop around seasonal markets; work flow and selling flow

FOOTNOTES

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36.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Production



Guiding Questions?

1. How am I going to select which products to produce?
2. How am I going to produce these products?
3. Who is going to do the designs?
4. Who is going to make the piece as a whole, or any of its individual components?
5. How much product do I want to produce?
6. How am I going to control for quality and cost?
7. How will I monitor the maintenance and replacement needs of equipment, tools, furniture, electronics?
8. How can I do each step faster and better?
9. By hand or by machine?
10. In house or farmed out?
11. Handmade original parts or pre-made parts?
12. Make each piece from scratch or use CAD and casting?

<p>Keywords: <i>production selection efficiency effectiveness</i></p>	<p><i>product design process planning budgeting capacity control supervising</i></p>	<p><i>quality and cost pricing inventory maintenance and replacement</i></p>
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Product Production

Product Production Management is that collection of strategies, tasks and activities which allow you to produce the maximum amount of product (output), given all the time, materials, staffing, quality, and cost constraints (inputs). Production management includes the following functions:

1. Selection of **Product and Design**
2. Selection of **Production Process** (*particularly in terms of timing and scheduling, and determining who will be making your products, and where*)
3. Selecting Right **Production Capacity**
4. **Production Planning and Budgeting**
5. **Production Control** (*Ways to ensure how the product actually gets made fits with all the goals and constraints*)
6. **Quality and Cost Control** (*involves multiple checks throughout the whole production process*)
7. **Pricing** (*making sure all parts, labor and overhead costs are accounted for; anticipating what cushion is needed to cover unexpected costs*)
8. **Inventory Control**, and
9. **Maintenance and Replacement** of Machines, Equipment, Furniture, Electronics (*particularly if they are underperforming or damaged*)

Another way of saying this is that production management steers your resources to create goods and services to fit your market and its realities. Production management involves planning, scheduling, supervising, and activities control so you achieve that sweet spot where the number of products you are making relates to the demand for those products and generates a profit for you.

Production management can also be thought of as finding those more efficient and more effective ways of producing your jewelry so as to add value to those products. As part of this, production managers will seek feedback and evaluation from those responsible for distributing your products, as well as those responsible for marketing your products. In this way, ideas about customer preferences are merged with ideas about production.

Production management also creates a budget and determines what price items need to sell at, and how many items need to be made and sold in order for the business to show a profit.

Additional Advice

If you plan on selling to catalogs (*chapter 66*) or TV shopping (*chapter 67*) or similar venue which works on volume sales, then you will want to be able to (a) show you can produce at great volumes, (b) learn to price at various greater volume levels, and (c) if demand and orders exceed your initial run, then how quickly you can get production up and running again.

Some considerations:

- You may need to line up some secondary suppliers (for both materials as well as production capacity)
- You need to factor in how returns are handled. Who pays? Most likely, you will be financially responsible, so you need to somehow price this fact into your production planning.

FOOTNOTES

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37.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Distribution



Guiding Questions?

1. *Where will my products be sold?*
2. *How will they get there?*
3. *How will my customers find my products?*

Keywords:
distribution
channel
physical / digital

transportation
packaging
delivery
intensive
selective
exclusive

speed rates
speed bumps
intermediary
levels 0, 1, 2, 3

PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION:

Take a few minutes to answer these following questions:

1. Where can you sell your jewelry?

List different settings/places where you might sell your jewelry.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

2. Why would a physical or digital store want to sell your jewelry, either on consignment or straight wholesale? What's in it for them?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

It is important to create a legitimate distribution strategy. You do not, necessarily, want to rely on the cheapest or easiest option. You want to have some degree of control over how your product gets dispersed throughout its market.

Distribution involves making a product available for purchase within a market and includes such things as transportation, packaging and delivery. It is a pathway with its sets of rules, boundaries, requirements, speed rates and speed bumps.

In a 1-person business, product distribution is one of the things you need to think about and manage as best you can. In a larger business, you would assign this function to one person.

Sometimes distribution is a direct pathway from designer to consumer. Other times intermediaries are involved, who act as go-betweens. There are 4 levels of distribution:

- **Level Zero:** Simplest. A direct sale from designer to consumer with no intermediaries.
- **Level One:** Has one intermediary. For example the designer might sell to a retail store, which in turn, sells to the consumer.
- **Level Two:** Has two intermediaries. For example the designer might sell to a wholesaler who sells to a retailer who sells to a consumer.
- **Level Three:** Three intermediaries. The designer uses a sales representative or broker, and that person sells to wholesalers who sell to retailers who sell to consumers.

There are three types of distribution strategies:

1. *Intensive*: products placed in as many outlets as possible; saturation
2. *Selective*: products placed in a limited number of locations in various markets; allows for customization; the number of locations is capped
3. *Exclusive*: products restricted to very limited locations or location; usually used to maintain a brand image

Distribution managers oversee all this. They make sure that there are good open lines of communication. They want to know quickly if an item is selling well (or poorly), or whether an item is out of stock and needs to be reordered. They want to know if their delivery methods are working well and in a timely fashion. They want to know whether the packaging is holding up as expected. They want to be certain that products ordered online will arrive just as pictured.

Whatever mix of distribution strategies you eventually decided on, you will need to develop your product distribution strategy. This will include doing things like,

1. Learning how your target customer shops and buys
2. Studying your competitors and their distribution strategies
3. Determining what each distribution approach will cost
4. Evaluating the impact of each distribution approach on product development
5. Monitoring the positive and negative impacts any distribution approach has on your business reputation, business visibility and product branding

FOOTNOTES

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38.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Marketing, Promotion and Positioning

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How will my target market come to know about my product?2. What is my target message? What will motivate my customer to buy my product?3. What makes my jewelry or my line of jewelry marketable?4. How much should I spend on marketing?5. What makes my jewelry or jewelry collection perceived as coherent?6. What about my jewelry makes it contagious – that is, gets people talking about it and showing it off to others?
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<p>Keywords: coherence contagion show-stopper</p>	<p>marketing / pro- motion / positioning budget</p>	<p>target message motivation recruitment / retention</p>
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Market, Promote and Position Your Products

Determine Your Budget First

Marketing is more than merely getting someone in the door, so to speak. Marketing is about engaging with your customer. Marketing is about creating opportunities for your customer to experience the essence of what you and your jewelry are all about.

Your marketing/promotional budget typically is 5-20% of your product costs. When you get started in business, budget what you can.

You need to create visibility and an emotional connection of your customer to your products. You also want to be able to trigger positive word-of-mouth. This all takes strategy, time and determination.

Some math: If you are selling 50 pieces which cost you \$5.00 each, with a budget between 5% and 20%, your promotional budget will most likely be between \$12.50 ($.05 * (50 * 5.00)$) and \$50.00 ($.20 * (50 * 5.00)$).

[NOTE: I go into a lot more detail about 42. *MARKETING* in a later chapter.]

Some Marketing Self-Assessment Questions For You:

4a. Coherence and Contagion. Fashion is adopted and spread around through processes of coherence and contagion. What about your jewelry is *coherent* – well understood about how and why to wear it, and how and why to buy it? (Examples: authenticity; rarity; individuality)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

4b. What about your jewelry is *contagious* – makes people want to get others to see it, to talk about it, get involved with it, get others to try it on or buy it? What drives word-of-mouth? (Examples: visual communication; visibility of consequences; availability; rapid reproduction; fashion participation / inclusion; risk assessment; psycho / social cost benefit analysis; innovativeness; a fashion influencer likes it; something unusual)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

What Makes a Cohesive, Thus Marketable, Collection?

From a product design and development standpoint, marketing comes down to achieving two things:

1. Cohesiveness

2. Contagion

These are things about your jewelry – some tangible, some intangible – which influences people to feel a connection between themselves, their values and desires, and your jewelry as designed.

Cohesiveness

Cohesiveness might be achieved through having a certain number of related pieces, say 20 pieces in a particular jewelry line.

Cohesiveness might be achieved through the use of design elements and how they get arranged. Things included might be color or color themes, textures, patterns and the like. The compositions and arrangements do not have to be the same, but share some similarities that the customer connects with.

In a similar way, cohesiveness might result from how principles of composition, construction and manipulation are applied.

A cohesive collection might share price points.

There might be a few show-stoppers within the collection to attract attention to other pieces in the collection.

There might be similarities in how customers recognize whether the piece feels finished and successful. Customers may appreciate the artist's-hand of a particular designer. They may appreciate how the designer anticipated sizing issues.

They may like the name you have give to your jewelry collection

Contagion

People may wear and buy your jewelry, but you want to persuade them somehow to take another step. You want them to wear your jewelry in public and talk about it. You want them to buy your jewelry and talk about it. And you want them to talk about it in such a way that it persuades their family and friends and co-workers and acquaintances and strangers they happen to meet to want to seek you and your jewelry out and buy it as well.

[Also see the chapter on 46. INFLUENCE AND PERSUASION.]

This is called contagion. You want contagion to be positive, and obviously, not negative. You want it to last as long a time as possible. You do not want that excitement of your jewelry to dissipate, or be replaced by excitement for the products of one of your competitors.

The degree your jewelry meets the customers expectations about desirability and value, the more likely you are to generate positive contagion.

Your Marketing Message

People have short attention spans. There are many other businesses competing at the same time for their attention. That means, your marketing message(s) must be clear, concise, and point to the most critical element or elements you believe your customer wants to see and hear.

These message elements could be anything, including any of the following, but not everything at once and not within the same message:

- Forms, components, design elements, themes
- Packaging
- Pricing
- Using visuals in your message
- Identifying the product's best feature
- How the product is displayed, lighted, placed
- Value, rarity, accessibility, who the designer is, limits on availability
- Timing, such as attention to seasonal markets, or anticipating where your customer will be when
- Context, such as attention to the situation the customer might be in or expect to be in

Once The Customer Gets Hooked

Marketing is not a one-time deal. Your marketing job is never done. You will need to work hard to keep your customer engaged, thus motivated to buy new products from you.

Your marketing message might get bifurcated here. One message to attract new customers. Another message to keep current customers. Recruitment may require a different set of ideas and parameters than retention.


You might stage how you launch your various marketing messages over a period of time.

You might alter the focus to pay attention to different features of your product. Or different benefits your products offer. You might create a rewards structure for those who keep buying additional products.

39.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Pricing

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do I compute a price for my product?2. What determines whether a price is 'fair'?3. What kinds of things influence my price in any local market?4. If I think your customer would not be willing to pay the price of my product, what kinds of things can I change to lower that price?5. Do I include the costs of design time as well as production time in my final price? What about the time it takes to learn how to make something?
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<p>Keywords: <i>keystone / triple keystone keystone fair pricing what the market will bear</i></p>	<p><i>product cost labor cost overhead cost profit under pricing / over pricing</i></p>	<p><i>design-time make-it-time learn-to-make time investment vs. cost return on investment</i></p>
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You may be interested in my online video tutorial about [Pricing and Selling Your Jewelry](https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/pricing-and-selling-your-jewelry) (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/pricing-and-selling-your-jewelry>)

About Pricing

Whether you are approaching your jewelry making business as a part-time or full-time endeavor, your goal is to make a profit. That means, in short, you need to get adequately paid for your designs and your production. Yes, you can make serious money making jewelry. But, you have to be smart about it.

The question becomes: How do I set a price for my jewelry?

In this chapter, I introduce you to a pricing formula which you can use to compute a minimum and maximum fair price for each piece of jewelry. So, this formula generates a range of acceptable prices from which you can select. It can be applied to compute a retail price as well as a wholesale price. The formula takes into account three types of costs: *Parts, Labor and Overhead*.

Key Business Strategies Closely Interdependent With Pricing

These business strategies will influence how your costs will get translated into prices. They include:

1. **Buy Parts Cheaply**
2. **Know Your Market**
3. **Know Your Competition**
4. **Mark Up and Price To Make A Sufficient Profit**
5. **Don't discount to family, friends and co-workers**

Buy Parts Cheaply

When starting, you want to go after *depth* rather than *breadth* of inventory. Buy a limited selection of parts, colors, sizes, so you can purchase in greater volume, thus getting a lower price.

Don't try to meet every contingency. If someone wants the piece in red, and you only have purple, don't try to get the pieces in red. You won't be able to buy them in volume and get a good price for them.



Learn how to say “NO!” to the face.

You have to hold your ground for 60 seconds. Just 60 seconds. Then the person usually says, OK, I'll take it in the color you have.

When in “production” mode, you will need to develop strategies to keep from getting “bored”. After 1 year of selling, you can begin to change strategies. You can add another color

or size and expand your inventory. Eventually, you will be able to add colors/styles and have more fun, freedom and flexibility to create.

Know Your Market

Who are your customers? What are they willing to pay?

What will it cost you to link up with this market (travel, displays, packaging, timing)?

Know Your Competition

Check out similar merchandise in places your customer base goes to. What are they charging? How are they merchandising and marketing their products? How are they presenting their competitive advantages? What is their reputation?

Mark Up and Price To Make A Sufficient Profit

A sufficient profit:

- Covers ALL costs
- Gives yourself some payment
- Allows you to reinvest 15-25% into expanding your inventory
- Means your customer feels they got a fair deal

NOTE: It is always easier to lower a price than to raise it.

Don't discount to family, friends and co-workers

Through word of mouth, this ends up spreading expectations about getting low prices from you.

It is easy to lower prices, but very difficult to raise them.

PRICING STRATEGIES

Most jewelry designers (and other craft artists) are not smart about pricing their jewelry.

Often, they “*underprice*” their pieces. They give friends, relatives and co-workers discounts. They don’t charge for their labor. They feel awkward asking for a higher price.

Other times, designers and artists “*overprice*” their pieces. They see high prices in high end boutiques, and think they should match these prices. They sometimes overvalue their labor.

In either case, there is a lack of knowledge about the true costs of all the parts and activities that go into creating a piece of jewelry, and how to manage all these costs. Also making things confusing is that the artist often wears 3 hats: manufacturer, distributor, and retailer.

There are three pricing strategies which are very prominent in the jewelry and beading industries:

Keystone-ing (multiply cost by 2x), or, **Triple Keystone** = multiply cost by 3x)

Works well for a gift store or jewelry store where the owner buys already made pieces and puts them out for sale. Does not work so well for jewelry designer who has to accommodate having to make items, have parts inventory on hand, and has to market items.

What the market will bear (highest price you think you can get)

Works well in tourist areas where customers are not regulars, and expect to pay somewhat higher prices. Very short term strategy. While at time of sale, seller and customer are happy, when the customer returns home and finds out they paid too much for an item, they may, even if never returning to the area, may spread bad word of mouth.

Fair Value (both seller and customer get good value, leave the transaction happy, and stay happy)

This method is more long term. This method forces the artist to account for all costs involved, and in the process, forces the artist to more realistically evaluate whether a particular piece of jewelry will sell at a particular price.

APPLYING PRICING FORMULA

I developed this basic pricing formula which works very well.

The formula: $2P + L + O$

where,

P = *the typical cost of your parts.* This may not be what you actually paid for your parts. You may have bought them on sale. In this case, you get to pocket your savings. You use the typical cost, which in this case, would have been more. You may have overpaid for your parts. In this case, you take a loss on the excess cost. You use the typical cost.

L = *labor cost.* You charge off in increments of 15 minutes. Say you charge your labor at a rate of \$10.00 per hour. Picture a clock. If you took 11 minutes to make something, this puts you in the first quarter of an hour. Your labor cost would be \$2.50 (or $\frac{1}{4}$ of \$10.00). If you took 29 minutes to make something, you would be in the 2nd quarter and your labor cost would be \$5.00. If you took 31 minutes to make something, you would be in the 3rd quarter and your labor cost would be \$7.50.

I would suggest (in 2023) that, for new businesses, they charge between \$10 and \$15 dollars per hour.

NOTE: Except when doing custom work for a client, you do not price your Design-Time. You only price your Make-It-Time. Your Design-Time is considered an investment, not a cost. As such, you build in various business operations to maximize both efficiency and effectiveness to get a return on your investment, that is, Design-Time. An example: You make 10 of the same designed pieces to sell. You took the time to figure out how to do the project in the first place – Design-Time – and then made 9 more pieces without having to take up any more Design-Time. Each subsequent piece you sell, in effect, becomes more profitable to you.

You never charge for the time it took you to learn how to make something.

O = *overhead cost.* Overhead stands for everything else. We estimate this rather than take the time to count up everything else.

The formula to estimate overhead is

$$\mathbf{O = .2(P+L)}$$

Which reads, overhead equals 20% of the sum of the cost of the Parts plus the cost of Labor. “.2” is commonly referred to as a *multiplier*.

For an independent jewelry designer working out of a home studio, .2 or 20% is a reasonable multiplier. If you were working in a store, you would increase that percentage to .25 (25%) or .30 (30%). A department store would probably use an even greater percentage for the multiplier.

Applying the Pricing Formula, an Example:

Parts cost \$5.00. Took you 10 minutes to make.

2P 2 * the parts is \$10.00

L Labor is in 1st quarter, so \$2.50 (if hourly rate is \$10.00/hour)

O Overhead is .2 * (5.00 plus 2.50) , thus equals \$1.50

2P + L + O = 10.00 + 2.50 + 1.50 = 14.00

THE BASIC RETAIL FORMULA

(To compute “**minimum**” fair retail price)

P = “*typical*” cost of parts

L = labor

O = overhead estimate

NOTE: “*typical cost of Parts*” is what you’d normally expect to pay; if you purchased at discount, you do **NOT** use that discounted price.

“**Labor**” is make-it time, **NOT** design-it time.

“**Overhead**” stands for everything else: rent, electricity, wear and tear on equipment, admin time, etc.

Minimum Fair Retail Price =

$$2P + L + O$$

where,
 $O = .2(P+L)$

So, **MinFRP = 2P+L+.2(P+L)**

If parts cost \$15.00, you spent 43 minutes making the piece, **then,**


$$\begin{aligned} \text{MinFRP} &= 2*15 + 7.50 + .2(15 + 7.50) \\ &= 30 + 7.50 + .2(22.50) \\ &= 37.50 + 4.50 \\ &= 42.00 \end{aligned}$$

LOOK HOW I ORGANIZE MY NUMBERS!
We have 5 variables. We list these in a column.

We fill in correct information after each “=” sign.

<p>P = 2P = L = (P+L) = .2(P+L) =</p> <p>where, P = parts L = labor Overhead estimated with .2(P+L)</p>	<p>*One times P = *Two times P = *Labor = Usually figured as \$10/hour, charged off in 15 minute intervals. Thus, 12 minutes = \$2.50 17 minutes = \$5.00 *Sum of one times P plus one times L) *2/10 times the sum of P plus L</p>
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<p>Maximum Fair Price = 1.5 * (Minimum Fair Price)</p> <p>If Minimum = \$10.00</p> <p>Then, Maximum = <u>\$15.00</u></p>	<p>Thus, we end up with a range of possible acceptable and fair prices, and we pick a price within this range.</p> <p>If the price we think we can get in reality is either below or above this range, we need to do some re-thinking. Change quality of parts. Charge less or more for labor. Change the setting we are manufacturing things in. Change our target market niche. Change our design. Change packaging.</p>
<p>Use the BASIC RETAIL FORMULA <i>(To compute a “maximum” fair retail price)</i></p> <p>We multiply the “minimum fair price” by 1.5.</p>	

 <p>Minimum Fair Wholesale Price = $1.4P + L + 2(P+L)$</p>	<p>WHEN TO USE RETAIL vs WHOLESALE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you are selling <i>less than 10 similar pieces at one time</i>, use the RETAIL FORMULA ...<i>even if you are selling to another business for re-sale</i> 2. If you are selling <i>more than 10 similar pieces at one time</i>, use the WHOLESALE FORMULA <p>To get the <i>maximum</i> fair wholesale price, we multiply the minimum by 1.5.</p>
<p>THE BASIC WHOLESALE FORMULA (To compute a range of fair wholesale prices)</p> <p>So, we multiply the cost of our parts by 1.4 instead of 2.</p> <p><i>Wholesale mark-up is 40%; retail mark-up in formula is 100% (double cost). Some business texts tell you to use 25% (1.25x) mark-up for wholesale, but from experience, this multiplier is too low for jewelry designers.</i></p>	

You use the pricing formula to compute a minimum and maximum fair retail (or wholesale) price.

Then step back. The formula is a guide, not an absolute.

What influences the price in your local market?

If you think your target market is not willing to spend the minimum fair price, then what kinds of things can you change, to bring the price in line with this market?

If you think your target market is willing to spend more than the maximum fair price, then what kinds of things can you change, to bring the price in line with this market?

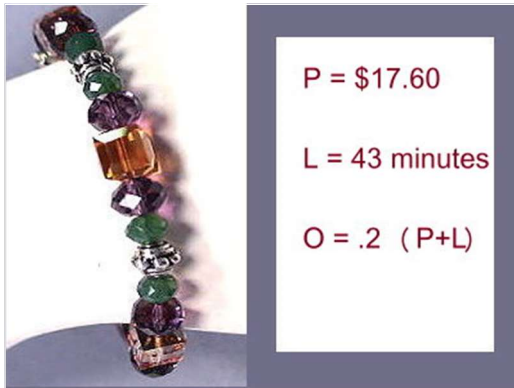
Things you can change by increasing or decreasing:

- Salary
- Target Market

- Cost of Parts
- Time it takes you to make something
- Where the piece is sold
- Design of the piece
- Packaging
- Setting in which you are making the product, like findings lower rent space

Let's again practice applying the Pricing Formula.

Assume labor is \$10.00 per hour.



Minimum Fair Retail Price = 2P + L + .2(P + L)

ANSWER: \$47.72

Maximum Fair Retail Price = 1.5 (Minimum Fair Retail Price)

ANSWER: \$71.58

Minimum Fair Wholesale Price = 1.4P + L + .2(P + L)

ANSWER: \$37.16

Maximum Fair Wholesale Price = 1.5 (Minimum Fair Retail Price)

ANSWER: \$55.74

Then, do some reality testing.

If your retail customer is not willing to pay as much as \$47.72, then what kinds of things can you lower the costs, to bring the minimum fair price lower?

If your retail customer is willing to pay more than \$71.58 for this piece, then what kinds of things can you do to raise your costs, to bring the minimum fair price higher?

If your wholesale customer cannot at least double the cost you need to charge them, then your jewelry is not a reasonable choice for them. Is there a way to lower (or raise) your costs to make the wholesale relationship work? If not, walk away. If it won't work for the reseller, it won't work for you.

You may be interested in my online video tutorial about [Pricing and Selling Your Jewelry](https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/pricing-and-selling-your-jewelry) (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/pricing-and-selling-your-jewelry>)

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40.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT:

Product Launch

	Guiding Questions? 1. What is involved in a product launch?
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Keywords: <i>product launch</i>	<i>building anticipation</i> <i>gathering feedback</i> <i>pretesting</i> <i>creating momentum</i> <i>creating market recognition</i>	
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PRODUCT LAUNCH

It is a lot of work to get this far in your product development process. But you will need to summon up even more energy because more work needs to be done. You need to introduce your product to the market through some kind of *Product Launch*.

Success requires something more than creating a BUY button. You need an organized and coordinated effort to bring your enthusiasm for your product to the market. You want to leave as little as you can to chance.

Product launches involve debuting a new product and making that product available for purchase. It involves things like:

- Building up *anticipation* for your product
- Gathering *feedback* from early users
- Creating *momentum* and *market recognition* for you and your product(s)

Product launch activities should be clear, measurable and given a beginning / end time frame.

Product Launch Goals

Start your launch by having a pre-launch honest conversation with yourself, and with anyone else involved in the launch.

Think through possible problems and missteps that could impede or hurt the launch. Think through possible solutions.

Review all contracts, if any, to be sure you are following all agreements, rules and regulations.

Acknowledge whether your customers will need a little bit of education about the product. For instance, your product might need more than one obvious step in order to use it.

Examples of Product Launch goals include things like:

- Defining market boundaries and market fit
- Securing new customers
- Increasing revenues
- Enhancing visibility and customer awareness
- Improving perceptions of your company's brand and reputation
- Reality testing your ideas about product value and desirability
- Final testing for all logistical aspects related to getting the product to the customer
- Final testing for all messaging plans


Last, set up a formal post-mortem evaluation about your product launch. To what extent have you met all your goals. Why or why not?

FOOTNOTES

Annie Dunham Director of Product, ProductPlan. www.productplan.com
The Anatomy Of A Product Launch.

41.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: *Product Feedback and Evaluation*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are my customer(s) reactions to my product? How do you find out about these?2. What works, what doesn't work?3. Are there improvements in efficiency and effectiveness that I can make?4. What analytics am I going to track?
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<p>Keywords: evaluation feedback</p>	<p>reactions merchandise re- turns measures success</p>	<p>efficiency / effectiveness analytics</p>
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Evaluation and Feedback

Businesses often give little, insufficient attention to the needs for evaluation and feedback. But it is critical – and critical every day – to find out and monitor how your customers are responding to you, your products and your business.

There are both formal mechanisms of evaluation and feedback, as well as informal ones. You will want to use both. Think about things you can *measure*: surveys, feedback, online reviews, repeat sales, merchandise returns, how many people open the emails you send them in a mass mailing.

Other analytics to watch:

- Rate of sales per month? Quarter?
- Likes on social media
- Online indicators like costs per impression, costs per click, adds to cart, cost per add to cart (conversion rate), page views
- Price comparisons
- Changes in sales from before, during and after any marketing efforts or campaigns

- New customers
- Retained customers
- Revenues
- Product abandonment

Get your own reactions to your product. Are their improvements in design or production efficiency/effectiveness can you make? Are your marketing messages hitting the spot and triggering the responses you want?


Perhaps yearly, visit each of your jewelry items and product lines. What worked? What didn't?

You will be gathering a lot of data. It is important to look for trends and rates. You want to have some clear ideas about what *success* will mean for each type of information you collect. You want, as best as you can, link your definition of success to your product and marketing goals. You want to stop collecting/monitoring any data that doesn't relate to your product and marketing goals. These measures, while many might make you feel good and play to your vanity, will become a waste of your time.

As best as you can, you will want to standardize and automate as much of this as possible. But you do not want to automate at the expense of gathering informal feedback. Informal feedback can be just as important.

42.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING:
About Marketing

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are you going to sell to? 2. How is the buyer going to find your products? 3. How will you influence the buyer to purchase your products? 4. How does the buyer see and understand you and your products? How do your products fulfill their needs? 5. How does your competition see and understand you and your products? 6. What kinds of things enhance your visibility, credibility and legitimacy? How do you earn trust and loyalty? 7. Why should they buy from you? What are your competitive advantages? 7. Why is the ultimate business goal something we call Branding?
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<p>Keywords: marketing / promotion / positioning branding tag line elevator pitch naming logo</p>	<p>marketing mindset visibility credibility legitimacy consumption persuasion engagement influence competitive advantages</p>	<p>shopping behav- iors influencers self-promotion social media bricks and clicks target co-marketing visibility of consequences / risk</p>
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About Marketing

Marketing is sharing what you love about your jewelry with those you believe will want to touch it, wear it, buy it, collect it, share it, and so forth. It's not a shouting out of *BUY MY*

JEWELRY! Rather it involves deliberate analysis of potential target markets and their needs / wants / demands / desires for the characteristics of the products you are selling.

Marketing involves an understanding of persuasion and market engagement. Where is your market? What's your message? How receptive is your market to your message? What will all this targeting, messaging and reception cost?

In this Marketing Section of the book, I will cover the following topics:

1. **About Marketing, Promotion, Positioning (chapter 42)**
2. **Finding Your Target Market (chapter 43)**
3. **Competitor Analysis (chapter 44)**
4. **Fashion and Consumption (chapter 45)**
5. **Influence and Persuasion (chapter 46)**
6. **Marketing Strategies (key words, word of mouth, digital marketing) (chapter 47)**
7. **Social Media Marketing (chapter 48)**
8. **Influencers (chapter 49)**
9. **Increasing Credibility and Legitimacy (chapter 50)**
10. **Building Your Brand (chapter 51)**
11. **Self Promotion and Raising Visibility (chapter 52)**
12. **When The Reporter Comes A-Calling (including information about writing a Press Release) (chapter 53)**

[See also chapters on 10. NAMING YOUR BUSINESS (discusses tag lines, elevator pitches, and the like) and on 9. YOUR GETTING STARTED STORY.]

Core Marketing Questions and Concerns

You will need to develop a marketing mindset. You are going beyond the design process and the mechanics of production. You are now dealing with psychology and sociology and cultural behaviors related to shopping.

Throughout the marketing process, you will be focusing on

- Defining your target market

- Finding the right market
- Linking up with that market
- Analyzing need-want-demand-buy client preferences and behaviors
- Raising your visibility of services and product offerings

You want to know things like

- Who is buying from you?
- How do you earn their trust and loyalty?
- Why should they buy from you?
- How does your business fulfill their needs?
- How do you link up with them?

Every form of contact you have with various client audiences is an opportunity to market yourself. Your body language, your clothing, the jewelry you wear can trigger positive or negative responses. How you reply to emails or customer queries can affect responses. Your displays, your packaging and the like can all affect whether someone decides to buy your pieces.

Clients will need many interactions with you and/or your jewelry line before they make a purchasing decision. But you never know when someone is ready to buy from you. Because of this, you need to have a long term marketing structure which follows your clients everywhere they shop or spend time on.

One short note: Many businesses short-change marketing or think of it in small, limited terms, like equating marketing with advertising, rather than expansive ones. When business slows down, often marketing activities are the first to get cut. But you always need to be careful. When business slows, it makes more sense to do more marketing.

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43.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Finding Your Target Market*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you define a target market? 2. How do you further segment that target market so as to increase receptivity for your marketing message? 3. How do you maximize your Marketing Return On Investment?
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<p>Keywords: <i>target market</i> <i>sub market</i> <i>niche market</i> <i>market segments</i> <i>target audience</i></p>	<p><i>market boundaries</i> <i>geographical</i> <i>local</i> <i>transport systems</i> <i>demand variation</i> <i>return on investment</i></p>	<p><i>behavioral</i> <i>age-sex-gender</i> <i>cohorts</i> <i>message</i> <i>visibility</i> <i>attention</i> <i>decision-makers</i> <i>supporters</i> <i>influencers</i></p>
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Finding Your Target Market

How smartly you define your customer base the more likely you are to have success. You survey the landscape, formally or informally or both. Question current clients, potential clients, people who might never become a client. If you have a current client base, you evaluate them, why they shop with you, what they like and don't like, what they buy and don't buy. You might examine the clients of one or more of your primary competitors. You want to know who the possible customers are, what messages are most receptive, and how to exert influence and persuasion within this market.

You start more generally to set boundaries around what you would project as your *target market*. Then, you begin to segment this target market into *submarkets* also called *market segments* or *target audiences*. You may also find that you can identify very specialized, narrowly-defined markets we'll call *niche markets*.

You will want to define your customer along several parameters. These might include one or more of the following:

- Geographical
- Locality

- Transportation network / how far they are willing to drive to come to you
- Shopping behaviors / stores or websites they frequent / price points they prefer
- Age-Sex-Gender cohorts
- Specialized, like *all people who love the color pink*
- Online
- Previous buyers
- Motivations: Need your product / want your product / desire your product / demand your product
- What attracts their attention: the look and style, color, silhouette, discount coupon, your reputation
- Income / disposable income / wealth / education / what they spend their discretionary income on
- Occupational roles
- Cultural factors and values
- Timing / seasonal considerations / how much time they are willing to spend with you
- Ethnicity
- Interests and Hobbies / what they read
- Marital status
- Who is trusted
- Types of events they attend
- Whether *price* or *design* is more important

Now you want to understand what makes your target market tick and click. How does information flow within this market? What types of messages work better than others? Who/what has the power to broker these messages for you so they reach the right people? How do you link up with this market and raise your visibility? How do you generate word-of-mouth? How does this word-of-mouth become contagious and spread ever more rapidly? Who is resistant to your message, or rejects it outright?

Selecting the right message and the right media for delivering that message will directly relate to your *Marketing Return On Investment (ROI)*.

Targeting that message to the right person is an additional challenge. Some members of your target audience will be *decision makers*. Some will be *supporters* or *influencers*. Some will have negative reactions to your message.

As you continue to collect data over time about your target market and market segments,

you will also want to continually evaluate and redefine market boundaries. You want to get at demand variation from audience to audience, and ask how customers differ from one another and thus how those differences impact demand.

FOOTNOTES

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44.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Competitor Analysis*

	Guiding Questions? <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Who are your competitors?2. Where are they located?3. Who are their clients?4. What are their advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis your own business and product lines?
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Keywords: <i>competitor</i> <i>competitive ad-</i> <i>vantages</i> <i>multiplier</i>	<i>direct / indirect</i> <i>competitor</i> <i>substitutes</i>	<i>competitor analy-</i> <i>sis</i>
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Competitor Analysis

You cannot effectively compete without knowing a lot about your competitors and how to differentiate yourself from them. Your competitors might be other businesses. Or they might be new products or services which might replace the ones you sell.

You need to know a lot about your competitors. You will want, at least, to try to match them in product selection, product quality, price points, accessibility, visibility, credibility, customer service and other possible competitive advantages in meeting customer needs and desires. Ideally you want to surpass them.

If you weren't around, where would your customers shop? Make a list. Think of other stores, other jewelry designers, catalogs, websites, home shows, wherever.

<p>Who are your competitors? Make a list.</p>	<p>In what ways are you weaker, as strong, or stronger than each one?</p>
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Types of Competitors

There are three types of competitors:

- 1. Direct**
- 2. Indirect**
- 3. Substitutes**

Direct competitors (primary) are businesses like your own who are your major competition. They sell similar items to similar customers. Your customers will always think of them as an option along side your own business.

Indirect competitors (secondary) offer alternative products and services than you, but which compete for your customers' dollars. Some businesses might sell discounted versions of what you sell; others might sell premium versions of what you sell. Some might sell similar jewelry as you, but to a different target audience.

Substitute competitors (tertiary) deliver the same set of benefits as your products, but are not the same product. Think clothing and handbags as substitute competitor products for jewelry. In the Spring, for example, your customers might take the money they would have spent with you and spend it at a garden center instead.

How To Do A Competitor Analysis

Competitor Analysis is a tool for figuring out your strengths (called *competitive advantages*) and weaknesses, as well as identifying ways you might be able to surpass your competition. This is something you do when you are getting started in business. You repeat

this every couple of years.

Select about 7-10 competitors. Your competitors are businesses which sell similar products as you do, or serve similar customers as your own. If possible, select both new as well as established businesses. Consider selecting both bricks and clicks competitors. You can identify them in several ways. Ask your customers. Do online Google searches. Look at business directories.

Sign up for their newsletters.

Follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

Register for their blogs.

Try ordering from them online. What happens when you abandon a shopping cart? What happens when you purchase an item from them?

You want to gather as much strategic information about your competitors, at a minimum, about the following:

- Who are their target customers?
- Do they target more specific niche markets?
- What key words / ideas/ phrases do they highlight in their marketing materials, web-pages, social media pages, advertisements?
- What kinds of things do they identify as their competitive advantages, or things which differentiate them from their competition? Where are their weaknesses? How do they position their products? How do they describe their business?
- What are their price points?
- What marketplaces do they seem to pop up in? Where and how do they interact with their customers?
- How differentiated are they as a business – bricks and mortar, online, craft shows, home shows, catalog?
- If they ship, what are their terms and arrangements?
- Who are their suppliers?
- What are their website features?
- What pros and cons can you list from their online customer reviews? What is their reputation?
- What is their marketing approach – print advertising, online advertising, social media presence, website, emails, blogs? What types of promotions or discounting do they do? Do they do something special for first-time customers?
- What is their history? How have they grown and developed over time? Where does it

look like they are going in the future?

- Do they do anything special to enhance customer loyalty?
- Why would their customers choose you over them?
- What have they done right?
- What mistakes have they made?
- What about them would you like to emulate?

Key Resources

These resources will help you research information about your competition. These include,

- Which keywords they are using and the impact or profitability of various keywords
- Their social media performance, what they are doing, and what kind of traffic this generates for them
- Their email marketing performance, what they are doing, and what kind of responses they are getting

BuzzSumo (<https://www.buzzsumo.com>)

Provides content insights about high-performing content, identifies influences, monitors your performance.

Feedly (<https://www.feedly.com>)

Aggregates online content and where it is generated.

Followerwonk (<https://www.followerwonk.com>)

Provides Twitter insights, followers, influencers, interactions.

Google Alerts (<https://www.google.com/alerts/>)

Set up alerts for your business or your competitor's business to see when these are mentioned online.

Google Trends (<https://trends.google.com>)

On any and every topic, shows you industry trends and an ability to compare your business to these trends.

iSpionage (<https://www.ispionage.com>)

Analyze competitor traffic, ad words, key words.

MailCharts (<https://www.mailcharts.com>)

Analyzes competitor's email campaigns, subject line strategies.

Monitor Backlinks (<https://www.monitorbacklinks.com>)

Monitors each time a link is clicked to either your business or that of a competitor.

Owletter (<https://www.owletter.com>)

Spots frequency and response to competitor email campaigns.

Pathmatics (<https://www.pathmatics.com>)

Searches what ads/info/keywords runs where, social media, search engine.

RivallQ (<https://www.rivallq.com>)

Powerful social media analytics, showing what your competitors post and impacts.

SEMrush (<https://www.semrush.com>)

Competitor analysis, keywords, back links

SimilarWeb (<https://www.similarweb.com>)

Analyze any website or app: audience, marketing, keywords, industry comparisons.

SiteWorthTraffic (<https://www.siteworthtraffic.com>)

Analyzes traffic by website.

Sprout Social (<https://www.sproutsocial.com>)

Analyzes all aspects of social media presences and performance by company or individual.

SpyFu (<https://www.spayfu.com>)

Keyword analysis, back link map, more.

Tweepi (<https://www.tweepi.com>)

Analyzes twitter followers, traffic, links.

Website Authority Checker (<https://www.seoreviewtools.com/website-authority-checker/>)

Analyzes keywords, rankings, backlinks, content.

Evaluation

Put this information in a spreadsheet. Set up the table so that it is relatively easy to compare and contrast competitors based on different criteria.

Now compare yourself to each of your competitors. Think about why someone would choose to buy from you over them.

What are the opportunities for you?

Are their market gaps you can exploit?

Is the market saturated?

Don't jump to conclusions. As best as you can, base your judgements and assessments on real data.

List your strengths and weaknesses.

Translate these into key words, key phrases and short descriptions.

Feed back this information into your product development and marketing efforts.

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45.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING:
Fashion and Consumption

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we know we have made the right aesthetic choices? 2. To what degree should the goal of good aesthetics mirror that of pleasure? 3. What role do fashion, style, taste, art and design play in marrying aesthetics to pleasure? 4. What are these cues and clues people use when deciding to wear or purchase a piece of jewelry?
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<p>Keywords: <i>fashion</i> <i>consumption</i> <i>style</i> <i>taste</i> <i>art</i></p>	<p><i>design</i> <i>aesthetics</i> <i>discernable</i> <i>characteristics</i></p>	<p><i>pleasure</i> <i>minimize risk</i> <i>validation</i> <i>preferences</i> <i>relative vs. objective</i> <i>terms</i></p>
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Fashion and Consumption:

How Can We Know We Have Made The *Right* Aesthetic Choices?

It is important for any marketer promoting their jewelry to recognize the difference between what people or society indicate is *beautiful and appealing* and what people *actually purchase*, that is, things which *give them pleasure*. Because something gets labeled *fashionable* doesn't mean that someone will actually buy it. It becomes critical then that the marketer identify what cues and clues people use when deciding to wear or purchase a piece of jewelry.

One set of cues and clues comes from the general society, culture or social group. Wearers and buyers of jewelry often look for a socially acceptable way to confirm they've made the *right* aesthetic choices. They may have picked a blue necklace, but was it the *right* blue? They may have decided upon a 24" necklace, but was this the *right* length? They may have gone with gemstones, but were they the *right* gemstones?

Another set of cues and clues could come from the jewelry designer. People might listen to the jewelry designer, if that person is present at the point of a transaction. But more likely than not, the designer is not present. They could look at how this designer's jewelry was

displayed. Or named. Or the packaging. Or read the designer's description. Or look at images on a website. Or check out other people wearing this designer's jewelry. Yet, even if the designer were present, and all this other information were available, however, why should the wearer or buyer trust the designer? Isn't there still a high level of risk for making the less than or more than right or wrong choice?

Another set of cues and clues might come from the design elements and compositional strategies inherent in the piece of jewelry itself. Our wearer or buyer is a consumer of aesthetics, when selecting a piece of jewelry. They are probably not experts in jewelry design or jewelry making materials and techniques. But some design choices might catch their eye or resonate with them.

People, in general, are looking for something appealing, but concurrently socially and psychologically acceptable. They may want to feel part of a larger group. Or, they may want confirmation about a sense of individual identity and a way to distinguish themselves from the larger group. They may want reassurance that they are living life the way life should be lived, at least according to social and cultural norms. And there is a perceived risk here, should they make the wrong choice. We want to experience aesthetic pleasures, but our insecurities often mean we look for validation from other people around us, when consuming those aesthetic pleasures.

The actual ways and the actual clues and cues we look for to legitimize our aesthetic choices will vary from person to person. But we can look at five different ways to define the consumption of *aesthetic expression* and *pleasure* to begin to get a kind of understanding for the dynamics of what is going on here. Each is associated with a set of socio-cultural rules and consequences when acquiring products like jewelry. These five *expressive-consumption modes* are,

1. ***Fashion***
2. ***Taste***
3. ***Style***
4. ***Art***
5. ***Design***

Let's settle on some initial ideas about each of these, and then elaborate further through the remainder of this chapter.

Fashion: Often considered the substitution of someone else's taste for your own, and is assumed to represent *Good Taste*. Fashion satisfies the needs of the person to feel connected to a group, to imitate a sense of good taste, and to adapt to changes around them. It considerably lowers the risk for any aesthetic choices.

Taste: A person's ability to recognize beauty in whatever form she or he finds it, in our case here, jewelry. *Good Taste* is associated with how well principles of beauty and art have been applied.

Style: Will vary with particular cultures or events or historical periods or individual identities. Style communicates an expectation about meaning and its expression and what form it should take within a composition as seen by the outlook of the jewelry wearer or buyer. It might be referenced by terms like classic, modern, religious, Gen-X, casual, and the like. The principal forces in the creation of style are tradition and the experience of other jewelry the person is familiar with. Style on one level is the way a person applies their taste when choosing an aesthetic. Styles change and evolve in response to the influence of contemporary life.

Art: Represents beauty regardless of context. Regardless of whether it is worn or sitting on an easel. There are no pragmatic considerations involved.

Design: Represents the recognition of the most parsimonious relationship between beauty and function within any one piece of jewelry as it is worn. Jewelry requires that the piece not only satisfies the aesthetic needs of the person, but also fulfills a practical need.

AESTHETICS

What is the *essence of beauty* – what we call *aesthetics*?

When someone wears or buys a piece of jewelry, the choice of any aesthetic, as represented by that piece of jewelry, can become very problematic. The idea of aesthetics must be thought through by the person as she or he decides to touch or wear or share or part with some money or to walk away from the jewelry item.

But one person's aesthetic sensibility is not necessarily the same as anyone else's. There are few universal aesthetic ideas. Most things are so subjective and so context- or situationally-specific. Rules defining personal pleasure and rules defining beauty and appeal may co-exist, but they are not necessarily the same or in harmony. We know this because, from person to person, tastes, styles and fashions differ.

One response, where such differences exist, is to rely on fashion and art to define for us how pleasure and appeal should co-exist at any one moment in time. If we cannot find universally-accepted, common rules of aesthetics, then perhaps, we should let the social group or the social majority define it for us. Beauty, then, becomes not a property of the object per se, but an aesthetic judgment based on a subjective feeling. Our sense of good taste or fashion or style or art or design is a constructed one; it is not inherent in any particular jewelry design.

This brings us back to the idea that *people want to minimize their sense of risk when making the right choices about wearing or buying a piece of jewelry*. There is this inner need for validation. Part of that need is met by constructing and communicating a feeling or thought about what a consensus about taste might look like. Such a consensus, in reality, does not exist. But an idea of it emerges from preferences, assumptions, expectations, values, and desires. An idea of it emerges from how well the jewelry designer has managed the design process. That is, how well the designer has anticipated shared understandings of the various client audiences the jewelry is meant for, and incorporated these into the content of the design.

CONSUMPTION

Fashion, Taste, Style, Art and Design are each closely linked to the idea of *consumption*. These represent different ways of identifying preferences for certain types of jewelry and which directly affect the wearer' or buyer's choices in the marketplace. These preferences do not, however, necessarily trigger the wearing or purchase of a piece of jewelry. The interaction of these preferences with consumption is more complex and more depending on social interaction or personal motivation and strategy. People tend to emulate others (or distinguish themselves from others) or seek to reconfirm certain ideas which create certain habits and preferences, which in turn influence consumption of one piece of jewelry over another.

Yes, people want agency. They want to be free to choose jewelry that gives them pleasure. But they want validation and acceptance, as well. Most of that results from the understandings about the content of the jewelry. That is, how the content relays meanings through the aesthetic and design choices of the jewelry designer. We want the people around us to know who we are and what we have become. Jewelry makes a big statement here.

FASHION

Fashion is the socially acceptable, culturally-endorsed and safe way to distinguish oneself from others, while at the same time, re-affirming membership in a group. The person is allowed to be both an individual as well as a member of a group. With fashion, the individual can have both a sense of taste of their own as well as expect others to share it. Jewelry, from a fashion perspective, is embedded with the same values as our own. It is assumed that the community of fashion is the real community of universal good taste. That assumption means that the rules of beauty and appeal are understood as directly linked to and in harmony with the rules of finding pleasure.

Fashion may be thought of encompassing two things:

1. *The jewelry object itself, and*
2. *The process of gaining acceptance for that object.*

That process moves from the designer to a client to that client's audiences and public acceptance. That process extends from inspiration to aspiration to implementation to early adoption by fashion influencers and the diffusion of the jewelry throughout a particular social network. Eventually, though, there is a decline of acceptance over time.

The fashion object – in this case jewelry – must have discernable characteristics. These must be perceivable. They must anticipate how others will understand them. They must be communicative. These characteristics must show value; that is, something about them must be measurable in either relative (*example, it's better than what I have now*) or objective terms (*example, it is worth twice as much as my other piece*).

Fashion denotes a broad social consensus about good taste. If a piece of jewelry is “not fashionable,” it means that, at least in a particular moment, it would be judged as boring, monotonous, unsatisfying or even ugly.

TASTE

Taste is an individuals' personal aesthetic choices. Taste is how any individual judges what is beautiful, good and correct. These choices are influenced by social relations and dynamics.

Taste denotes preference. If a piece of jewelry is “not your taste,” this means you don't like it.

Good Taste is something which is socially sanctioned.

STYLE

Style is about agency and choice. It is strongly influenced by broadly accepted social constructs, such as time period, geography, religion, class, cultural identify. Style suggests that anything can be acceptable as long as it makes you feel good and that you are showing your authentic self.

Style denotes the manner in which something is expressed. If a piece of jewelry is “not your style,” this means it does not present your beliefs in the way you want them expressed. You won't wear it.

ART

Everyone wants a little art in their lives. They want beauty around them. It inspires them. It makes them feel good. They do not want to be encumbered with practical considerations in every moment of the day. Great color combinations and component arrangements are reassuring, pleasuring, uplifting. Jewelry communicates a sense of the designer's hands that have touched it, the imagination that created it, and the work that has gone into it.

Art denotes the way the design elements and composition reflect principles of harmony

and variety embedded in art theories. If a piece of jewelry is “not art,” this means it is not sufficiently harmonious. It lacks some appeal.


DESIGN

Jewelry, however, is not a framed painting hanging in a museum. It is something that is worn. It is something that must continue to look good, even as the person wearing it moves from room to room, one lighting situation to another, one context to another.

Design denotes the way tradeoffs are made between beauty and function in the most parsimonious way. If a piece of jewelry is *not yet judged designed*, this means that if you added (or subtracted) one more element to (or from) the piece, the piece could be judged as more finished and more successful. The piece is not done yet.

46.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Influence and Persuasion*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is Influence and what is Persuasion? How are they interrelated? 2. What causes clients to purchase certain products and brands, and reject others? 3. How can marketing influence client shopping behaviors?
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<p>Keywords: <i>influence persuasion the hook coercive informational leveraging logic /rationality emotions / feelings</i></p>	<p><i>risk / benefits visibility of consequences confidence charisma reciprocity authority commitment consensus scarcity</i></p>	<p><i>analogy / meta- phor / simile connection legitimacy / credi- bility / trust / justification target audience shopping behav- iors motivations shared understandings</i></p>
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Designers need to get the approval of and payment from their clients. That means the client has to recognize and share the choices the designer made when creating the piece of jewelry. It all comes down to two aspects of marketing: persuasion and influence. Marketing is about creating persuasive arguments which can influence a person's beliefs, attitudes, motivations, intentions and behaviors. Influence comes with knowing what the best outcome that the marketer should seek. Persuasion includes the tools you use to get there. Persuasion can take many forms. The marketer's success depends on a handful of persuasive factors. Marketing strategies follow one or more of eight universal principles of persuasion. Information within any successful persuasive argument is best presented in a certain order.

Influence and Persuasion

Marketing is about creating *persuasive* arguments which can *influence* a person's beliefs, attitudes, motivations, intentions and behaviors. The marketer wants to be able to persuade the client to focus their attention on the jewelry product line, to approach it, touch it, try it on, buy it, exhibit it, share it with others, then, moreover, to further persuade these *others* (thus making the marketing message *contagious*) to want to buy it. *Influence* comes with knowing what the best outcome that the marketer should seek. *Persuasion* includes the tools you use to get there.

When we are trying to persuade someone, we might be trying to get them to change their mind about something. We might want them to change the weight, ranking or priority they give one thing over another. We might want them to see the interrelationship among two or more otherwise unrelated things. We might want them to re-evaluate the cost and reward calculus they use when deciding to make a purchase.

When *trust* is present, influence increases and persuasion ends in more positive outcomes.

Persuasion can take many forms. *It can be...*

- Coercive, done aggressively through direct commands, threats, fear mongering, shaming.
- Informational, spread as biased in some way towards a particular position or idea.
- Leveraging a belief by appeals to logic and reasoning.
- Leveraging a belief by appeals to feelings and emotions.
- Establishing a high level of credibility or character.

A marketer or jewelry designer is not born as persuasive. It is something to be learned, practiced, applied and applied again. The strength of the marketer's influence centers on a handful of persuasive factors, such as:

1. **Commonalities:** People like people like themselves.
2. **Logic and Rationality:** When you see data, it tells a recognizable story.
3. **The Target Audience's Needs, Wants, Values and Desires:** It is important to pay attention and hone in on these.
4. **Attractiveness:** Attractive people are more persuasive.
5. **Confidence / Charisma:** Confident / Charismatic people are more persuasive.
6. **Preparation:** Learning, Practicing and Preparing are how you place yourself in a powerful, persuasive position.

Persuasion In Marketing

Persuasion in marketing (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ajagrawal/2016/06/02/why-every-marketer-should-read-influence-the-psychology-of-persuasion/#4dd46coa6doc>) involves the ability not just to influence people's actions, but their attitude as well.

Persuasion is a matter of establishing mutual trust or shared understandings. You develop that sense of trust in your client. That means, they believe that you will deliver on any and all your promises, and that your product will solve their problems, needs and/or desires. The marketer presents some type of evidence which the client must interpret as relevant and valid for themselves, whatever that might mean.

Marketing campaigns are various strategies attempting to influence, direct or change client behaviors by eliciting reactions. Marketing campaigns rely on imagery and word associations tied to emotional responses.

To be persuasive, the marketing message must have value and relevance for your target client. She or he might see a reward or a minimization of costs and agree to change their behavior. She or he might be trying to shield themselves from anything which refutes their sense of self and self-esteem. She or he might derive pleasure when they can align their self-concept with that of the emotional message associated with the product. She or he might find that they can meet their needs for understanding and control by finding out more information about your product.

In response to any marketing campaign, the client can do one of three things:

- 1. *Accept***
- 2. *Non-commit or remain indifferent***
- 3. *Reject***

And it is important to think of persuasion as a continual process. You might be able to persuade someone to purchase your product once, but will they purchase your product again?

The Marketer Should Have A Detailed Familiarity With Everything Involved With Consumer Behavior

What causes clients to purchase certain products and brands, and reject others? It is important to begin to document client shopping behaviors, motivations and their psychological and sociological underpinnings.

The marketer will want to get a handle on the target audience in terms of

- ***Psychological Factors:*** How assumptions, perceptions, understandings, values and desires affect responses to the marketing message.
- ***Personal Factors:*** How demographic characteristics, such as age, culture,

profession, gender play roles in forming responses to the marketing message.

- **Social Factors:** How socio-cultural groups, such as income, geographic residence, education level, affect shopping behaviors and responses to the marketing message.

How Can Marketing Affect Client Shopping Behaviors?

The Eight Universal Principles of Persuasion

Persuasion works when the client feels that, by purchasing your product, you and your product have made a positive contribution to their life. There are different ways or principles marketers follow for establishing that sense of positivity.

There are nine universal principles of persuasion the marketer can resort to in order to influence client shopping behaviors. These are,

- 1. Reciprocity**
- 2. Commitment**
- 3. Consensus**
- 4. Authority**
- 5. Affinity**
- 6. Scarcity**
- 7. Visibility of Consequences**
- 8. Information Exposure**
- 9. Associational**

Reciprocity

If you do this for me, I'll do this for you.

People tend to feel the need to return the favor. You offer or remove incentives and play with client's natural tendency to be grateful and want to do something for you in return. You might offer them discounts or a free sample. You might put them in a frequent shopper rewards program. You might do a special customization. You might offer them a gift. You might offer something special to first time buyers or to clients who register for your email list.

Commitment

I am a loyal customer.

Once someone is engaged with something, they are more likely to stick to it and commit. They become loyal to the designer, the designer's business and the designer's brand. The marketer would do those things which enhance customer loyalty. You might have a special

showing or trunk show. You might include them on your email list. You might make them aware a way ahead of time of some deals or opportunities.

Consensus

If it's OK with them, it's OK with me.

Sometimes this is referred to as the herd response. If the client sees others doing it, they are more likely to do it as well. The marketer here would demonstrate the popularity of their products with other clients and client groups.

Authority

If such-and-such expert tells me it's OK, I'll think it's OK.

Clients are more likely to listen to an expert they trust, than anyone else. The marketer would have the marketing message put forth by trusted experts who could be seen as authority figures. These authority figures are seen as having already established proof of their knowledges and beliefs. Authority might be actual or implied. Thus, their advice is recognized as trustworthy. You might seek endorsements from well-known figures. You might create an ad where the expert is delivering the message. You might rely on influencers online to spread your marketing message.

Affinity

She bought it, and she's a lot like me, so I'll buy it as well.

The client is more willing to follow through on the marketing message and goal if she or he knows someone who is similar to themselves who bought the product. *Similar* might be by gender or age or economic class. *Similar* might be people who belong to the same church or shop at the same store or attend the same events. The marketer would emphasize shared interests. The marketer would present reasons why conformity is the best choice here.

Scarcity

I better get it right away, if I'm to get it at all.

People tend to want what they think they might not be able to have. When something is scarce, clients tend to assign it more value. Defining the context becomes very important for this principle of persuasion. It might be something that is exclusive. It might be in limited supply. It might have some sense of rarity. It might be subtle clues provided in how the products are displayed to make it seem like you are running out of stock (such as, a very large container with a few items left in the bottom). The product might not be available from any other competitor. The product might be temporarily on sale or only available for a limited amount of time. The marketer might emphasize that this product does what no other

product can do. The marketer might emphasize that if the client doesn't act quickly, the likelihood that they could ever purchase the product will be very low.

Visibility of Consequences

I know what will happen when I purchase and use this product.

The client is more likely to purchase a product if they can anticipate the consequences of their choice. Every purchase is a risk. Will it work? Will it hold up? Will it be appropriate? Will I get the reactions I want? Here the marketer would highlight evidence which makes the consequences obvious, and then more evidence which minimizes the likelihood that any risk and uncertainty might occur. The marketer might emphasize the positive results, and minimize any negative ones. They might point to past successes of this or similar products. They might present the pros and cons and comparative imaging of future outcomes. They might present the pros and cons by comparing antecedents. They might explain that the client will have emotion regrets if they don't make the purchase.

Information Exposure

I was told it was important now to act.

Clients often have to make choices when they have more limited information upon which to rely. How and when the client is exposed to certain information, prompts, triggers and cues may affect their choice whether to buy a product or not. The client might be distracted. There might be time / timing / seasonal considerations where they pay more attention, say to holiday merchandise during Christmas season, than at other times of the year. Some information may have increased salience, depending on the context. For example, what the jeweler says when standing behind the jewelry counter may have more salience than what that same person says about the same product when randomly meeting that person on the street.

The marketer might present or withhold information based on timing considerations. The message might be different presented during the day from presented during the evening. It might be different in the Spring from the Fall. The marketer might try to connect positive emotional information the client already holds to the product the marketer is trying to sell. This could be a positive memory such as a song or image or experience. The marketer might stress how even with this limited information the client can still anticipate a level of success. The marketer might emphasize negative information about a competitor or competitor's products. The marketer might use popular phrases and words that have a particular emotional or cognitive association with the target audience.

Associational

I always see it with her, and she's a celebrity, so I'll buy it because I identify with her.

Think of the idea “As Seen On TV”. That could include any social media site or webcast. People tend to feel a special kinship with celebrities, famous/notorious people, influencers, ideologues. If the product co-exists in the same space and frame as the celebrity, people tend to automatically have the same positive (or negative) feelings as they do for the celebrity.

THE PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT

Whatever principle of persuasion the marketer follows, the presentation of information in their persuasive argument follows a 9-content pattern. That is, informational content, when presented in a certain order, makes for a more persuasive argument. The persuasive argument will always end with a Call To Action. This order is presented in the table below.

The Order Information Is Presented In A Persuasive Argument		
PERSUASION CONTENT	CONCEPT DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
1st. THE HOOK	Something you say that gets the person excited about or emotionally connected to or focused on the piece of jewelry you want to sell. It can be a fact, a connection, a declaration, a description, a metaphor, a quotation or a story.	Wouldn't your life be easier if you had fewer, more versatile necklaces?
2nd. THE ITEM	State what you are selling	Necklace
3rd. ITEM DETAILS (2 or 3)	Give 2 or 3 details about this item which you think are especially attractive or valuable about it	Long, which can be worn as a long single strand or as doubled shorter strands Turquoise-Capri-Bronze color palette
4th. GOAL / OBJECTIVE	What do you want the person to do next, such as wear	Buy it

	it or buy it or exhibit it	
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The Order Information Is Presented In A Persuasive Argument		
PERSUASION CONTENT	CONCEPT DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
5th. BENEFITS (2 or 3)	State 2 or 3 benefits the person will experience / gain if they follow through with the goal	Versatility in different situations Versatility with different outfits
6th. VISIBILITY OF CONSEQUENCES	A way the client can measure what the risk or uncertainty is for making the choice to wear / buy	“whether in fashion” “if a certain celebrity is wearing this” “whether it is better than before”
7th. LIKELIHOOD	Given the possible consequences, what things will minimize or mitigate against these risks and uncertainties	Will always be fashionable Color looks better on you
8th. CREDIBILITY	Point to person or resource – a known, believable entity - which can back up your view of the risks and likelihoods	Look at how well your sister Janice wears her necklace out.
9th. CALL TO ACTION	Very specifically tell the client what she or he needs to do next	Click the button to buy this before September 30 to get the discount

A Note About Using Push And/Or Pull

Push vs. Pull. One more thing. You can either *push* your way in, or use *pull* to get in. For most of us, particularly when we are getting started, have only *push* at our disposal. We might cold call, or set up a formal interview, or initiate a conversation with someone at a gallery opening or art show.

But *pull* always works better. Here we leverage something or someone to get to the right place or person at the right time. An established designer or academic might set up an appointment for you with one of their contacts, for example. You might be wearing one of your pieces and someone comes up to admire it. You might work out an arrangement with an influencer online.

A Few Cautions

When marketing your products, you have a professional responsibility not to cross the line between influence and manipulation. You might be successful in manipulation in the short term, but this will probably spell disaster for you mid- and long-term. People are willing to be influenced and persuaded, but resent getting manipulated. And if manipulated, they usually find out.

Don't present yourself falsely in any way. Don't claim to be an expert when you are not, for example.

Last, don't over emphasize economic factors – price, discounts, and the like – in your marketing messages. Rely more on one or more of the universal principles of persuasion where you play towards emotions, perceptions and desires.

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47.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Marketing Strategies*

	<p>Guiding Questions? 1. What are some workable marketing strategies and tactics useful for the designer?</p>
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<p>Keywords: keywords word of mouth digital marketing strategy / tactic product / price / promotion / place</p>	<p>communication influencers co-marketing re-marketing trust memorable approachable</p>	<p>social media marketing advertising cross promotion coherent defined goals emotional connection</p>
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Marketing Strategies

As a marketer, you will be developing and organizing a series of communication strategies and tactics. You will also be combining things into coherent marketing campaigns with defined goals and methods for collecting evidence from which you can evaluate success.

Your strategies will hone in on the 4 P's: *product, price, promotion and place.*

- **Product:** serves a need not being met or provides a novel experience
- **Price:** set a fair price both for you as well as your customer
- **Promotion:** your marketing message and how you get the word out
- **Place:** where your product is available and your distribution arrangements

Whatever marketing strategies and tactics you resort to, remember this.

- You need to be different and refreshing.
- You need to do something your target audience(s) will talk about.
- You need to make your product approachable, accessible, and memorable.
- You need to enhance the emotional connection among client, product and designer.
- You need to be patient and focused.

- You need to be creative.
- You need to be authentic.
- You need to be market-driven, not product-driven. *[It might be a great product, but there needs to be a market for it.]*

Some marketing tasks you will direct and take charge of yourself. With some, you will work with an agency and turn over responsibility to them. You might rely on online influencers and bloggers. Some things will be in print. Some will be images and/or posts online. Some will be videos. Some will be messages to your email followers. You might coordinate your marketing with similar or complimentary products of other businesses (called *co-marketing*). You might donate items to organizations which will publicize your donations. You will have business cards, brochures, jewelry name cards, guest books, packaging, letterhead stationery, websites, domain names. You might be able to get articles written about you or invitations to participate in podcasts.

You will find that, with jewelry, you will need to use a multi-method approach to your marketing. Any one particular approach won't be sufficient to reach enough potential clients and influence enough buying decisions to keep you in business.

The Importance of Word of Mouth: *The Biggest Source of New Customers*

If your client has had a positive experience with you and your products, it is highly likely they will share this with someone else. This is called *word of mouth* (or technically, called *contagion*). Word of mouth might result from a conversation. It might result from an online or print review. It might be generated from comments to an online post. It might be a mention in an article. Word of mouth usually accounts for 3 of every 4 jewelry sales in the United States.

Things which drive word of mouth:

- Thanking your customer
- Asking your customer if they get compliments on your pieces they wear, and if so, can they mention that in a review or post online
- Ask your customers to talk about you, such as mentioning you on Facebook.
- Offer a discount to a customer who refers another to you.
- Image and Video posts on Instagram and other social media sites, and concurrently responding to all LIKES and COMMENTS. Note: Always repeat the person's first name in your response comments.
- Join social media sites groups, and comment on various posts.

- Hold a customer appreciation event.
- Do some co-marketing with similar businesses in town.
- Follow-up on sales to make sure customers are happy.
- Bring a friend campaign.
- Give out business cards.
- Show something special to clients which I know they will want to tell others about.
- In-store giveaways.
- Be involved in the community.
- Supporting **nonprofit fund-raising** events, usually by offering a gift certificate or a showy piece of jewelry
- Create **how-to handouts and/or post videos online (or other educational content) you can give to customers** for free.

Some Marketing Ideas

1. Educate with your content
2. Personalize your marketing messages
3. Be data driven
4. Keep your messages and content updated
5. Be visible in your community and online
6. Manage active and frequent email campaigns, along with implementing strategies to expand your email list
7. Rely on credible influencers
8. Concentrate on one, perhaps two, social networks only, and give it your all
9. Create opt-in offers
10. End all your marketing and promotional messages with a call to action
11. Be a strategic user of key words in webpage designs and promotions
12. Teach
13. Do repairs
14. Survey, listen and learn
15. Sponsor a charitable event
16. Donate products or services to a charity event
17. Co-market with other small businesses

18. Do presentations or webinars to enable your audience to get to know, like and trust you
19. Provide free consultations or demonstrations
20. Write articles
21. Build a website optimized for search

Remember, people need to be able to find your business. Marketing is one of the major vehicles for how.

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48.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Social Media Marketing*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is social media marketing? 2. What is a marketing audit? 3. How do I optimize my presence online? 4. What makes my site more usable? 5. What inexpensive things can I do to get noticed, and to recruit and retain customers? 6. What information should I include in a social media post? 7. How do I generate an email list and conduct an email campaign? 8. How should I measure my performance online?
---	---

<p>Keywords: search engine optimization meta data click-through rate eyeballs visibility recruitment / retention site usability / navigation feedback / evaluation competitor surveillance</p>	<p>keywords spam HTML / CSS / Ja- vascript tags / coding URL responsive web- site hashtags social media / posts directories marketing audit front door / land- ing page business profile site activity indi- cators domain name</p>	<p>post blog video / reel image .jpg / .gif / .tif / .mp4 pixels 72 dpi / 300 dpi / 600 dpi site placement link / link de- scription heading text / image / video FAQ testimonial influencer</p>
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Also check out the chapters on **49. INFLUENCERS** and about **59. SELLING ONLINE**. Check out writing **9. YOUR GETTING STARTED STORY** and how to do **44. COMPETITOR ANALYSIS**.

Social Media Marketing For Very Small Businesses ... That Works!

Today's successful jewelry-designers and other very small business entrepreneurs maintain a very visible presence on the internet. You must have an online way for people to find you and your products. There are many options. These options vary in terms of who controls the site, the costs to be there and update as necessary, and what limitations are imposed on the site or because of how the site operates.

They may have a website that functions simply as a billboard or business card. They may list merchandise on their site, with prices, and information about how to order it. They may present their jewelry on Ebay or other auction houses, or on sites like Etsy or Supadupa. They may let someone else promote their jewelry on-line in exchange for a commission or royalty. They may post images or videos on sites like Instagram and TikTok. They may have a business page on Facebook, Google or Bing. Or they may have a fully functioning shopping cart system on their own dot.com.

Whatever their level of involvement online, they must put into place active and deliberate marketing strategies for creating visibility for their site and their products, and for maintaining and enhancing that visibility over time. It's all about recruiting and retaining eyeballs, whatever it takes. Take advantage of social medias' powers for networking.

Digital marketing is not one thing; it is a set of different strategies and pathways for connecting with and influencing people. While initially a lot of what you do will be hit or miss and trial and error, you eventually want to get very organized, developing internet marketing goals, objectives and encapsulating them into a coherent plan. You want to be represented broadly across many platforms, but concentrate your energies narrowly on perhaps 2 platforms only.

You want your website and any web presence to be:

- Optimized for search engines and directories
- Attractive
- Navigate-able and User friendly
- Enticing to first time visitors as well as repeat customers
- As broadly visible and findable as possible
- Broadly bookmarked and linked to

Successful marketing of any kind means:

- *Getting Seen*
- *Getting Known*
- *Getting Your Competitive Advantage Recognized*

- *Making the Sale*

Make them stop. Make them stay

To achieve these marketing goals online requires putting into effect various internet marketing strategies, some technical, others not.

Towards this end, I provide insights about the following:

1. Conducting an initial marketing audit of your online presence
2. Optimizing your front door and landing pages
3. Choosing and placing key words and hashtags
4. Optimizing your social profiles
5. Site usability and navigation concerns
6. Intensive site placement and linkages
7. Inexpensive things you can do to get noticed
8. Social media posts marketing
9. On-line advertising
10. Generating an email list and conducting email campaigns
11. Creating visual images and video content
12. Garner online reviews
13. Getting customer feedback
14. Competitor surveillance
15. Establishing baseline site-activity indicators
16. Have a FAQ page which summarizes all your policies and procedures
17. Have a testimonials page
18. Create relationships with online influencers to market your jewelry

You want to choose the right tools and use them in the right way. If the wrong tools, you can waste a lot of time and money and find yourself serving the wrong customers.

Conducting An Initial Marketing Audit of Your Online Presence

The first step is to get honest with yourself. How well do your current marketing and business strategies perform, particularly in reference to your online presence? How do they help or hinder you from achieving (a) visibility on the web, (b) credibility on the web, (c)

customer recruitment and retention, and (d) customer responses, reviews and orders from the web?

This auditing activity involve three steps:

1. Assessing current marketing materials, brochures, business cards, stationery, listings, keywords, descriptions, click through ad campaigns, email lists, responses-to-customers templates, efforts and activities,
2. Assessing current web-site strengths and weaknesses, from a marketing standpoint, that is, how you are in sync with target customer needs, wants, desires and shopping behaviors, and
3. Setting reasonable and attainable online marketing goals and objectives.

Do all your printed materials reference your website and/or your email address?

Is this information prominent and readily accessible, or is it buried?

Does it convey a sense of pride in your online efforts, or shame and embarrassment?

Do you routinely mention your website to your customers or clients?

Do all your emails end with a business signature, that includes your business name, address, phone, fax, and email, and perhaps a tag line?

Does your website clearly and concisely express what your business is all about, and how to contact you – particularly in terms of the information on the front page, any other landing pages, near the top, that would appear in the first screen that your customer would see?

Is your navigation bar/system/strategy easy to manipulate by any customer?

Is each link labeled clearly and strategically?

Does the set of all your links clearly and easily get your customer to each section of your website?

Have you minimized the number of links it takes to get to any one of your product pages?

Is your front (landing) page indexable by search engine robots?

Is there sufficient information on this page to index?

Is the organization of keywords on your front page presented to your advantage, or disadvantage, given search engine indexing schemes?

Does your front page load relatively quickly?

Have you kept your graphics on your front page to a reasonable amount so they don't slow down page loading or obscure any keyword information?

Does your website have the kinds of things which will encourage customers to remain on your site more than a few seconds?

Is it relatively easy to keep your website up-to-date, such as changing information,

uploading new images, creating new layouts?

Is your website responsive – that is, will load and be easily readable on any browser and any device, no matter screen size or preset layout parameters?

Now, **GOOGLE** (<http://www.google.com>) YOURSELF. This way you have a starting point for how visible you are on the internet.

Optimizing Your Front Door and Landing Pages

Your front door page (or any landing page) is your most strategic website asset. It should be optimized in form and content so that it anticipates the indexing and ranking schemes (*algorithms*) of the major search engines. While these schemes get altered on a regular basis, there are some pointers which will be generally helpful all the time.

1. Don't use frames. Try to use DIV instead of TABLE html commands. Try to use a CSS style sheet along with HTML5 (or most recent version) coding. Make your webpage responsive, so that it will load up perfectly no matter the browser or screen size of the device.
2. Don't use a visually wonderful, but indexability awful splash page. You should settle for a slightly less visually appealing page, as a tradeoff for making it more indexable and rank-able. If your landing page is only an image, then nothing will get indexed, and your website will remain invisible.
3. You are selling things. The average person will have the average computer system or cell phone setup. That means, you can't use the most up-to-date, exciting website technology available. Your pages won't load up for everyone, some may take too long to load up, and some may even lock up your device. Save the best-of-current-tech for your personal home page.
4. If you are using a template-based host's WYSIWYG (*what you see is what you get*) website design editor, be sure the final result will be responsive. Also be sure your website will be easy to update and maintain.
5. **TITLE:** Your title should be about 9 words (not more, not less), with your most important key word first. Don't repeat the same word twice in a row; separate it by another word. Use lower case letters for your key words.

For example: “*beads, jewelry findings, beading supplies – Land of Odds*” is better than “*Land of Odds – beads, jewelry findings, beading supplies*”. [Most important keyword is first.]

For example: “*beads, jewelry findings, beading supplies*” is better than “*beads, beading supplies, jewelry findings*.” [Here bead is capitalized once, and appears as what would be judged as twice in a row.]

6. **FIRST TEXT LINE:** Your first line of the page (and this will appear after the BODY tag if you are hand coding), should be about 10 words, again repeating your major keywords, not putting the same word twice next to each other, and listing the words from most to least important. Never start the page with a TABLE or Graphic file. Start with words.
7. **LINK AND PAGE NAMES:** Be strategic in the names you give your active links and webpages. Use your keywords in these LINK DESCRIPTIONS (link-text) and URL ADDRESSES (url-text).

For example: Call your gemstone necklace page “*gemstonenecklace.htm*” rather than something like “*AC402.htm*”.

In creating the *link descriptions* on your page, write something like “*Gemstone Necklaces*” rather than “*Products Page*”.

8. **PARAGRAPHS:** Have about 3 paragraphs of text on your front-door page. Each paragraph might have 3 or so sentences.
9. Your major keywords should appear in this pattern:

At the top of paragraph #1

In the middle of paragraph #2

Not at all in paragraph #3

If you don't like the look of all those words on your front door page, you can always put the paragraphs at the bottom of your webpage. You can even use an extra small font if you want to minimize their visibility even more.

10. **IMAGES:** For all your images, use the ALT tag. For the ALT tag, use your keywords to describe the image. By using the ALT tag, when someone places the cursor over the image, a yellow box will appear with the ALT tag words appearing. These are also very indexable.
11. Make your original images into .jpg or .tif or .gif files. The original images should be a minimum of 500 x 500 pixels and 72-96 dpi resolution. Within your webpage, you can adjust image sizes. Preference for using the percent (%) adjustment rather than setting particular pixel width and height sizes.
12. **HEADINGS:** Set up 2 or 3 headings on your front door page, and use your keywords in the heading text. Sometimes what you code as a heading is the first thing indexed, and sometimes the only thing indexed. On subsequent pages, use more headings, if these make sense for the page.
13. **COMMENT TAGS:** Put in at least one COMMENT tag using your keywords. In the HTML code, comments start with <!-- and end with --> . COMMENT tags cannot be seen on your page. They are hidden within the code. There is a 1000 character limit to COMMENT tags. Words in COMMENT tags are very indexable.
14. **DOMAIN NAME:** If you haven't already selected a website domain name, you

might try to create one using your most important keyword in the URL-text. There are many sites online that sell domain names. Compare their prices which can be all over the place. Compare the amount of space they offer you, any email limits, and whether you can add a shopping cart.

For example, “*beadsatlandofodds.com*” would do far better than “*landofodds.com*” in search engine indexing.

You can also envision having more than one front-door or landing page for your website. You might have different kinds of customers, and may want to set up an entrance very tailored to each of them. From the search engine’s standpoint, they do not like to see virtually the same page used more than once. You will lose points here if this is your approach. But you can set up differently designed pages as front entrances, and based on how you get your site listed, you can use any of these as the link-reference point.

Choosing and Placing Key Words and Hash Tags

Generate a keyword list of 1000 characters. You can use a word processing program like WORD, which has a character counter. In this list, you would include variations on upper case and lower case spellings, as well as common misspellings.

Think about the words and phrases your customers might use to find you, to understand what you do as a jewelry designer, and how your jewelry will satisfy their needs and desires.

To research keywords, you can go to various search engines, plug in the major keywords you’re interested in, and check out what keywords other sites which pop up in the search engines search, have used. On each site’s front door page, review what words they seem to use on this page. Also, you can use the browser’s VIEW button to bring up the Source Code image of a page, and check out what keywords other people have listed in their META TAGS (which are otherwise hidden from view). You can use Google’s ad words program to generate keyword lists.

You also might want to use the names of other prominent jewelry designers, jewelry businesses, or jewelry lines as key words and phrases. If people are looking for these, they might also find you popping up in the search engine results.

Hash Tags

A hashtag is a word or keyword phrase preceded by a hash symbol (#). It's used within a post on social media to help those who may be interested in your topic to be able to find it when they search for a keyword or particular hashtag. It helps to draw attention to your posts and encourage interaction.

If you are using a phrase, do not put spaces between the words.

You want to use hashtags that you think people will search on.

You don't want to be too general and you don't want to be too obscure. You can check out what influencers in your area of interest are using on their posts.

[RiteTag](https://ritetag.com) (<https://ritetag.com>): Get instant hashtag recommendations.

You should, if possible, include a branded hashtag, such as *#yourname*, *#yourbusiness-name*, or *#nameofflineofjewelry* .

Different social media platforms have different expectations for the number of hashtags they view as optimal. Use that number, not more or less, if you can.

Facebook (1 to 2 at most)

LinkedIn (1 to 3 at most; place them within the body of your post, rather than at the end)

Instagram (10 or 11 is best, but you can use up to 30 hashtags)

Tik Tok (100 characters maximum)

Pinterest (1 or 2 at most)

I would suggest using hashtags in all your posts.

Some sites might use a related technology using an @ sign. Check this out.

Optimizing Your Social Profiles

In various social media sites, directories and other places you list your business, you want to have a great, professional social profile about yourself. Think about...

Username: This is the identity of your business in one simple or compound word. If you have the opportunity to verify your name within any site, do so. This builds trust.

Biography: You want a short introduction to yourself and your business.

[Refer to your 9. GETTING STARTED STORY in an earlier chapter, or 85. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES-WRITTEN DOCUMENTS-BIO AND PROFILE.]

List important information about yourself and your business. Tell the reader how you and your design work solved problems for them. Establish some indicators of credibility and legitimacy. Make your business sound approachable.

Photos: Get a good headshot of yourself and another shot of you working at making jewelry. Get another image that defines your business, such as store front, store displays, or a

group of employees serving customers. Last take some appealing images of some of the pieces you make and which represent your brand or style. Include photos showing someone wearing your pieces. Photos should be in .jpg format, 500x500 pixels minimum size, and 300dpi (for print) and 72-96dpi (for screen).

Headline or Tag Line: Usually you have an opportunity to add a short line of text after your name or the name of your business. 7-9 words is good. This line should suggest your keywords and hashtag words. This line should be catchy. Test out a few examples and see which ones get the best reactions.

[Also see the earlier chapter which includes chapter 12. TAG LINES.]

Content: A lot of informative content on your profiles is always a plus. Research what other jewelry designers are posting on blogs and on Facebook for ideas.

When you update your social profile, let all your followers know. This is a good way to keep them engaged with your business.

Site Usability and Navigation Concerns

How usable is your website to:

- *New customers*
- *Returning customers*

Websites need very clear Navigation systems.

Websites need strategies to keep them from becoming boring. After someone visits a site a few times, and it only takes a few times, the sites become stale and boring to them.

Websites need all your contact information – address, phone, fax, email – right on your first page. Or at least a very visible link/button to CONTACT INFORMATION. Don't make your customers hunt for contact information.

Navigation System

There is a series of research about the *Magical Number 7 plus or minus 3*. When people are confronted with 7 or more choices, they psychologically need to re-categorize them, such as into one group of 3 and another group of 4, in order to deal with all this information. Otherwise they get paralyzed and stumped. People can easily handle 4 pieces (7 minus 3) of

information, but start to get uncomfortable with 7 pieces, and can also be forced to deal with 10 separate pieces (7 plus 3) information, but that's pushing it.

From a website design standpoint, you do not want to make someone have to travel more than 4 links to get to the product information they want. As the required number of links to click on gets greater than 4 clicks, your customers will begin to get paralyzed, and not make the next click. Wherever you find you have more than 4 clicks to get to a product, you can re-categorize, so you have fewer links to navigate.

For example, suppose it takes 5 clicks to get from your section on Jewelry to your section on Amethyst Beaded Necklaces:

PRODUCTS – click 1 to – JEWELRY – click 2 to – NECKLACES – click 3 to – BEADED NECKLACES – click 4 to – GEMSTONE BEADED NECKLACES – click 5 to – AMETHYST BEADED NECKLACES.

You might reduce the number of clicks the customer has to travel by reducing the number of webpages they have to traverse:

PRODUCTS/JEWELRY – click 1 to – NECKLACES/BEADED NECKLACES – click 2 to – GEMSTONE BEADED NECKLACES/AMETHYST.

On the PRODUCTS page, you list all your types of products. On your NECKLACES page, you list all your types of necklaces. On your GEMSTONE BEADED NECKLACES page, you list all the types of gemstones.

Avoiding Boredom

Websites get stale fast. Unfortunately, to keep things re-designed and very fresh takes a lot of time and effort. So, you want to come up with some simple, less time-consuming tricks that you can do to keep your website appearing fresh.

One trick is to put something on the page that moves. Build in some kind of “movement” on your front-door page. You can use a .gif animation file, or create mouse-overs and other simple fun things and animations which move using Javascripts.

Another trick is to create a sense of Interactivity – forms, polls, message boards, chat lines, email sign-up, email link, contests, games, ezines, links/resources page listing other sites of interest.

A third trick is to run specials and/or have a What's New section which gets updated at least monthly.

Contact Information

Preferably on the first page, include your address, email, phone, fax, and other important identifying contact information.

If you have a separate CONTACT PAGE, be sure that the link/button to the page is prominently displayed at the top of your front door page.

If you use a CONTACT FORM, I think it is also helpful to list your email address on this same page, as well. If concerned about robots collecting email addresses off websites to use in spam, you can write you email address like this: *warren (@) landofodds (dot) com* .

Many of your regular customers or clients will begin to use your website like a rolodex entry. Make it easy for them.

Caution: many anti-spam programs reject emails that begin with *Info, Contact, Shop, Office, Mail, Studio* and other very generic terms.

Intensive Site Placement and Linkages

It is important that you get listed with all the major search engines, directories and social media sites, as well as specialty directories associated with your specific business.

To make this process go as quickly as possible, it is important to have all your information together in one place, where you can *cut and paste* the information into the online forms, as requested.

Type out your landing page URL as <http://www.mysite.com> . If you are using a shopping cart system, your URL will most likely start as <https://www.mysite.com> .

Type out your email contact address: warren@landofodds.com

Besides having about 12-20 of your most important keywords or keyword phrases handy, also have about 12 hashtags ready. You will also want to create 25-word, 50-word, 100-word, 200-word and 250-word descriptions of your site, heavy on keywords, but no side-by-side keyword repetitions. One more thing: have a 7 to 9-word part description / part tag line for your business. Make this catchy.

Do NOT pay for or use any of the multiple submission services. Take the time to submit your site to each search engine and directory, one at a time. A site submitted through a multiple submission service can get assigned a low ranking by the search engines.

You can use Yahoo or Google or Bing to find specialized directories. Get listed in as many as these as possible.

Many search engines and some directories now charge you for a listing, either as a flat fee, or as a click-through rate. You may not be able to afford all the opportunities, but you might want to follow through on the major ones.

Some search engines will let you buy key words. When someone searches on a keyword, a

link to your site will appear. If someone clicks through on that link, you're charged a per click fee. Google ad words and Facebook ads work this way.

Also, link up with web-rings, web-malls, and other affinity arrangements online. You might create your own affinity arrangement with other businesses you know.

Social media sites, newsgroups, forums, and message boards are great places to get visibility. While you usually can't put a blatantly commercial post on these, you can (a) respond to existing posts, and put your business signature information at the end of your post, (b) suggest a jewelry-making tip, or other similar tip, and add your business signature information to the end of your post, and (c) and similar things.

There are many sites which list local resources. Get listed. Facebook's Graph Search allows you to search for businesses both by location as well as friend's recommendations. It shows you which businesses your friends have frequented. Yelp and Trip Advisor are critical for local businesses.

You can do a search on the URL web-address of your competitors, as well as on their names, to see where they are listed.

Some of your suppliers may list you on their websites. Some of your customers or clients may list you on their websites.

To get a high ranking, search engines do three things:

a) **CATEGORIZE**

your site in relation to certain keywords, by indexing words on your site,

b) **RATE**

your link-popularity, by checking how often someone clicks on a link to your site, and

c) **RANK**

the link-relevancy of your site based on how long the person stays on your site, once they've clicked on their way there.

So, the more places that maintain a link to your website, the more likely someone is to click through to it. The better designed your website is, the more likely someone is to hang around awhile. The better indexed you are (called SEO optimization), the more visible you are in any search.

Inexpensive Things You Can Do To Get Noticed

There are many low-cost or free things you can do to increase your visibility online. Some suggestions:

1. Get reciprocal links – “I’ll list you if you list me.” There are your friends and personal associates; other similar businesses; affinity sites such as shopping malls, specialized directories, awards programs.
2. Create educational and information content. Share it with other sites in exchange for a link back to your site. In fact, there are Free Content sites online that act as a repository and exchange for free content articles. Submit your articles there.
3. Respond to people’s questions in forums, newsgroups, message boards, reviews and the like. Start each of your responses by repeating their first name. Include a business signature with a link back to your site at the end of your response.
4. Write articles for online ezines, newsgroups, forums, specialized portals and the like.
5. Join affinity groups.
6. Include a lot of explanatory and how-to information next to each of your products.
7. Run a contest.
8. Set up a group and form your own community within one or more of the social media sites.
9. Set up a business page on one or more of the social media sites, as well as the major search engines such as Google and Bing.
10. Create your own online newsletter.
11. Post images on all the social media sites.
12. Post short videos to You Tube, as well as other social media sites, particularly Instagram and Tik Tok. Videos will generate more interest than images.
13. Create a blog. Keep it active. You can also use micro-blogging posts to lesson your workload. Micro blog posts are short links to other websites or posts online you find of interest. Here you make a statement about why the reader should pay attention to this link. Write the link. Suggest that the reader come back to your blog and offer some feedback.
14. Create an email campaign for your email-opt-in customers.
15. Send birthday wishes to your followers; include an image of your jewelry; tag the follower.
16. Create both business and personal profile pages on various social media sites.
17. Run promotions and discount offers.
18. Bundle 2 or more pieces of jewelry and run a promotion.
19. Shine a spotlight on your employees.
20. Show off your space.
21. Run a contest.

22. Re-share content from other sites.
23. Recognize loyalty; feature your super customers in blog posts or posts on social media channels; give them first access to new products; create a brand loyalty program.
24. Invite customers to react to and test out new ideas before you implement them.
25. Reward referrals.
26. On social media, position yourself as a subject matter expert.
27. Use social media to find cross-promotional partners.

One thing I do NOT recommend is to send mass e-mailings where your target audience has not previously opted in to receive emails from you. Mass e-mailings generate a lot of positive responses, but they generate a lot of negative responses, as well, from people overwhelmed with spam.

There will always be new tools every year to take advantage of. Sharing text, image, video and audio will always remain in style.

However you decide to attract attention and increase your visibility, you will pay with either your time or your money. At first, you will probably take a shot-gun approach – that is, trying everything. But in the interests of time and money, you will want to narrow your efforts.

Social Media Posts Marketing

Post everywhere.

React to other people's posts. Answer queries. Suggest how-to solutions. Include an image with your post, 1-3 hashtags, and a link back to your website or online presence.

Create a presence on all social media sites, and post to them all. However, select 2 of them to concentrate your marketing efforts.

Things which improve responses to posts: touches of humor, quality of information, your excitement, something weird, something that evokes an emotional response, a feeling of connection.

Keep your posts short. Yes, you are marketing yourself and your designs, but more subtly. You do not want to sound salesy.

Engage your viewer. For example, ask *“Which of these 3 is your favorite?”* or *“A and B are perfect together – Agree?”*.

If at all possible, end each post with either a CALL TO ACTION or a TAKE-AWAY / LESSONS LEARNED.

Share photos of events. Share photos of what's new?

If someone responds to your post, respond back to them. At a minimum, thank them for their post. Remember to cite their first names in your responses.

Pay attention to the number of responses you get, and whether you get more or fewer responses depending on the site, the day of the week or the time of the day.

Plan to make posts on a regular basis. You might plan to use the same posts on different media sites. If using the same post for placement on the same social media site, say in several interest groups on that site, try to limit the same post to, in this example, 3 interest groups.

Instagram has been especially useful, productive and responsive to jewelry maker posts. With Instagram, I suggest planning to post *at least once every single day*. Remember that those captions are important and you want to make them clever or very personal in some way.

Quality will matter more than quantity.

Online Advertising

There are many opportunities for online advertising. For each opportunity, you want to carefully think through the costs and benefits. How many impressions (*# of eyeballs*) will your ad achieve? For each impression, how many of those people will follow through (*click-thru rate*) and link to your site? What words, keywords, terms seem to influence people to click-thru more often? What is a reasonable cost per click through?

[Also see the chapter about 69. ADVERTISING.]

The first types of advertising you should do are the basic, cheap and obvious. Include your website address and/or email address on your stationery, business cards, business checks, brochures, other handouts.

You add some marketing highlights, address and email as your “signature” for all the emails you send.

You might send out a Press release to your local papers and magazines, or to regional and national publications pertinent to your business. You will want to approach them with a good angle, that you think would be of interest to *their* readers.

[See information about writing a 53. Press Release]

Many search engines, like Google, directories and social media sites sell keywords. You pay a certain amount of money for each click thru to your site. You can set a limit to how much you want to spend each month. It could be as low as a few dollars, or as high as you want to go. When one of their visitors does a search on the particular keyword (or keyword phrase), your name appears with the search results, with a clickable link back to your site. You pay when someone clicks on that link and visits your site. Using a keyword phrase of 2 or more words, rather than a single word keyword will narrow your target audience, but at the same time increase the chances one of these people will click through.

Instead of using keywords, you might also be able to target customers by demographic data, such as age, gender, and geographic location.

You might purchase a banner ad to place on other people's sites.

You can also purchase ad space or sponsorship listings on various online ezines, magazine and websites.

You can place classified ads. Many search engines have classified sections. There are many specialized websites hosting classified ads.

In a similar way, you can post several of your products on Ebay or other auction sites. Marketing on Ebay is very similar to taking out an ad, but probably more effective.

Note: Social media sites and search engines tend to favor paid posts and ads. These sites probably have applications which help you narrow your target audience, thus maximizing your costs-per-click-thru.

Generating An Email List and Conducting Email Campaigns

It is critical to generate an email list of customers. You want them to very formally and visibly *opt-in* to the list. You can generate sign-up sheets, online forms, and the like towards this end.

You can run your own campaigns, or use an email client like [MAILCHIMP](https://mailchimp.com) (<https://mailchimp.com>) or [CONSTANT CONTACT](http://www.constantcontact.com) (<http://www.constantcontact.com>) .

You can segment your email list into smaller, targeted groups.

Each time you get someone's email address to add to your list, send them a special email, thanking them. Also direct them to your website or online presence, such as on social media like Facebook or Instagram, with an active link. If you maintain a blog, invite them to register on the blog, again with an active link. If you have an online Portfolio, direct them there with an active link.

A monthly contact is reasonable.

Caution: many anti-spam programs reject emails that begin with Info, Contact, Shop and other very generic terms.

Creating Visual Images and Video Content

Images: Images get better responses than text. Make your original images into .jpg or .tif or .gif files. The original images should be a minimum of 500 x 500 pixels and 72-96 dpi resolution. Within your webpage, you can adjust image sizes. Preference for using the percent (%) adjustment rather than setting particular pixel width and height sizes.

Show images of your finished pieces. Of you at working making things. Of someone

wearing your pieces. Of the inspirations for your pieces. Of works in progress. Of close-up details of your pieces.

Encourage customers to share images of them wearing your jewelry.

Create a slide show of a series of images to tell a story.

Infographics generate lots of discussion.

Write captions for all your images. Don't just tell them what the image is. Tell them how and why what is photographed will be important to them. Try to use humor and irony. Make the captions authentic. Bring out your personality in the captions. For example: *"The bracelet you always wanted to go with that blue dress,"* or, *"One of a kind necklace which will no longer be available after the 1st."*

More examples:

"My color-picking frustrations paid off this time!"

"Need to finish this ASAP. Didn't even take the time to brush my hair today!"

"So tribal ... What do you think?"

"I think I've made a necklace to match the picture I hung in my room. Didn't even think about that. Or did I?"

"I made all this jewelry today, and now have to leave it to do some vacuuming. I can't stop looking at it though."

Videos: Videos are the best way to get attention on the internet. They catch the eye. They can convey emotions. They make demonstrations easy to follow.

There are many formats. The safest one to use is MP4. When you upload to a site, like YouTube, the sites convert your video to their format. Consider purchasing video editing software. For the most part, keep your videos short – either the 1-3 minute version or the 10-20 minute version.

Each social media platform has its own rules and pros and cons for hosting videos. Check out: Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tik Tok, Snapchat. Most require a screen resolution of 1920 x1080 pixels, and a widescreen (16:9) format. You would set up a page or channel on each site. It's a good idea to create a short introduction video explaining what your page or channel is all about.

YouTube: Host all your videos. On YouTube, you can also live stream video. This is useful to make spot announcements, present new products, and the like. Videos available to everyone. People most often look for "how-to", "demonstrations", "product reviews."

Facebook: Videos can only be seen by your friends and followers. People on this site want videos that are entertaining or inspirational. 85% of viewers watch the videos with the sound off. Video size recommended is 1280x720 pixels.

LinkedIn: People like career-oriented videos as well as corporate and business promotions and interviews and conference broadcasts.

Twitter: Videos are very, very short. Usually off-the-cuff remarks shared by cell phone.

Instagram: Videos are square by default. Optimal size: 1080 x 1350 pixels. You want your videos to tell a story, with a beginning, middle, climax, denouement and conclusion.

Pinterest: Similar to You Tube.

Tik Tok: The standard video length is 3 minutes, though you can go up to 10 minutes. Sound is essential. The orientation is vertical, so you want the size of your video to be 1080 x 1920 pixels.

Pointers:

- Keep the viewer in mind. Aim to meet their needs, whether seeking to solve problems, learn something, be entertained, or be inspired.
- In the first 5-10 seconds, be sure the video content is an attention-grabber with a solid hook. Get your name out and your purpose out. Viewership drops dramatically after 10 seconds.
- Make the video mobile-friendly. Make any text large enough to be seen on a small cell phone screen. Make sure there is good contrast between text and the background it is imposed on.
- Always add either a CALL TO ACTION or a TAKE AWAY / LESSONS LEARNED before the video ends.
- Add captions to your video throughout because many people view videos with the sound off.
- Embed all your posted videos on your own website as well.
- Video editing software will allow you to create a raw video, and save it to the various formats and pixel size requirements.

Garner Online Reviews

Online reviews will always be important.

I widely post links throughout my online pages and emails to the various review sites like Google, Yelp, Facebook and Travel Advisor. Periodically I send out an email to my customer list asking them to post a review.

Respond to every single post, positive or negative. Always begin your responses by writing the reviewer's first name. Real and authentic responses, rather than canned responses, keep the conversation going and allow you to glean more valuable insights from your customers.

Occasionally the reviews might be negative. I know it's difficult not to take negative comments personally, but it's only personal if you allow them to be. Still, even negative comments are opportunities for dialog. Respond to them in a sensitive, understanding way, perhaps suggesting something like, (a) a future discount or reward, or, (b) being grateful for calling something to your attention – that this will change your behavior in the future. Thank them for their review.

One contributing factor to a higher search engine ranking is the number of positive reviews for your site.

Make sure you have set up business profiles on Google and Bing so that your customers can see the reviews posted on either search engine site.

Getting Customer Feedback

It is important to get customer feedback about your website, your marketing efforts and your products/product mix. Regularly connecting with customers will help you retain them. It will help you keep their information updated. Asking for feedback will get them more invested in your business. It will help you uncover any customer issues which need to be resolved.

When people email or call you, you might ask some evaluative questions of them, while you have their attention. Also ask them how they found you originally.

You can set up a free poll or survey online. There are many websites that offer free online polls and surveys.

Ask your customers for leads.

Competitor Surveillance

The internet provides myriad opportunities for you to view your competitors' marketing strategies. You can analyze specific competitors you know of in your immediate environment. Or you can focus on 3-5 competitors that are prominent in your business.

[Also review the chapter on 44. COMPETITOR ANALYSIS.]

Think about what they are doing and their performance relative to what you are doing and your performance.

In the search engine locator box, you can:

- Type a keyword, and look more closely at the first 3-5 competitors whose websites pop up
- Type in the name of a specific competitor, and see which websites mention their name
- Type in the URL address of a specific competitor and see which websites maintain active links to them, or have reviews of them

You can:

- Analyze their website and product line
- Determine what keywords are important to them
- Find out who lists them and links to them
- Check their visibility and rankings

What is their business model?

What assumptions do they make about the market for their products?

Where do they think their customers are?

How do they think their customers will find them?

Where do they advertise?

What is their product mix?

What kinds of pricing strategies have they put into action?

Listening tools (from LinkedIn Share): Some online sites which help you monitor competitors, blogs, comments, videos, tips and the like:

Bing (<http://www.bing.com>): Internet Search

Blog Search Engine (<http://www.blogsearchengine.org/>) (**formerly BlogPulse**): Identifies daily blog post patterns

CheckUserNames (<https://checkusernames.com/>): Find where your username has been registered

Crunchbase (<https://www.crunchbase.com/>): does the full range of market research; many plans; many specialized search engines

Digg (<https://digg.com/>): Members vote on which web content should be shared

Google News (<https://news.google.com>): Highlights news items about businesses and brands

HootSuite (<https://www.hootsuite.com>): Customized analytics relative to various social media sites

Pipes.digital (<https://www.pipes.digital/>)(**took over Yahoo Pipes**): Helps you aggregate information from all over the internet

Technorati (<https://technorati.com/>): measures particular position and influence of any website

Website.Grader: Measures the marketing effectiveness of your website

<https://website.grader.com/>

Establishing Baseline Site-Activity Indicators

It is important to track the activity on your website, and to try to gauge whether this activity level is affected by any marketing effort you might launch.

There should be a statistics package that comes with your website. You can also link to Google Analytics or other available statistical packages online.

From this information, you should gather the following stats:

- # of unique visitors
- Average visitors per day
- Average length on site per visitor
- # of sales per week
- Average dollars per sale
- Percent of unique visitors resulting in actual orders
- # of abandoned shopping carts

NOTE: You can easily find out similar information for all your competitors using many apps available online for this purpose.

Have a FAQ page which summarizes all your policies and procedures

Create one page, called a FAQ page, which summarizes those policies and procedures relevant to your customer base. Anticipate the kinds of questions your customers will ask you, and provide the answers here.

[Also review the later chapter on 88. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: FAQ PAGE.]

So, at the least, your customers will ask about:

- Ordering procedures
- Turnaround times
- Shipping time and costs
- Customization
- What to do about lost or damaged merchandise
- Repairs

- Returns and exchanges
- Backorders
- Copyrights, Trademarks
- Disclaimers
- Lead content or other information about materials
- Gift certificates
- Discounts
- Minimum orders
- Exchanging links
- International orders
- Security of site for online payments
- Other payment methods
- Sales taxes
- Wholesale orders or arrangements

Have a testimonials page (also can include pages for Press Articles, List of Retailers Who Sell Your Jewelry, Upcoming Events)

Periodically, gather testimonials from your customers who have purchased your product. Set up a webpage listing all these testimonials.

Gather in one place any published print or digital article about you or mentions you.

Keep an up-to-date list of all places your customers can buy your jewelry.

Create relationships with online influencers to market your jewelry

There are many people online that function as influencers. Many will market and promote your products in exchange for something. Sometimes this is money. Sometimes this is product. Sometimes this is some other reciprocal arrangement. ***[See chapter on 49. INFLUENCERS for more details.]***

They might share images of your jewelry. They might wear it. They will create a buzz for it.

Start by creating a relationship with an influencer who is relevant to your product line. Follow them everywhere. Interact with their posts. Show that you are interested in what they have to say.

Then pitch a collaboration.

[Review the information on the chapter 70.COLD CALLING AND MAKING THE PITCH.]

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49.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Collaborating With Influencers*



Guiding Questions?

1. What is an influencer?
2. How can an influencer help me in marketing my products?
3. Where can I find influencers?

Keywords:

collaboration
influencer
reciprocal require-
ments agreement

change agent

INFLUENCERS: Fashion Change Agents

Influencers are people positioned at the intersection of fashion, style and taste. They are fashion change agents. They are key to the dynamics of adoption and diffusion, coherence and contagion. They may play out these roles in an ephemeral, non-professional way, or, they may be prominent professionals in a community, a network or online.

The jewelry designer is not necessarily positioned or skilled enough to adequately influence who wears or buys their jewelry. Today's jewelry designer needs to get a good sense of how influence and influencers operate within the creative marketplace for the pragmatic purposes of managing adoption and diffusion of the jewelry she or he has created.

In today's world, there is a manic competition for attention (what colloquially is called *eyeballs*). Then, also, a frenetic effort to retain and manipulate that attention. Attention creates value. Often, it is difficult for the individual jewelry artist to get a leg up in this world without some significant help.

Influencers are one of the backbones of internet culture. Their business model centers on ways to shape everything we do in our lives from how we shop to how we learn to how we dress. Influencers are part micro-celebrity and part entrepreneur. They are opinion leaders and have been able to garner a large audience. They have proven themselves to be able to exploit how people distribute their time and attention.

Influencers might be bloggers. They could be social media personalities, celebrities, industry experts. They are thought leaders. Their brand often defines a lifestyle.

It is important to get a handle on the *change-agent role* of the influencer. Specifically,

1. The influencer is probably *not* one of the earliest adopters of a newly introduced piece or line of jewelry
2. The influencer communicates using both visual and verbal representations of the jewelry, and usually needs some assistance from the designer with content
3. Influencers as people are usually more interested about fashion-style-taste than the general public they are trying to influence; they may not be up-to-date on all the current fashions, but they have the inherent skills to communicate and legitimate and instigate any fashion choice
4. Influencers have the creative skill to aesthetically and artistically assemble stylish jewelry presentations; they can articulate what *good taste* means in the context the jewelry as presented; they are often creators of accepted standards of good jewelry design and dress behavior

The influencer plays multiple roles from innovator, information transmitter, opinion shaper, knowledge base, social legitimizer.

It is estimated that 50% of the female population and 25% of the male population monitor fashion information on a regular basis, from surfing websites, perusing magazines, shopping, and talking about fashion. But it the influencer who best locks in their attention to any particular fashion item.

From a business standpoint, your first step is to find influencers who match closely with your goals and target market. They may be influencers who are working with your competitors or working with businesses you believe share your audience. You want to verify that your target audience will trust and respect them.

You then want to develop a collaborative relationship with them. You do this by following their blogs and posts, and commenting on them. You might join an online chat group your influencer participates in. You might leverage your network to get an introduction. You begin to correspond with them on subjects of mutual interest.

Now begin to formulize your business relationship. You identify what you want them to do for you, and what they might want in exchange from you.

You might want them to spread the word. They might become a spokesperson for your brand. They might write about your brand. They take photos. They might wear your jewelry prominently in several images which get posted online. They interact with audiences. They get your message out on different platforms and they sponsor your content.

Influencers typically work on a quid-pro-quo basis. In exchange for some products or money you give them, they promote your jewelry. So, they might want money or charge a fee or prefer to have some of your jewelry. They might want to do a joint venture, say co-host something. You might want to allow them to offer special discounts to their followers for your products. You might want to partner on a joint webinar video series. You might want to exchange posts.

Finding Influencers

There are several websites which will aid you in your search for influencers. In addition, you can ask your audience for leads.

- [TheTrendSpotter.net](https://www.thetrendspotter.net/) (https://www.thetrendspotter.net/)
- [Hootsuite](https://www.hootsuite.com/) (https://www.hootsuite.com/)
- [Followerwonk](https://followerwonk.com/) (https://followerwonk.com/)
- [Buzzsumo](https://buzzsumo.com/) (https://buzzsumo.com/)
- [Influencity](https://www.influencity.com) (https://www.influencity.com)
- [Upfluence](https://www.upfluence.com/) (https://www.upfluence.com/)
- [aspireIO](https://aspire.io/) (https://aspire.io/)
- [HypeAuditor](https://hypeauditor.com/) (https://hypeauditor.com/)
- [PostForRent](https://www.postforrent.com/) (https://www.postforrent.com/)
- discover.ly (https://discover.ly/)
- influence.co (https://influence.co/)
- [tweetdeck](https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/) (https://tweetdeck.twitter.com/)
- [social crawlytics](https://socialcrawlytics.com/) (https://socialcrawlytics.com/)
- [AllTop](https://alltop.com/) (https://alltop.com/)
- podbay.fm (https://podbay.fm/)
- [crowdfire](https://www.crowdfireapp.com/?request_locale=en_US) (https://www.crowdfireapp.com/?request_locale=en_US)
- [FullContact](https://www.fullcontact.com/) (https://www.fullcontact.com/)
- [seoquake](https://www.seoquake.com/index.html) (https://www.seoquake.com/index.html)
- hunter.io (https://hunter.io/)
- [personapp.io](https://digitalmarketingsupermarket.com/tool/personapp/) (https://digitalmarketingsupermarket.com/tool/personapp/)
- [SimilarWeb](https://www.similarweb.com/) (https://www.similarweb.com/)

- [TaggerMedia](https://www.taggermedia.com/) (<https://www.taggermedia.com/>)
- [Grin.co](https://www.taggermedia.com/) (<https://www.taggermedia.com/>)
- [Izea](https://izea.com/) (<https://izea.com/>) (<https://izea.com/>)
- [InfluencerMarketingHub](https://influencermarketinghub.com/) (<https://influencermarketinghub.com/>)
- [SmartFluence.io](https://www.smartfluence.io/) (<https://www.smartfluence.io/>)


Types of Influencers

4 Types of Influencers by Follower Count

1. **Nano** influencers (1K–10K followers)
2. **Micro** influencers (also called C-influencers) (10K–100K followers)
3. **Macro** influencers (100K–1M followers)
4. **Mega or Celebrity** influencers (1M+ followers)

50.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Increasing Credibility and Legitimacy*

	<p>Guiding Questions? 1. How can the client trust you enough so as to purchase a piece of your jewelry?</p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>legitimacy</i> <i>credibility</i> <i>trust</i></p>	<p><i>reputation</i> <i>criticality</i> <i>validation</i></p>	<p><i>risk</i> <i>coherence</i> <i>contagion</i></p>
---	---	--

Increasing Credibility and Legitimacy

Your actual and potential clients will always have questions about you and your jewelry. Is it desirable? Have value? Work for them? Durable? Risky?

They will critique you and your products until they feel they have a satisfactory answer. Critique is not something negative. It's a process of inquiry, dialog and dialectic. Legitimacy in art and design results from discourse.

At the point of sale, you probably are not physically present. If you are, you probably have limited time to get across all your credentials and experiences.

So why should anyone trust you enough so that they follow through and purchase a piece of jewelry made by you?

There are several clues and cues. Your piece of jewelry represents a series of choices about design elements, their arrangement and composition, their construction and manipulation. The viewer can perceive many of the choices you have made, and from a criticality standpoint, will concurrently recognize the choices not made. *[In technical terms, the perception of the SET is always accompanied by the perception of the NOT SET.]*

When the jewelry is tried on, its functional and sensual qualities become more apparent. In addition to the piece of jewelry itself, you might have provided packaging, information tags, a name for the piece, a name for a collection the piece might be a part of, a bio of

yourself as a designer. Lots of clues and cues.

The context, situation or setting will contribute some clues and cues about legitimacy. Moreover, you might provide links to a website to see more of your pieces, lists of where your pieces are available for sale, an artist portfolio, and so forth.

Legitimacy

Your *legitimacy* as a jewelry designer, your reputation, your visibility, your opportunities, to some degree, flow from this process of *criticality*. Legitimacy comes from both local and more general validation. Validation results from these processes of critical observation and analysis of your work and of how you conduct yourself within your practice.

Your various audiences that view your work critically, in turn, bring your work in contact with the external world. They look for a high level of *coherence* within the design and its execution. They describe it critically as to its qualifications for matching desire, establishing appeal, having personal or general value and meaning. For successful jewelry designers, this *contagion* continues, diffuses, and grows.

Legitimacy engenders a deeper level of confidence among artist, wearer and viewer. The relationships are stimulated, enriched, given more and more value. Jewelry is more than a simple object; it is a catalyst for interaction, for relationships, for engagement, for conversation and dialog, and for emotion. Legitimacy results in trust and validation.

With globalization and rapid technological changes, the jewelry designer is confronted with additional burdens, making the effort to achieve legitimacy ever more difficult. That is because these larger forces bring about more and more standardization of jewelry. They rapidly bring fashions and styles to the fore, only to scrap them, in the seemingly blink of an eye, for the next hot thing. They channel images of jewelry pieces around and around the world taking on a sameness, and lowering people's expectations to what jewelry could be about.

If the products around the world are essentially the same, then the only thing the customer will care about is price. They won't care who made it. They won't care about quality.

Innovation begins to disappear. With its disappearance, the role of the jewelry designer diminishes. The jewelry designer becomes more a technician with no professional identity or concerns. The jewelry simply becomes the sum of its parts – the market value of the beads, metals and other components. There are few, if any, pathways to legitimacy.

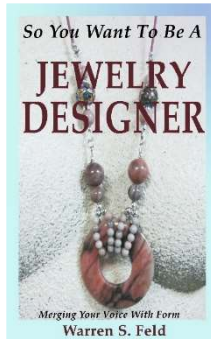
That's not what we want. And that makes it ever more important that jewelry designers see themselves as professionals, and develop their disciplinary literacy – fluency, flexibility and originality in design. Aspects of design which cannot be globalized. Or standardized. Or accomplished without the work, knowledge, skills, understandings and insights of a professional jewelry designer.

Legitimacy as an artist requires massive exposure, most often in diverse locations and

venues. It is unusual for a single venue or location, whether you are looking for exhibitions or for sales, to be sufficient for a designer to achieve that needed legitimacy and become successful. You will need to have your jewelry pieces in many venues.

Read my book:

SO YOU WANT TO BE A JEWELRY DESIGNER



Ebook (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer-warren-feld/1141377653?ean=2940165581120>)

Kindle (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer-ebook/dp/B09YJ4ZLW6/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_o?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1666795503&sr=8-1)

Print (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer/dp/B09Y3VNNMW/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_o?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1666467382&sr=8-1)

“The literate jewelry designer grasps the differences between jewelry as object and jewelry as intent. That is, you recognize how a piece of jewelry needs to be orchestrated from many angles. How jewelry making involves more than following a set of steps. How jewelry, without design, is just sculpture. How jewelry is a very communicative, public and interactive work of art and design. How jewelry focuses attention. How true design enhances the dignity of the person wearing it. And how the success of a jewelry designer, and associated practice or business, comes down to what’s happening at the boundary between the jewelry and the body – that is, jewelry is art only as it is worn.”


“The field of jewelry design has little academic scholarship relative to the ideas which must support it. This is mostly because jewelry design is not thought of as a discipline apart from art or craft. And this is a disservice to we designers.

Most description and analysis focus on the accomplishments of various successful designers. These texts detail their biographies, their use of artistic elements and techniques, and their influence over styles and fashions. This information is important, but insufficient to support jewelry design as a profession all its own, relevant for today and tomorrow, and inclusive of all of us who call ourselves jewelry designers.

This book covers the bases of those critical professional, think-like-a-designer skills jewelry designers need to develop and at which to become proficient.”

51.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING: *Building Your BRAND*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is branding? 2. How does branding differ from marketing? 3. Why is branding important? 4. How can I build my brand?
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<p>Keywords: <i>branding</i> <i>cohesive</i> <i>coherent</i> <i>consistency</i> <i>new customers /</i> <i>influencers /</i> <i>current customers</i> <i>/ purchase deci-</i> <i>sion makers</i></p>	<p><i>marketing</i> <i>advertising</i> <i>tactics</i> <i>strategies</i> <i>authenticity</i> <i>perception</i> <i>relationship vs</i> <i>transactional</i> <i>terms</i> <i>multi-media</i> <i>authenticity</i></p>	<p><i>scaleability</i> <i>competitive</i> <i>advantages</i> <i>better / faster</i> <i>/cheaper</i> <i>evaluation / feed-</i> <i>back</i> <i>emotional connec-</i> <i>tion</i> <i>evolve / re-brand</i></p>
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Branding

The ultimate goal and priority for any successful business is *branding*. Here your clients have an emotional connection to your work as a designer. They immediately recognize your style. Your choices in design. Your sensibilities. Your value and desirability for them. Branding is about what your customers perceive about you, and how you make them feel.

Your brand has ingredients; many moving parts which consist of the following:

- The quality of your product or service
- How it offers more value (*for example, better quality, easier access, and/or lower price*) than your competition
- The speed at which you deliver it
- The support you give your existing customers
- The tone/look/feel of your product, copy, and advertising
- How many different contexts and situations in which it is used
- How you respond to questions, concerns, complaints, reviews, online posts, things which for some reason do not go right

Jewelry designers who are successful know how to build their brand. In this chapter, I discuss this in more detail.

What Is Branding?

Branding is your product's personality. You. Your voice. Your message. Your commitment. Your look. Your artist's hand. But always remember, with branding, *consistency* is the real driving force behind it.

Your jewelry will have a personality. It may project one or more of these characteristics: *handcrafted, artistic, sophisticated, human, enduring, novel, playful, versatile, fashionable, well-constructed, noticeable, enviable*. These are the kinds of things you think your customer wants, desires or needs. These are the kinds of things customers buy jewelry for – to make their life a little better, a little bit more fun, a little bit more authentic. These are the kinds of things your customers want to feel when purchasing and wearing your jewelry.

Your *brand* is the name, term, design, logo, sensibility, sensation, symbol, or any other feature that identifies your product as distinct from those of others. Brand is often the most valuable asset of a company. As such, it needs to be groomed and managed carefully. Good branding will result in higher sales and greater longevity for the business. Good branding can make it easier to introduce new products. Good brand management seeks to make your product or service relevant to your target audience.

Your brand will be used in several contexts – in a store, on stationery, on websites, in posts, as signatures in email, with image captions. As such, it should be what is called *scalable* – that is, it is flexible and adaptable enough to function in many contexts.

I am often asked: What if you want to make a lot of different kinds and styles of jewelry? If they are so different that they feel like they are different brands, you will either have to narrow your interests, or develop separate branding strategies for each set of products.

If you want to sell other types of products along with your jewelry, if they feel like a part of the same brand, then your branding strategy should be something that encompasses all the variations in products available. If they feel like separate brands, then you need a unique branding strategy for each one.

How Does Branding Differ From Marketing?

Businesses often make the mistake of talking about marketing, advertising and branding interchangeably. So people often confuse them. This confusion is unfortunate.

Marketing is what you do. Marketing efforts make people aware of you.

Advertising is a tool or technique. It is one of the many, many things marketers do.

Branding is what you are. Branding efforts create an emotional and enduring connection to you.

You cannot do effective marketing without a clear idea of your brand, and the words, look and feel needed to convey it. Branding should both precede and underlie any marketing effort. The brand is bigger than any particular marketing effort. The brand is what sticks in your customer's mind about your product or company, whether they purchased your product

or not.

Marketing may convince someone to buy. Branding will convince someone to be loyal.

Marketing will unearth buyers. Branding will make them advocate for you.

Why Is Branding Important?

Everything you do will have the effect of either inspiring or deterring your customer. Every thought, price, design choice, marketing promotion, merchandising decision, product placement – all of these lead up to your customer recognizing (or not) you and your jewelry as a brand. Branding is the essential foundation to a successful jewelry design business.

You should be in *brand-building-mode* from day 1!

Your Successful Branding Campaign

What drives you? Passion? Values? Purpose? People who create great brands are usually seeking to fulfill some inner longing of their own, some dream of how they want to live their lives.

How do you want your customer to perceive you? What is your long-term vision? What will your business look like when you are done? Can you track your progress? Can you create clear milestones to help you know if you are on track? Why would someone do business with you rather than someone else?

Most successful brands use very human strategies in their communication and relationship building. You need to see and understand your business in relationship terms, not transactional ones. Give your brand an aura. Inspire your customer. How will you serve them? How will you solve their problems through the jewelry you design? What do you stand for? What differentiates you from your competition? What types of products and services can your customers expect from you?

A successful jewelry designer would not merely say *“I make jewelry.”* She would be more focused, more specific and more enthusiastic. She might say, *“I create beautiful works of art to adorn people.”* She might say, *“I make people ooh and aah!”* She might say, *“I help people find that right décor accent they have been looking for.”*

Your customer needs to know:

1. What you have to sell
2. How your jewelry changes something in their lives, and
3. What they have to do to *get one of those*

Try to emphasize specificity and avoid generic statements.

Who Are You Targeting With Your Branding Campaign?

You want to target four key audiences with your branding campaign. These include:

- 1. *New Customers***
- 2. *Influencers***
- 3. *Current Customers***
- 4. *Purchase Decision* Makers**

Your Business Name Should Reflect Your Brand

[See the chapter on 10. NAMING YOUR BUSINESS.]

How does your business name relate to your product and brand identity? Does your tag line support your brand identity?

If you plan on selling more products than just jewelry, you do not need the word *jewelry* in your name. Anticipate the future of your business as best as you can.

Before you select that name,

- Settle on a tone.
- Research that the brand names you want are available.
- English is not the only language option for you.
- Getting feedback is your best friend.

The Names Your Call Your Jewelry And Lines Of Jewelry Should Reflect Your Brand

[See the chapter on 12. NAMING YOUR JEWELRY.]

Giving names to your jewelry and jewelry lines allows you to amplify your company name and brand, as well as their impacts and effects. But you must tie your naming strategies back into your primary brand identity.

Your LOGO and Other Graphics Designs Should Reflect Your Brand

[See the chapter on 10. NAMING YOUR BUSINESS.]

Does your logo relate to your products and values? Does the logo help people remember you?

You want effective visual brand identity. Fonts, colors, images, packaging, displays, use of

particular visual elements to create distinction all should support your brand.

Your ELEVATOR PITCH and TAG Lines Should Reflect Your Brand

[See chapter on 12. ELEVATOR PITCH for ideas about creating elevator pitches and tag lines.]

Your Elevator Pitch and your Tag Line make it easier not only for your audience to understand exactly what your product is, but also gives them something easy and simple to share. Shareable information is spreadable. It can be posted, tweeted, texted and talked about. These give your brand a voice.

The Look of Your Pieces Should Reflect Your Brand

You play with shapes, colors, sounds, scents, tastes, movements, textures, patterns, compositions, silhouettes, packaging, displays, constructions – are all of these supporting your brand?

Your Website and Online Social Profiles Should Reflect Your Brand

[See chapters on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING, 59. SELLING ONLINE, and 85. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES-BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND PROFILE.]

Your website and online social profiles should look like your work – similar in look, feel and tone. Your work and your presence need to reflect on one another and be compatible.

Always include CALLS TO ACTION and/or LESSONS LEARNED throughout.

Your Portfolio Should Reflect Your Brand

[See chapter on creating a 84. PORTFOLIO.]

If you have a varied set of pieces to include in your Portfolio, organize them in such a way that your brand identity still shines through. This might involve placement, naming, descriptive text, sizing and layout.

Delivering Your Message Clearly

It goes without saying that you can have a lot of things organized and in place, but the crux comes in how you deliver your brand message clearly.

Think about: Why do things catch on? Why do people talk about you? How do you

generate a buzz?

Developing your marketing message, pretesting it, pretesting again, testing, testing again is very important. Your message needs to be *consistent* and *coherent* and resonate with people. Your customer should be able to anticipate that your brand is going to deliver the same essence of a thing each and every time.

It is very tempting to try to be everything to everyone. And you may have different kinds of customers. But, at the end of the day, they all should have the same impression of your values and your products.

Your core message needs to have both an *emotional side* and a *rational side*.

Example: You make beautiful jewelry that lasts.

Your core message needs to be *believable*.

Example: Your jewelry is worn by the queen. [True or not true?]

Your core message needs to be *relevant*.

Example: I sell wedding jewelry. [Only relevant for people who need jewelry for a wedding; if that's not your customer, this message won't work.]

Your core message needs to be *simple*. If your customer cannot understand, remember or repeat your one thing, it is too complicated. It won't stick in the person's mind.

Give people things to talk about. Make things fun.

You will be using a multi-method approach towards getting your branding messages out. Advertising. Social Media. Attending events. Sponsorships. Selling in stores. Website. Donations. Packaging. Displays. You want your message to be reinforced over and over again from many angles and points of view.

Your marketing message should promise what you know you can actually deliver. Authenticity reconfirms actions, and in turn, resonates well with customers.

Confirming Your Credibility

Tell and share your story in a way which creates a connection with your customer. Think about how things in your life led up to your success, how this relates to the brand identity you are trying to create, and, last, how the customer will relate to your story. You may find you have to re-write your story to meet your branding goals, and this is OK.

Your jewelry can be explained by your values and beliefs, your experiences and lifestyle. Put into words who you are, what your values and beliefs are, also your goals and how you approach the jewelry design process.

Show and tell the customer, in simple words and phrases, what the consequences (positive and/or negative) for them might be if they bought and wore your jewelry, and what the likelihood of any of these consequences occurring.

Offer any evidence that your assessment of consequences and their likelihood of

occurring will happen.

People always trust word-of-mouth, so generating this is always important.

[See chapter on 47. MARKETING STRATEGIES for more about generating word-of-mouth.]

Commit to serving your customer over and over again, and they will learn to trust and rely on you.

Connecting To Your Clients Emotionally

Always work to market that emotional connection with your customers. Inspire affection. Create fantasy.

People need to see your business as a solution to their problems. So you want to make your competitive advantages (over all your other competitors) very visible and apparent. Show and tell them how you intend to minimize their risk should they choose your products to solve their problems. Not generic problems, but the actual concerns of your real and potential customers.

Customer concerns and problems may be one or more of the following:

- Want peace of mind
- Want to feel a part of a group or family
- Want to feel they make good choices
- Want to make life easier
- Want their questions answered
- Want to minimize any sense of risk or consequences
- Want to be the focus of attention
- Want to fit into a particular situation, context, event
- Want power and influence
- Want reassurance about something
- Want greater self-esteem
- Want meaning in their life

Listen to feedback. What are your better customers saying about your brand – positive, negative and everything in between? Show them that you hear what they are saying.

Always respond in meaningful ways. Follow-up on everything. The more you can repeat your customer's first name in your follow-ups, the better their response.

Motivate Your Buyer, and Secure Your Customer's Loyalty

Recognize loyalty. Reward and cultivate. Give them access to new products and services first. Involve customers in your business. Let them test your products. Turn them into brand ambassadors and encourage them to spread word of mouth. Get feedback on your marketing strategies. Give them a sense of brand ownership. Engage in conversations. Respond to needs. Make them feel good. Give out referral rewards. Encourage them to post reviews online, and then thank them for these. Feature them on your website or blog. Follow-up after purchases.

SUCCESSFUL BRANDING STRATEGIES

There are many types of branding strategies, and you will be using several of these. These include,

- 1. Making new rules**
- 2. Marketing a belief**
- 3. Creating connection and belonging**
- 4. Enabling expression**
- 5. Creating culture and thinking routines**
- 6. Leveraging tension**
- 7. Using scarcity**
- 8. Encouraging play**

Since a lot of your business will occur online, you will be doing a lot of social media marketing.

[See chapter on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING]

Anticipate Problems

Your brand loyalty can disappear in almost an instant. You have to be diligent in anticipating or dealing with things like:

- Service interruptions
- Too many options diluting the brand
- Mixed messages confusing customers
- Negative publicity or negative word-of-mouth

- New competitors or existing competitors upping their game

The jewelry market is always big enough to attract new competitors as well as provide opportunities for existing competitors to deliver better, faster, cheaper. Face the challenge to elevate your marketing and branding strategies and tactics and deliver more value.

Brands Evolve

As time goes on, things come in and go out of fashion. Styles, colors, silhouettes. Your customers might begin to get bored or even dislike your brand. Stay relevant and flexible. A well-managed brand is always making adjustments.

You want to be ready to deal with this kind of thing before it happens. That means, it is important to be ready to *re-brand*. It is important to seek out and enter new markets. It is critical that you be in touch at all times with your customers' goals and values.

Periodically, reality test.

For instance, visualize someone else taking over your business. Could they succeed at maintaining your brand?

Did your product deliver the experience the customer was looking for?

Have you maintained quality standards?

Did your employees and sales staff and sales agents understand your brand and sound like they know what they are talking about when interacting with customers?

Did you respond to phone calls and emails in a timely manner?

Do your customers believe you have their best interests at heart?

Measure Your Effectiveness

It is always important to build in evaluative and feedback components to all your business activities. Branding is no exception.

How well is your business (you and your employees) inspired to execute all your proposed marketing and branding activities?


Given the time and money you are spending, are you getting that Return On Investment (ROI)?

Does your brand resonate with your customers? Does this translate into sales and profitability?

Plan to do some experimenting by testing out different ideas before settling on one. Be sure your ideas fit your brand authenticity and align with your strategies.

52.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING:
Self Promotion and Raising Your Visibility

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do I go about promoting myself and increasing my visibility as a jewelry designer? 2. What kinds of things might help me overcome my fears about marketing my own work?
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<p>Keywords: <i>self promotion visibility your story / narrative</i></p>	<p><i>juried value word-of-mouth</i></p>	<p><i>speaking about yourself relevance inspire</i></p>
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The Importance of Self-Promotion

If you are a jewelry designer who has ambitions to have your work publicized in books or magazines, or to be accepted into a juried show or exhibit, or to sell your things in a store or gallery, you need to be able to promote your work. Often, I have found, creative-types can be shy when it comes to self-promotion and marketing.

What insights, from your own experiences, can you offer your fellow jewelry designers about self-promotion?

What kinds of things help you to overcome any fears about marketing your work?

How do you handle criticism and other rejection like getting the dreaded “No”?

From an article I wrote....

Jewelry designers often find a self-satisfaction in working intensely on a project, often in isolation or solitude. But when it comes to tooting their own horns – this is not as easy or satisfying for them. There is a discomfort here. You might want to show your pieces to others, perhaps submitting them for review or a juried competition, or perhaps wanting a store or gallery to accept your pieces for sale.

Then humility kicks in. Or perhaps a lack of confidence in yourself. Or a fear of criticism. Or a rejection. Hearing: No, we don’t want your pieces.

We don't want to appear desperate for a sale, or too eager for acceptance.

But, if you don't believe in yourself and your products, no one will. Your fantasy of striking out on your own will never materialize, if you don't find it within yourself to do some self-promotion.

First Point:

Promote Your Value

And the first point is understanding and recognizing that:

To promote yourself means promoting your value.

Your jewelry has VALUE to them, why....?

If something has value to someone, then they typically want to know about it. Your jewelry has value to them because it solves a problem for them. It might make them happier, more beautiful, more enriched, more satisfied, more powerful, more socially accepted, more understanding of construction or technique or art and aesthetics. It might be better than other jewelry they see or wear or think about buying.

For a store or gallery, your jewelry might be more saleable, more attractive as displayed, better constructed, more artistic, more stylish or fashionable, a better fit with their customer base, with good price points.

You promote the value of your jewelry to your audience. You do not have to brag. You do not have to be shameless. You do not have to sound sales'y. You do not have to do or say anything embarrassing. Just speak the truth about value. Share examples of your work and what you have done, not your ego. Be authentic.

Second Point:

Practice Speaking About Yourself

And that brings up the second point – ***speaking***.

People who are more comfortable speaking about themselves and their products tend to be more successful in their careers.

Products don't sell themselves. People need to be nudged.

This *speaking-about-themselves and their products* is a basic communication process. This communication process is a process of sharing information. You want to educate the right people, in the right way at the right time. You want to speak about who you are, and what you make. The values your jewelry has to offer them. And how you would like to develop your relationship – whether designer/client or designer/retailer or designer/jury – so that you may both benefit.

Fundamentally self-promotion is about communication. Communicators frame the narrative. Communicators start the conversation. They begin on favorable terms.

They would not say: *Would you like to see my jewelry?*

Instead, they would say: *I have jewelry you are going to love.*

Third Point: Be Relevant

And this brings up the third point:

Be relevant.

Know your audience, what their needs are, what their problems are that need solving. You may have created the original piece to satisfy some personal yearning and desire. But if you want someone to buy the piece, wear the piece, talk about the piece, collect the piece, exhibit the piece, critique the piece, or sell the piece, you need to anticipate why. Why would they want to buy, wear, talk about, collect, exhibit, review or sell your piece of jewelry? Why would they desire your piece? How would they come to understand why they would desire your piece?

Do not assume they will figure all this out on their own. You will need to help them along in this process. You will need to communicate about the value your jewelry will have for them. You will need to do some self-promotion.

Last Point: Inspire People To Spread Your Message

The last point:

Inspire people to spread your message.

Your best marketing and promotion will be what is called *word-of-mouth (contagion)*. So you want to create supporters and fans and collaborators and colleagues. And you want them to be inspired enough about you, your creativity and your jewelry, so that they tell others about you. You inspire your current network of family and friends. You might make a presentation or teach a class. You might share images or videos of your work and work process on social media like Facebook or Instagram or Twitter or Pinterest or Tik Tok. You want to regularly connect with people, so that you and your work are frequently in their thoughts.

Some Self-Promotion Strategies

There are many self-promotion strategies that you can do. You don't need to do everything at once. You might try one or two ideas first, and do those, then pick a third, and so

on.

1. Wear your jewelry all the time, and don't be shy about saying you made it!
2. Have attractive business cards made, perhaps a brochure
3. Have an active presence on social media, particularly Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Tik Tok; participate in discussions; get people to click on those LIKE buttons (or similar thumbs-up registers) next to your images and your discussions
4. Have a website, either as a *billboard*, or as a full-fledged e-commerce site
5. Get your website listed in as many online directories and search engines as you can
6. Generate an emailing list and use it regularly, such as sending out a newsletter; get into the habit of asking people if you can add them to your mailing list
7. Collect testimonials about your work, and post them publicly
8. Always speak and act passionately when discussing or showing your work
9. Organize your own discussion groups on Facebook and other social media sites, or begin a blog (WORDPRESS is a good place to start a blog)
10. Post video tutorials or videos showing you making things on YouTube
11. Submit images of your pieces to bead, craft and jewelry magazines
12. Teach courses, either locally, or as a connection with one of the many websites promoting teachers online, such as Betterfly.com or Teachable.com
13. List yourself with websites that list custom jewelry makers for hire, such as Custom-made.com
14. If your jewelry has done well for a store, convince them to carry more of it and let it take up more display space
15. Doing the occasional art show, craft show, bazaar or flea market is also a good form of advertising and getting your message out to a large number of people you probably would never have met otherwise
16. Create a good, rememberable image to use as your avatar, on such websites as Facebook and Instagram
17. Follow up with customers and contacts, such as after a purchase, or after someone accepting to include your piece in a magazine, or sell their pieces in a shop. Thank them. Reinforce your personal brand with a short comment about the value of your pieces for them.
18. Have a clear personal style that you can point to in your jewelry, and that you can speak about.
19. Have a clear idea of what is called your *competitive advantage*. What are those 5-10 things about you and your work that sets you apart from, and perhaps makes you better than, the competition.

20. Search for companies or people that may want to see or buy your work. Use directories on Yahoo and Google. Use LinkedIn.com. Search Twitter looking for people who are saying they need custom jewelry work done.
21. Network with other jewelry designers, both in your local area, as well as online. Ask for feedback on the self-promotional activities you are doing. Have any of these worked well for them? Are they doing other things you haven't thought of?
22. Get out of your studio and meet people in the flesh.
23. Attend trade shows, networking events and charity events, or other types of places where your clients might also attend.
24. Offer something – one time only – for free. A free class, a free repair, a free pair of earrings.
25. Publish or self-publish a book or book-on-CD, and promote that
26. Have a well-rehearsed 30-second elevator pitch
27. Be sure your business name and tag line reflect your brand image

Sometimes it is easier to begin practicing self-promotion by targeting a narrow niche audience that you are familiar and comfortable with.

Think about your unique value proposition for them.

What makes you an especially interesting jewelry designer from their point of view?

Deputize them as marketers for you and your jewelry. Ask them who else you should be meeting and talking with. Where else might you sell your jewelry? Why do they feel your jewelry is a good sell?

Meeting people can only be effective if you are adding them to your network, and keeping in touch on a regular basis.

Stay in touch with people, especially between events or sales.

Be yourself.

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53.

MARKETING / PROMOTION / POSITIONING:

Writing A Press Release and Preparing For Reporters

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How can you best utilize the time when a reporter comes to write a story about you and your jewelry?2. How do you write a Press Release?
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<p>Keywords: <i>reporter publicity</i></p>	<p><i>press release newsworthy essential vs. sup- porting information</i></p>	
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When The Reporter Comes A-Calling

Kathryn was so very excited! She had just finished speaking with a reporter for a local arts magazine. He wanted to do a story about her as a jewelry artist. The magazine was 4-color, very substantial and distributed widely in her hometown area. Moreover, the reporter promised he'd include 5 pictures in the article. They made an appointment to meet in the middle of next week. And Kathryn was thrilled!

The reporter met her at her home. She greeted him, somewhat giddy, not sure what to say, or say next. She thought she would let him lead the conversation and interview. She gave him a short tour of her house – her beading room, her den, her living room. The reporter marveled at her collection of Pez dispensers and puppets. A short time later, a photographer joined them.

After 2 hours, the reporter and photographer had left. Kathryn was satisfied that they had seen several of her bead-woven jewelry pieces. She felt that she had given them a good history of how she got into jewelry making. The photographer had taken at least 20 shots of her around the house. The article was to come out in 3 weeks.

Three weeks later, and there it was.

A 4-color article. In a prominent local art magazine. About her wonderful *Pez collection*. And the long staircase from the street level to the living level in her house. And all her puppets. And information about her moving from Connecticut to Tennessee and having

lived in Georgia. And she had three children.

And no pictures of her jewelry. Or her bead room. Or her making jewelry. And no pictures, surprisingly, of her Pez collection or her puppets, given how prominently these were featured in the article. There was a picture of her staircase. Three pictures of her sitting on a couch or chair. And a picture of a treasured vase, and quite beautiful.

Kathryn had thought – Now Nashville will know about my jewelry making and design prowess.

Until she saw the article.

And knew now she'd be known for Pez dispensers.

The opportunity to get featured in a newscast or newspaper or magazine doesn't come around often. However, when the opportunity does knock, this can have a big and positive impact on your jewelry making business. But you have to be prepared. You have to remain in control – even if this leads to a little tension between you and the reporter.

Be Organized and Prepared Before The Reporter/Photographer Gets There

First, pre-prepare

Determine the 4 or 5 or so major points you want to make about yourself as a designer and about your jewelry.

No matter what questions the reporter asks, turn the conversation back to your major points. During the interview, keep making the major points. When the reporter returns to his notes to quote you, this will be all the material he has to draw from. You carefully avoided talking about any other irrelevant topic.

If you give a reporter a tour of your home, only take him to the jewelry-relevant points of interest. Where you make the jewelry. Where you display your jewelry. Where you have people try on your jewelry. Where you get inspiration for your jewelry. And if there's a photographer or cameraman there, direct and narrow their attention and focus as well.

Pre-think what will be the 5 or so most strategic pictures that should be taken. Definitely have an "action" shot that shows you making jewelry. Perhaps another "action" shot that shows you fitting someone with your jewelry, or them trying on your jewelry. Have some pieces of your jewelry "staged" so that they are photo-ready, with great background, foreground and pedestal. Don't wait to take your jewelry out of a box to show them. Because jewelry is made up of very small pieces, it might not photograph well. Show the photographer the parts of your jewelry that lend themselves to detailed close-ups.

Make your points. Get your images.

Second, set the stage

When the reporter (and photographer or cameraman) arrives, butter them up, and find out how deep and wide their knowledge is about jewelry. If they only have a shallow understanding, educate them. How do you find the parts? How do you determine how the pieces should be constructed? Do you use specialized tools? How does someone learn to do what you do? What materials do you use? What techniques? Any special technologies or strategies or design thinking?

Also, ask them about the “audience.” Who do you make jewelry for? What kinds of things do they think that their “audience” would most like to know about jewelry and jewelry design?

Third, before they begin, ask for tips

If this is getting filmed, ask about how you should stand, (or sit), the direction you should look at, the positioning of your head, how to align your feet, what to do with your hands and arms, and any other do’s and don’ts, as they see it. Be assured they typically know how to make you look your best. But it is up to you to make sure they take the time and effort to make you look your best.

What kinds of things do they like to see/hear in an interview?

Last, when you are done, ask to get a copy

Be sure you will be sent copies of the written articles, or DVD or video copies of any filming. Don’t assume they will automatically send you something – even if they promise to do so.

Don’t think all this will make you seem too pushy.
Remember: Everyone will be happy if the story comes out great!

WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

Visibility is your goal and one way to try to get this is to distribute a press release, usually to a local paper, or specialty magazine or e-zine, or to someone’s blog or podcast. There are also Press Release distribution outlets. Check online.

You might use a Press Release to

- Open your business
- Launch a new product line
- Announce a new employee
- Announce where your jewelry will be prominently displayed

- Let people know you received an award
- Let people know about an event you are hosting

Anticipate what the publication's source's clientele would be most interested, and slant your narrative so that it will seem especially newsworthy to that clientele.

The general format:

1. IN TOP LEFT CORNER, write either

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE,

or,

HOLD UNTIL (date)

NOTE: If time sensitive, get this out several days ahead of when it needs to be published.

2. Appealing Title and Sub-Title (summarizes what article is about)
3. Date of Press Release (month-day-year)
4. Your business name, your name, location (or website)
5. Two or Three paragraphs with essential details (think paragraph 1 is most important, and if they have to, they can cut paragraphs 2 and 3; paragraph 2 is next in importance, allowing them, if they want, to cut paragraph 3)
6. Emphasize what makes the story newsworthy.
7. Bulleted facts or key points or key takeaways – supporting information
8. Describe your company/business in 50 words or less
9. Contact information: Your business name, your name, address, website, phone, email, logo, other contact information
10. One head shot photo, minimum 500x500 pixels, at least 300 dpi
11. One to three accompanying photos, minimum 500x500 pixels, at least 300 dpi
12. End with three hashtags (###) to show that this is the end of your Press Release

If you do get a Press Release published, announce this on all your social media sites with links back to the Press Release.

FOOTNOTES


Hayes, Mark. How To Write A Press Release (+ Free Template). 6/20/2022.

As referenced in:

<https://www.shopify.com/blog/how-to-write-a-press-release>

54.

SELLING: HOW WILL YOU SELL TO YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the various venues and channels for selling my jewelry? 2. What do I need to have before I approach them? 3. How should I approach them? 4. Should I concentrate on one venue, or multiple venues?
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<p>Keywords:</p> <p><i>selling</i> <i>cross promotion /</i> <i>co-marketing</i> <i>clienteling</i> <i>home show</i> <i>jewelry party</i></p>	<p><i>retail</i> <i>wholesale</i> <i>consignment</i> <i>sales rep / show-</i> <i>room</i> <i>social media</i> <i>3rd party website</i> <i>teaching</i> <i>patterns / kits</i></p>	<p><i>art and craft fair</i> <i>trunk show</i> <i>catalog</i> <i>print and online</i> <i>advertising</i> <i>niche marketing</i> <i>fear of rejection</i> <i>venue / channel</i></p>
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Also check out sections on 52. SELF PROMOTION, on 47. MARKETING STRATEGIES, and on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING.

How Will You Sell Your Jewelry To Your Target Audience?

Today's jewelry designer must be able to reach potential customers in a myriad of venues. These include what we call bricks and mortar locations, as well as what we refer to as clicks, that is online, locations. These include local, regional, national and even international venues. Our jewelry buyers are splitting their time between in-store and on-line purchases.

Whatever the location and type of venue, it is necessary for the jewelry designer to create situations where shoppers feel connected to the designer and their designs, emotionally, with service, and with the sense of awe, magic and desire our jewelry conveys for them. Today's designer must be adept at creating value, trust, legitimacy and connection, whether the

buyer is sitting across a well-lit display case or glancing down on the digital screen of a cell phone.

Look at these numbers from 2022:

- Online jewelry sales accounted for 18-21% of all jewelry sales
- Branded jewelry became more appealing to the average customer, with 68% of all jewelry buyers indicating they are willing to pay more for well-known brands
- Branded jewelry sales represented 20-40% of all jewelry sales annually
- 50% of the visits to local shops were triggered by an online search
- 70% of potential customers would prefer to visit a local jewelry store or boutique for their purchases, if this choice was easy, representing little risk of finding what they desired
- 76% of potential customers used their cell phones to find things, compared to using a personal computer
- 36% of consumers share their customer service experiences, whether good or bad, online. One-third of these posted on Facebook, followed closing by Instagram
- 30.3% of millennials expected to use a *buy now, pay later* option of payment
- 75% of potential customers were more likely to buy from a designer who knew their name

What is most important is selecting and organizing a sales process that works best for you. It is most likely going to be a multi-venue approach because it is difficult to earn enough money from a single venue alone. At a minimum, you will want your jewelry to be available in a physical space as well as represented online. The sales process may involve different pricing strategies. It may target different target market segments. Whatever the full sales process ends up being for you, it should always reflect your evolving brand identity.

In this section on SELLING, I cover these topics:

1. **Selling (chapter 54)**
2. **Linking Products to Buyers (chapter 55)**
3. **Knowing Your Competitive Advantages (chapter 56)**
4. **Training and Educating Your Customer (chapter 57)**
5. **Selling at Art & Craft Shows (chapter 58)**
6. **Selling Online (chapter 59)**
7. **Selling in Boutiques and Other Stores (chapter 60)**

8. **Selling on Consignment (chapter 61)**
9. **Selling in Galleries (chapter 62)**
10. **Selling at Home Shows (chapter 63)**
11. **Selling at Trunk Shows (chapter 64)**
12. **Selling at Jewelry Making Parties (chapter 65)**
13. **Selling in Mail Order Catalogs (chapter 66)**
14. **Selling on TV Shopping Sites (chapter 67)**
15. **Selling Through A Mobile Truck Business (chapter 68)**
16. **Advertising (chapter 69)**
17. **Cold Calling and Making The Pitch (chapter 70)**
18. **Working with Sales Reps, Agencies, and Show Rooms (chapter 71)**
19. **Selling at Trade Shows (chapter 72)**
20. **Teaching Classes and Selling Patterns and Kits (chapter 73)**
21. **Other Selling Venues and Strategies (chapter 74)**
22. **About Contracts and Agreements (chapter 75)**
23. **Overcoming Setbacks and Fears of Rejection (chapter 76)**
24. **Relying on Others To Sell Your Jewelry (chapter 77)**
25. **Saying Goodbye To Your Jewelry (chapter 78)**
26. **Merchandising and Display (chapter 79)**
27. **Designer Connect – Tony Perrin of Lock and Key (chapter 80)**

Salesmanship

As a jewelry designer, your self-concept is most likely one as an *artist*. But when you are in business, you need to expand this a bit and see yourself as both an *artist* and a *salesperson*. For many designers just beginning to sell their pieces, they may feel uncomfortable with this. Using the words *artist* and *salesperson* in the same sentence may feel awkward or somehow not right. If this is you, you need to get over it. Successful jewelry designers have developed strong sales skills. Jewelry, for the most part, will not sell itself. You have to encourage people who love your jewelry to buy it.

An empathetic salesperson – one who can put him- or her-self in the shoes of their customer – is always going to generate more sales. That means that you can readily anticipate the customer's needs and desires, and respond quickly and appropriately to them. That doesn't mean getting pushy. You always want to be your authentic self at all times.

Think of sales this way: You don't close a sale. Instead, you create a *relationship*.

- Be bold and confident when introducing yourself.
- Always ask the person you are talking with what their name is; repeat their name several times while speaking with them.
- Ask a lot of questions; show interest in the customer. Get them talking about themselves. You should be talking about 25% of the time and your customer should be talking about 75% of the time.
- A great story about your jewelry will sell it. They are especially interested in your inspiration, as well as you process for creating jewelry.
- Give your potential customer some space. Don't crowd them. Don't follow them all around. But don't leave them all alone, either. Periodically follow up with them to see how their doing and if they have any questions.
- Don't let your customers get away without at least asking them if they have any interest in purchasing the jewelry. (You might say, *Can I wrap that up for you? Or, Do you want to put that on a credit card?*) Even if the customer says *No!*, you would be in a better position than if you had not asked.

Some jewelry designers are comfortable selling their own work to others. Some are not. If you are one of those who is uncomfortable promoting yourself and selling your own jewelry, and you don't think you can get past your shyness, partner up with someone who can.

Record Keeping

- As best as you can, you want to keep a ledger of all your sales.
- To whom
- Address/Email/Phone
- When
- At what price
- Notes

Various selling venues, like Galleries or Online Shopping, most likely will require some documentation about your sales history.


FOOTNOTES

Jewel360. Selling In The Modern Marketplace. 2022

55.

SELLING:

How Will You Link Up Your Product To Your Buyer?

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How will you link up your product to your buyer?2. What is clienteling and how do I do this?3. How do I keep up with my current customers?
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<p>Keywords: <i>clienteling activities</i></p>	<p><i>client base design preferences documentation profile</i></p>	<p><i>visibility word-of-mouth look-book</i></p>
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Also check out section on 37. **PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION.**

Maintaining Your Client Base

A good deal of success results from *visibility*. How you keep up with your client base becomes critical. This comes down to collecting information about your customers and leveraging it.

You will want to keep customer profiles handy, probably on a spreadsheet. At the least, try to maintain a list of customers who have purchased a piece of jewelry from you, or from someone who sells your jewelry for you.

Getting some personal information, such as birthday or anniversary dates, can be very useful. Email, physical address, phone number, a place for notes – these are useful information to document.

Also, you will want some jewelry design preferences information: colors, sizes, silhouettes, materials, styles, related crafts interests.

Be sure you are visible on the web. People will use the internet like a rolodex. So you want a website presence, listings in all the major directories, business pages on Google and Bing, business page on Facebook and Instagram.

Create an email list. Use it on a regular basis. But don't spam. CALL TO ACTIONS, such as offering a time-limited discount coupon code, are very effective.

Personalize every note, post and email you send with your customers' first names.

Keep your customers up-to-date about where they can find your jewelry for purchase.

Develop a follow-up system. The better your system, the more likely you are to do the follow-ups. You will want to routinely follow-up with your customers. But you will also want to do be sure you follow-up with new contacts you have made, such as a store where you might sell your jewelry, or a gallery owner you met at a trade show.

Provide valuable information in your follow-up conversations. You can link them to information you think they would be interested in. You can educate them about jewelry or materials or techniques. You can spotlight a jewelry designer you like. You can point them to enrichment travel opportunities. You can post images of your jewelry or other jewelry you like. You can write articles.

Linking Up With Your Customer

Selling involves creating opportunities to communicate with your customers. We call these *clienteling activities*. Social media provides many options here, and some are even automatic, such as informing you when someone's birthday is. But you will also want to keep profile information on your customers, particularly those who purchase a piece of jewelry from you.

Clienteling is more than good customer service. Clienteling will enhance how your customers engage with your business. Clienteling can turn your customers into brand evangelists, spreading word-of-mouth about you and the jewelry your design. Here you are personalizing the selling process. Clienteling activities can reduce the cost of generating each subsequent sale by up to 80%. Clienteling can reduce the visibility and information gaps between the physical store experience and that customer experience online.

You can create your own clienteling strategies and/or rely on assisted selling software services which you will find online.

Some examples:

- Birthday reach outs (*I send birthday congrats to every friend on Facebook, for instance*)
- Anniversary ideas
- Service reminders
- Weekly sales opportunity follow-ups
- 6 month clean-and-checks, where you call the customer and review their jewelry needs and purchases over the last six months, and what they might need/buy over the next six months, and how you can make this process easier and better centered


around the customer

- Spouse birthday
- New inventory announcement
- Wishlist items on sale
- Child birthday
- Graduation event
- Holidays
- Review request
- Post-sale thank-you
- General check-in
- In-store visit follow-up
- Special update follow-up
- Store event reach-out
- Item complete alert
- Keeping point-of-sale (POS) information as a record of what people have bought
- Greeting your customers by name each time you interact with them
- Sending out a look-book with images and/or videos of jewelry specifically tailored to the interests of particular clients
- Set up 1-on-1 virtual appointments
- Post customer-generated content

56.

SELLING:

Knowing Your Competitive Advantages

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a competitive advantage? Why would someone buy from you and not your competition? 2. Why is having a competitive advantage important to you? 3. What are the components underlying any competitive advantage? 4. How do you determine your competitive advantages? 5. What do your competitive advantages look like to your customer? How do they motivate your customer?
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<p>Keywords: competitive advantage</p>	<p>authenticity handmade rarity value individuality access price reconfirming connection</p>	<p>differentiation focus target market desirability value competition</p>
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[Also see chapter on 44. COMPETITOR ANALYSIS.]

What Is A Competitive Advantage?

Your *competitive advantage(s)* (you will have one or more) is what influences someone to buy something from you rather than from one of your competitors. Do you make something of higher quality? Or less cost? Or especially noteworthy. Or use rare materials? What is it that sets you apart, or as Heather Bunker puts it, what is your *secret sauce*?

Competitive advantage is your ability to outperform your competition. It is your way to design, create, produce, distribute, market and/or sell products and services better than anyone else. It is something that cannot be easily replicated, or, if it is at some point, you can build back better.

There are all types of competitive advantages. Businesses might emphasize one, or several. Some examples of competitive advantages that jewelry design businesses might claim:

1. Authenticity and honesty
2. Rarity
3. Individuality, tailor-made, custom
4. Material quality
5. Technical prowess
6. Access, Location, Visibility
7. Timeliness
8. Special occasions (ready for those ...weddings, etc.)
9. Financing, payment plans
10. Innovation
11. Extensive knowledge about materials and techniques
12. Environmentally friendly, sustainable
13. Socio-culturally friendly, sensitive
14. Prominence / reputation of designer
15. Mass quantity production
16. Service Orientation: repairs, custom work, style consultation
17. Pricing, discounts
18. Concurrently maintaining both quality and prices
19. Use of technology
20. Unusual designs
21. Brand loyalty
22. Ownership of copyright
23. Where differences from your competitors, such as different product mix or material use or better craftsmanship, might make you appear superior to them
24. Celebrity status of the jewelry designer

Why Is Having A Competitive Advantage Important To You?

Competitive advantage is what makes your products and services more desirable to customers than any of your rivals. When your customers recognize these competitive advantages, you are more likely to make sales and more likely to be profitable. You are more likely to

grow your business and enjoy greater customer loyalty.

The jewelry design business is very saturated worldwide. On Etsy on any day, there are over 6,000,000 (that's 6 million) pieces of jewelry for sale. Don't see this as a defeat. See this as a challenge. Your competitive advantage will help get you that edge, and make you more memorable.

Your competitive advantage is something that you can repeat or allude to in your business name, how you name your jewelry and jewelry lines, your tag line, your elevator pitch, your domain name, your marketing and branding strategies. It might influence how you design your products, distribute them, and put boundaries around your target market.

What Are The Components Underlying Any Competitive Advantage?

You use your competitive advantage as a means of communication. As such, to establish any competitive advantage, you must know 3 things:

- 1. VALUE PROPOSITION**
- 2. TARGET MARKET**
- 3. COMPETITION**

ONE. Value Proposition

You must clearly identify what attributes of your products or services make them desirable to your customers. What is the value to them? Why does this value motivate them sufficiently to touch, wear, buy and/or collect your jewelry? What things might further get them to show off and talk about your jewelry to their friends, acquaintances and relatives?

TWO. Target Market

Your advantages will not be seen and understood equally by all people. And you don't really care about all people. You care specifically about your more narrow market audience or market niche focus. What does your advantage look like to them? Why will it motivate them? What evidence are you using to know this?

You might take the time to ask some of your customers why they buy from you and not your competition?

THREE. Competition

Your competitive advantage is always in reference to some other business or designer. It is comparative. It differentiates you. It influences a choice of you over others. Your competition might be traditional. It might be non-traditional. It might be emerging.

How does your competition look like from your customer's viewpoint?

How Do You Determine Your Competitive Advantage(s)?

First, think about your strengths.

List Things Which You Believe Are Your Competitive Advantage(s) <i>What evidence can you provide to support your claim(s)?</i>	
<i>Competitive Advantage</i>	<i>Supporting Evidence</i>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.

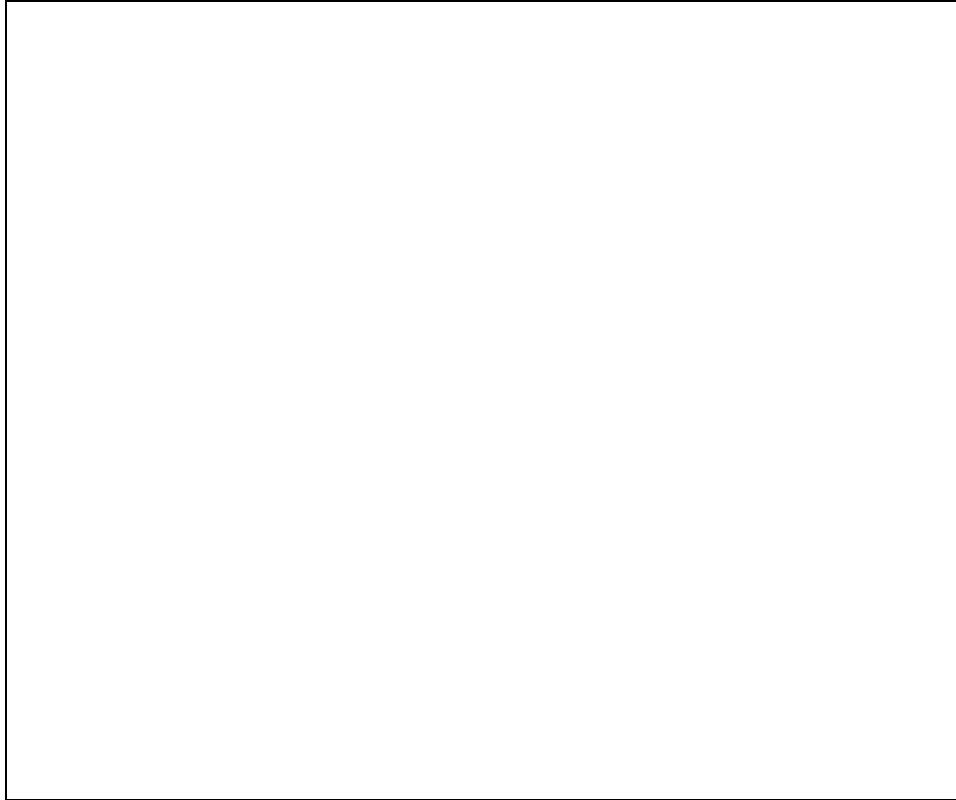
Second, think about the strengths and weaknesses of your major competitors. These competitors might be in your same geographic location, or they may be online.

Search on Google and Etsy for jewelry makers. How do they present themselves? What qualities do they emphasize? What competitive advantages do they claim? Based on what evidence? How do they link their idea of competitive advantage to their assessments of customer needs, wants and desires?

List Strengths and Weaknesses of Your Major Competitors <i>What evidence are you using to make these claims?</i>	
Competitor Name	Strengths and Weaknesses
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Last, list what things you are better at than your competitors.

List What Things Make You Superior To Your Competitors



FOOTNOTES

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5/22/2022.


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https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/competitive_advantage.asp

57.

SELLING:

Training and Educating The Customer

	<p><i>Guiding Questions?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. What is customer training and education?</i><i>2. What kinds of things can you do to ensure your customer uses or takes advantage of your jewelry and jewelry designs as you intended?</i>
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<p><i>Keywords:</i> <i>customer training educating</i></p>	<p><i>using your product or service as intended</i></p>	<p><i>better buyers better utilizers better partners during design process</i></p>
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[See also the chapter on 77. RELYING ON OTHERS TO SELL YOUR JEWELRY.]

What Is Customer Training?

I'm sure you have experienced this. You have made a piece of jewelry for your customer, and they have no idea of the work you put into it or how carefully you selected materials for them or its overall value. They like it, yes. But they don't appreciate it. They might not be sure how to wear it, or what to wear with it. They might not be sure how it fits with the jewelry they already own and wear.

As a consequence, you are not sure they will ask you to make another piece for them, or not. You sadly anticipate that, even if they want another piece from you, they will be unable to articulate exactly what they want – the colors, the lengths, the materials, the techniques, the strategies for composition, construction and manipulation.

If only...

Customer training and education is called for here. Customer training is training offered to your customers so that they can best utilize as well as buy your products or services to the fullest. You want training to occur before the fact, not after you have sold the piece of jewelry to them. You train them before they present you with problems that need to be solved. You want to be proactive. You want to empower your customers. You want to motivate your customers to be better customers. You want them to be better partners with yourself all throughout the jewelry design process from beginning to end.

Customer training results in such things as:

- Customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Customers more articulate in indicating what their needs, wants and desires are
- They more readily agree when a piece feels finished and successful
- Reduced costs in the design process since things flow more smoothly
- Better word-of-mouth
- Better, clearer feedback from customers about your work

Best Practices For Successful Customer Training and Education

1. Continually gather information about the most common problems customers present you with
2. List those things which would empower your customer to be a better customer
3. Create content (both formal and informal) easily understood and accessible to your customer. This most likely will be a multi-method approach including labeling, handouts, documentation, explanations (verbal and written), images, videos, blog posts, classes and the like.
4. Keep things short
5. Don't get too technical
6. Give simple, straightforward reasons why the content you are sharing is important and important enough to remember
7. You may want a data system which documents what you are doing with whom
8. You may want to develop a customer portal online where they can access some key points of information
9. Always add an evaluative component to what you do. Are you effective? Are you providing content customers want?

FOOTNOTES

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58.

SELLING:

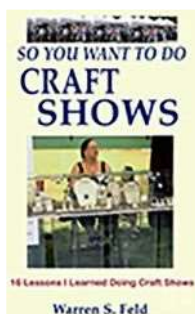
Selling At Art And Craft Shows

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are art and craft shows?2. How do I find them and apply to them?3. How do I conduct my business pre-show, during the show, and post-show?4. What does 'juried' mean?
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<p>Keywords: art show craft show walk-by booths walk-in booths application deadlines marketing budget promotion advertising</p>	<p>flea markets bazaars festivals fairs trade wholesale retail jewelry only mixed merchandise</p>	<p>juried open indoor outdoor holiday themed</p>
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Also, you might be interested in my **SO YOU WANT TO DO CRAFT SHOWS video tutorial** (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/p/so-you-want-to-do-craft-shows>)

As well as my book:
**SO YOU WANT TO DO CRAFT SHOWS:
16 Lessons I Learned Doing Craft Shows**



Ebook (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/so-you-want-to-do-craft-shows-warren-feld/1141846030?ean=2940166732026>)

Kindle (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoB69FP7N7>)

Print (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/BoB67JDJDR/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?smid=A1Y53T3O3Q25L8&psc=1)

Craft Shows Are Great Opportunities

There are many advantages to doing craft shows.

- You can make good money.
- You can jump-start and enhance your reputation
- You can learn a lot of good business tricks
- And find out about a lot of good resources
- You can expand your business and support network
- You can test out new ideas and designs
- Gets you a lot of important visibility
- Helps you expand your emailing list

If... And that's a big, "If!" You know what you're doing.

All too often, jewelry designers who want to do craft shows have not done their homework. They have not researched and evaluated which shows to do, and which not to do. They have not figured out how best to set up their booths and displays. They are clueless about what inventory to make, and to bring, and how to price it. They are unprepared to promote, to market and to sell.

In this chapter, I discuss:

- What information you need to gather
- How to set personal and business goals
- How to find, evaluate and select craft shows
- And, how best to promote and operate your business at these craft shows.

Not Every Art and Craft Show Is Alike

Art and Craft shows and similar venues are places where you can bring your merchandise, set up some kind of display, and sell to people walking by.

Craft shows are a great way to make money. People come to craft shows to buy. Craft shows are a great way to get broad exposure to a large customer base. They are a great way to

jump-start, re-start and re-energize your jewelry design (or other art or craft) business. And, sometimes you will meet people there who own businesses where they want to buy your items for re-sale.

Craft shows allow you to have little investment in overhead, like rent, insurance and the like that comes with a physical store. Craft shows mean you do not have to share your profits with a store or gallery.

But not every art or craft show is alike.

There are many types of shows, including,

- Art and crafts shows
- Flea markets and bazaars
- Festivals and fairs
- Juried vs. open
- Indoor vs. outdoor
- Holiday or themed
- Large vs. small operations
- Walk-by-booth setups vs. walk-in-booth setups
- Mixed merchandise vs. jewelry only shows

It is important to become familiar with each of these. Let's examine them in more detail...

ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOWS

One type is an *Arts and Crafts Show*. These are professionally-produced shows which promote the sales of handcrafted art and other craft items. These can be inside or outside. You find them in a wide assortment of settings, from parks to community centers to shopping malls. Some focus on art to the exclusion of craft. Others have a broader focus.

This type of show works well for jewelry artists. Arts and Crafts Shows attract a lot of people who expect to pay for quality and who come to buy.

But be careful that these shows are not “top-heavy” with jewelry vendors, unless, of course, it is a jewelry-only show.

The application process is often formal, and sometimes juried. Some entry fees are very low. Others very high.

FLEA MARKETS AND BAZAARS

Flea Markets and Bazaars are typically organized by churches, schools, clubs or organizations. Often with a fund-raising purpose in mind.

There are also businesses in many communities that, for a small fee, offer a place for anyone to come and sell their wares.

There are very few rules for entry, and fees tend to be very low.

The mix of what is for sale can be very haphazard.

People often come looking for bargains, or to browse.

In many cases, the attendance will have highs and lows during each day.

This type of show works well for the crafter or hobbyist who makes things during the year, and wants a once-a-year sales outlet.

Usually, I find that the return-on-investment (ROI) for these kinds of shows is not very good. However, it depends on history, timing, weather and location. For example, a bazaar sets up every two months at a local university where I live. They charge \$25.00 for a week-end booth rental. And people doing this bazaar usually make a killing.

FESTIVALS AND FAIRS

Festivals and Fairs are “Special Events”, sponsored by towns, civic groups, or neighborhood associations, and often put on by a special promoter. These are well-organized, well-publicized and attract lots of people.

Sometimes these will take the form of an arts and crafts show, and that will be their central purpose. Other times, the main purpose is some kind of entertainment, and they have an area set aside for people to sell their wares.

If the promoters emphasize the arts and crafts part of the festival, then you can do well here. People at festivals are typically willing to spend at mid-range prices.

If there is little promotion of arts and crafts, or, if that area set aside for arts and crafts sales is far from the main action, then this may not work out well for you.

JURIED OR OPEN ADMISSION

Some shows are *open to all takers* who pay the entry fee. Other shows are *juried*. That is, they require that you submit images of your work, and perhaps, some kind of artist statement. A panel of judges reviews your work, and decides whom to admit to the show.

Juried shows may also require that you submit images of your booth and display set up.

Juried shows have good control over the quality of vendors, as well as the mix of

merchandise available for sale. The fees can be steep. If these juried shows have a good reputation and history, they can be very lucrative. They are big reputation builders for you, as well.

If a Juror said No, do not take this personally. There are a large number of applications to juried shows, especially from jewelry designers. Shows may limit how many jewelry designers they let in. Often designers who have done their previous show will automatically be accepted into the current show, and this limits options for new designers. Show organizers and promoters choose jurors from various craft media and business backgrounds, and you will often find that what was rejected at one show will be accepted at another. Perhaps your work was poorly represented by your slides and images of pieces you made or your display setup. Show operators want a diversity of offerings and may think your work is too similar to others.

INDOOR OR OUTDOOR

Some shows are held *indoors*. Here you have some protection from the weather. Other shows are held *outdoors*, where you do not.

On good weather days, people like to be outdoors. On bad weather days, people like to be indoors.

What you bring and how you set up will vary a bit between indoor and outdoor. You can often spread out a little more, when outdoors.

You will have different special lighting needs indoors than outdoors.

If the indoor show is very well attended, it can get very claustrophobic, dusty and hot.

If the weather gets really bad or unpredictable, you might have a poor showing at an outdoor show.

Be sure to ask the show promoters what their policy is for inclement weather, if the show is outdoors.

HOLIDAY, THEMED OR TIMING SENSITIVE SHOWS

Some shows have a strong *theme* which sets a very important tone and direction for the show. You need to pay close attention to this theme.

There are Christmas shows and Western shows and Native American shows. There are Summer Celebrations and Winter Celebrations. There are Ethnic Festivals. Town History Festivals. Historical re-enactments. Lots of shows and festivals and bazaars with a holiday or other theme, or something tied to a specific time or event.

Make sure the merchandise you bring, and how you set up your displays and signage, and even the way you present yourself as an artist and craftsperson, coordinates well with the theme.

LARGE VS. SMALL OPERATION

Some operations are *large*, and others are *small*.

Obviously, the larger they are, the more people they will attract, and the more likely they will sustain themselves over time. That means less risk for you.

However, if the operation is small... such as, a small number of vendors, or a limited range or quantity of merchandise, or a smaller expected attendance, or, minimal advertising and promotion, then it poses more risk, from a business sense. So, when setting up at a small operation, be sure there are some other compensating factors, such as a special location, or that it is linked to a very special event, or that the attendees are primed to spend, and spend a lot.

WALK-BY OR WALK-IN BOOTHS

Some shows let you set up some kind of booth, where customers can walk into. We call this a *walk-in setup*. Other shows line up rows of tables. You rent one or more tables. The tables, from vendor to vendor, usually merge with one another. Customers work their way past the front of these rows of tables. We call this a *walk-by setup*.

I prefer walk-in setups. These give you much better control and management of customers and the buying situation. They more clearly delineate the boundaries of your booth, from those of your neighbors.

If doing a walk-by setup, then, if you can secure a corner space, or a central aisle intersection, or a spot near the main entrance, these work better. They give you more visibility. It's all about visibility.

If you can afford to rent more than one table, and have the inventory to display on more than 1 table, this gives you even more visibility. The more visibility you have, the better your sales.

JEWELRY ONLY VS. MIX OF MERCHANDISE

Most shows showcase a *mix of merchandise*. However, some shows are *jewelry only*.

When it is jewelry only, the show attracts buyers specifically interested in jewelry, but this will be a smaller number of buyers who might attend a mixed-merchandise show. If you are selling at a jewelry only show, be sure something about your work sets you apart from the crowd.

When it is a mix of merchandise show, it may be a little more difficult to link up to your

target customer. However, there will be more potential customers overall.

Shows which have a mix of merchandise often have to limit the number of jewelry vendors -- jewelry is an especially popular category.

BROAD OR NARROW OR LIMITED ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

At the show, you are dependent on attendance. That means, you are dependent on how well the show promoters deliver the goods.

How much money do they spend on advertising and marketing...
... to get the word out?

How much effort are they making...
... to earn a good reputation?

So, shows with large marketing budgets do better than those with small ones. Established shows do much, much better than 1st year shows. In fact, I would avoid doing shows in their 1st or 2nd years, until I saw that they were succeeding on some level.

I would also closely examine the show's marketing budget. It may be large, but they may be planning to spend all their money on a single billboard along the interstate highway. This is not enough. You want to see the show promoters undertaking a multimethod marketing plan.

WHOLESALE TRADE VS. RETAIL TRADE

Finally, while most shows would be considered *retail* shows, that is, targeted at the general public, some shows are for the *wholesale* trade. That is, businesses who shop wholesale shows are looking for lines of merchandise to carry. These businesses have their own retail outlets for re-selling your work.

The fees for these wholesale shows are usually very steep. You also need to be prepared operationally to accept and deliver on large orders in a timely manner.

Often, two or more businesses will share the costs of a single booth.

Research All Your Possibilities

There are plenty of tools and resources for finding out which craft shows are right for you. You just have to make yourself aware of these... And use them.

See the last section in this chapter on HELPFUL RESOURCES.

FINDING THEM: CRAFT SHOW DIRECTORIES

There are many online craft show directories. There are directories of shows in...

- Consumer craft and beading magazines
- Craft and art organizations, associations and clubs, in their newsletters, on their websites and Facebook pages
- Sometimes craft shows will take out ads in local papers looking for vendors
- Local and State arts commissions also might maintain a directory

You can also attend local shows and talk with management. You can talk to various vendors at local shows. You can contact local craft and fine artists.

Online Services

There are also services online which help craft shows find you. For example, Juried Art Services (<https://www.juriedartservices.com/>) or *Zapplication* (<https://www.zapplication.org>).

These digital juried and application systems allow you to post a profile with images online. They send out email calls for applications from craft shows they represent. And they allow you to tailor fit your application to the requirements of that specific show.

You register with these online, uploading images of your work, images of your booth and display, and various write-ups.

Know Which Craft Shows Are For You

When you research show opportunities, ask yourself:

Is there a good fit with

- Your merchandise?
- Your goals?
- Your expectations?
- Your customers?

Evaluate all your show options before selecting one or more of them.

MAKE SITE VISITS

Scope it out before committing to it.

If you can't attend a show prior to applying, ask the promoter for names and phone numbers or email addresses of a few of the exhibitors that have done the show before, and are returning again.

You want to ask and have answered a series of questions:

- Questions to ask yourself
- Questions to ask other vendors
- Questions to ask the show promoters

THINK ABOUT...

- How *comfortable* you are with the location
- The *setting*
- The *lay-out*
- The *opportunity*
- The *possibilities* to make a profit

How does your merchandise stack up against that which you have seen?

Try to visualize the event in your mind, with as much information you have gathered.

Is this particular event for you?

Does this show attract the types of customers most likely to buy what you make?

Promote, Promote, Promote

You need to actively promote yourself, both before and after the show.

Do not rely on the show promoters to do all the marketing.

About 2-4 weeks before the show:

1. Contact your existing customers (email, mail, social network sites)

2. Promote your message to potential customers. Leave flyers and brochures at relevant businesses or organizations. Post messages on social network sites. Post messages on your own website or blog. Get listed on community calendars. Tell people you interact with.
3. In your promotions, be sure you have all the details listed correctly. In a short, catchy phrase or sentence, tell why this event would be of particular interest to them. You might offer special discounts, if they present your card or email notice.
4. Be sure you are going to look presentable. If you need a haircut, get it. Be sure you have all the clothes you need. Check your supply of business cards, brochures, other promotional materials. Practice saying your selling points. Be strategic about which pieces of jewelry you are going to wear at the show.

AT THE SHOW:

Have your business cards, and any brochures, if you have them, out for the taking. It helps if your business cards have an image of your jewelry on them to help people remember you.

Have a book or sign-up sheet where people can list their names, mailing and emailing addresses.

Walk around the show. Pay keen attention to things like:

- What attracts customers to different booths
- What types of products are popular
- What price points are most attractive
- Pros and cons of different strategies for displays and merchandising
- How vendors interact with their customers
- What customers are saying as they approach, stay and leave a booth
- How displays and products are arranged and presented
- Booth layout

AFTER THE SHOW:

Update your customer database. Stay in touch with your new customers, such as with a

follow-up mailing or emailing.

Direct your new customers to your website, or other ways of contacting you and seeing your pieces which are for sale.

How Much Inventory Should I Bring?

As a rule of thumb, you want to bring 4 times as much inventory with the anticipation that 25% of this inventory will sell.

If you wanted to make \$100.00 revenue, you would bring \$400.00 (that is, add up all your retail prices of these pieces) of inventory.

Be sure to ask if they accept items other than handmade.

What Costs Are Involved?

Pay attention to the various costs and fees involved. Most charge an initial application and booth fee. This might be as little as \$25.00 or as much or more than \$10,000.00.

What size booth or space are you getting? What does it cost to get more space?

Do you have to pay extra for lighting, electricity, Wi-fi?

Are you allowed to do demonstrations?

Do the fees include any marketing and promotion?

Do you have to pay additional for parking?

Can they help you with staffing needs?

Do you have to provide your own tent and tables, or can you rent these from them?

If you are attending an out-of-town show, you must also consider your travel, lodging and meal costs.

Security

If your display is to be left overnight, what kinds of security does the show offer?

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES AND THEIR WEB-LINKS

ONLINE DIRECTORIES:

FESTIVAL NETWORK ONLINE

<http://festivalnet.com/>

Searchable database listing 24,000+ north American events; show ratings. Database includes fine arts fairs, arts and craft shows, music festivals, expos, corporate events, and more.

SHOWLISTER

<http://www.showlister.com/>

Searchable database of event listings. Art and craft shows, street fairs, festivals, home and garden shows, holiday gift shows, special events, farmers' markets, state & county fairs, trade shows and more.

NATIONAL CRAFT SHOWS DIRECTORY

<http://www.nationalcraftshows.com/>

Craft show listings by state

CRAFTS FAIR ONLINE

<http://www.craftsfaironline.com/>

Listings of shows. The Crafts Fair online is the oldest and largest directory of crafts oriented sites on the web. We offer organized links to thousands of individual crafter's web sites as well as craft web malls, crafts organizations, supplies, listings of real world shows, craft publications, instruction, software and more. In The Crafter's Web Development Center we offer all the information and resources crafts people need to create their own independent web sites.

ART FESTIVAL

<http://www.artfestival.com/>

Listing of Howard Alan Events & American Craft Endeavors around the US. Art fair promoter.

SOUTHERN FESTIVALS

<http://www.southfest.com/>

Listing of festivals in southern US. Lists festivals and events in the South including Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, Tennessee and Virginia.

SUNSHINE ARTIST

<http://www.sunshineartist.com/>

Listing of shows in US with reviews. Since 1972, *Sunshine Artist* has provided its readers with comprehensive reviews of everything from fine art fairs, festivals and events, to small craft shows around the country, focusing on all aspects of the shows from sales to artist amenities to the quality of art or craft. We also include in each issue hundreds of art and craft show listings, including contacts, booth fees, application deadlines and the type of art/craft that the event accepts. Finally, in each issue you'll find features on everything from tips to boost your business to in-depth reports on current trends on the show circuit.

ART FAIR CALENDAR

<http://www.artfaircalendar.com/>

Listings of US and Canada shows. Art fair event listings nationwide, **including** fine art shows **virtually online**.

CRAFTMASTER NEWS

<http://www.craftmasternews.com/>

Listings of shows in US. Art and craft shows, street fairs, festivals, home and garden shows, holiday gift shows, special events, farmers' markets, state & county fairs, trade shows and more.

PROFESSIONAL CRAFTERS

(www.professionalcrafters.com)

Craft industry news, hot trends, marketing strategies and creative techniques .Cutting edge resources and inside information to take your craft business to the next level and beyond. Join worldwide network of Art and Craft industry professionals and access the news and views.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS.net

Find Art Shows, Craft Shows, and Festivals near you (fairsandfestivals.net)

(<https://www.fairsandfestivals.net/>)

“We believe strongly in the creativity and capability of the independent business person and are excited to be a part of the new American Renaissance being built by artisans, crafters, concessionaires and entrepreneurs.” Up-to-date detailed event information for your show calendars. Multiple sales and marketing channels for increased exposure. Expert tools, and educational resources for learning more about the industry. Trusted partners to helping you network with peers and contacts that can help you build your business.

ART AND CRAFT SHOW YELLOW PAGES

Craft Shows, Art & Craft Fairs, Street Fairs and Festivals in All States (artscraftsshowbusiness.com)

Helping artists, crafters and vendors find events in the Eastern US where they can sell their works or products.

ART FAIR SOURCE BOOK

[Art Fair and Craft Show Listings | Art Fair SourceBook](https://artfairsourcebook.com/) (<https://artfairsourcebook.com/>)

AFSB is an online tracking system that organizes 285,420 facts into an easy- to-use, powerful planning tool. With AFSB's critiques you'll be able to target the best shows for your style of work and price range.

ETSY TEAMS

<https://www.etsy.com/teams>

The Teams section of the ETSY site (<https://www.etsy.com/teams>) has groups located throughout the U.S. and each team has its own forum where members interact. Many local teams have an ongoing thread that lists upcoming events of interest to crafters.

EVENTBRITE

Eventbrite - Discover Great Events or Create Your Own & Sell Tickets (<https://www.eventbrite.com/>)

CHECK OUT FACEBOOK COMMUNITY PAGES

ONLINE APPLICATION SERVICES:

JURIED ART SERVICES

juriedartservices.com/

A digital juried and application system. Jurors can view the artists' work along with accompanying descriptions and dimensions. Because they are self-paced, jurors have the time they need to properly review each application. The artist controls the layout of the works and sees exactly what the jurors see. The process is the most efficient and proven method available for the artists, shows and jurors.

ZAPPLICATION

<https://www.zapplication.org/>

A digital juried and application system. ZAPP enables artists to apply online to multiple art shows through one central website, ZAPPlication.org. The online application process also allows artists to directly upload digital images of their artwork for jury review. The result is that all artwork in the system is in a consistent, high-quality, digital format. The digital images are presented to the jurors of each show and the system allows them to score online.

ALSO, CHECK WITH YOUR

LOCAL AND STATEWIDE ARTS COMMISSIONS

AND,


STATEWIDE OR LOCAL CRAFT ASSOCIATIONS

AND,

STATEWIDE OR LOCAL PARKS COMMISSIONS

59.

SELLING: *Selling Online*

	Guiding Questions? <i>1. What is involved with selling jewelry online?</i> <i>2. What does it take to be successful, and what measures do I use to show this?</i>
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Keywords: <i>internet</i> <i>web</i> <i>http:// https://</i> <i>shopping cart</i>	<i>auction site</i> <i>web mall /</i> <i>marketplace</i>	<i>analytics / statis-</i> <i>tics</i> <i>visitor</i>
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[Also see chapter on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING]

SELLING ONLINE

At a minimum, you will need some kind of online presence. You will not survive as a business without it. In 2023, about 5-10% of all jewelry sold were digital sales, and this percent is increasing each year. Even if the actual sale is not made online, over 50% of online users explore their jewelry purchase possibilities online before going to a store to actually buy something. Customers will always need to find you, and they will use an online search as their rolodex equivalent.

You have a lot of options for creating an online presence, including

- Profile and/or business page on a social media site, like Facebook or Instagram or Tik Tok or Pinterest or You Tube
- Business page on search directory, like Google or Bing
- Directory listing, such as on Yelp
- A blog, such as using WordPress
- A webpage as part of a larger 3rd party site, like Etsy or a web mall or craft marketplace
- Listing products on sales or auction sites, like Amazon.com or Ebay

- Your own website
- Your own website with an online shopping cart system

Some Criteria for Choosing

1. Fees to list, renew, custom create site, tools to create your own site, percent of sales
2. Limits on images, text length, number of web pages
3. Whether you have your own domain name, and whether your domain name will fit this pattern www.yourbusinessname.com, or this pattern www.webmarketplace-name.com/yourbusinessname (the first one is preferred)
4. How shipping is handled
5. How updating is handled
6. How online customer payments are handled
7. If they allow items that are not handmade
8. How easily available their customer services are
9. Whether you can set up your email through your host, or have to find another email service
10. Do you have access to any analytics package
11. If on a third party site, how and how often you get paid when pieces sell

About Craft Marketplaces Online

Many jewelry designers choose to place their business on one of the many craft marketplaces online. Etsy, perhaps, is the most widely known. Like anything else, this approach has some pros and some cons. Below I list some things to think about before choosing one or more sites. It is a smart move, however, to be located on more than one marketplace site.

I have found that many people get frustrated with these sites, in that sales can be minimal, or the numbers of people they are competing with seems daunting. But I have found these same people not doing all the necessary “good business” tasks, such as some intensive and persistent marketing of their wares, and smart photo and text detail for their pieces.

**Question: WHAT KINDS OF EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU HAD,
and WHAT KINDS OF TIPS CAN YOU OFFER?**

Here's some of the things I have found.

First, there are many, many online marketplaces to choose from. Some let you set up your own website, and others show your merchandise as part of a larger marketplace. Each has pros and cons. Perhaps one lesson is:
“Don't put all your eggs in one basket.”

My list of these sites include:

Etsy
Zibbet
Artfire
overstock.com/mainstreet
revolution
tophatter (an auction site)
Ebay (an auction site)
storeny
luulla
bigcartel
meylah
madeitmyself
handmadeartists
createinventandsell
thecraftstar
rubylane
dawanda
copious
1000markets
silkfair
ecrafter
supermarkethq
goodsmiths
freecraftfair
folksy
notmassproduced
market.poppytalkhandmade
jewelrywonder
ave21
jewelspan
artflock
bonanza
lilyshop

icraft.ca (Canada)
shophandmade

The PROS to look for with any site:

- low commission on sales
- good traffic
- ease of setting up your shop
- having a lot of control over how your shop looks; how customizable it is
- no monthly fees
- web host does a lot of promotion
- site has a good search function
- site has good statistics, and lets you easily track traffic and what has sold, at what price point, and when, for both of your specific merchandise, as well as for all merchants with similar merchandise

The CONS to look for with any site:

- high commissions and/or fees
- when site is too big, may be difficult to get noticed
- host limits how you list and present your items
- host restricts your contact with your customers

Other types of questions to ask:

- Does site handle the billing and payments for you?
- What kind of marketing does the site do?
- Is it relatively easy to set up your site and keep it updated?
- Are there any limitations on the numbers of items you might list at one time?
- Are there any limitations on the number or size of photos you can include on your site?
- How and where will your items appear in a search listing on the host's site?

NOTE: Many sites put you at the front of the line for the first 30 days you have registered with them. Then they apply their regular ranking and rating algorithm, which, when you are new, puts you toward the bottom of the listing.

- What payment methods/options are allowed?
- Does the site restrict items to “Handmade” only, and how is “Handmade” defined? You do not want to compete with cheap, imported, machine made jewelry.
- How easy is it to contact customer service? Do they provide a lot of easy-to-follow tutorials for setting up and managing your site?

Different types of fees that might be assessed:

1. Listing fee
2. Sales commissions, usually as a percent of sale
3. Renewal fees (when listings are time limited)
4. Monthly site maintenance fees
5. Share of advertising fees
6. An extra shipping or postage charge to use when they handle your shipping, or enable you to purchase and print out a shipping label on the website

Some Tips and Advice About Craft Marketplaces:

- Your items should be different enough from others to set you apart, and get you remembered
- If your items are similar to others, you might consider competing on price
- Do NOT depend on the host to promote your site; you must actively – that means, almost every day – do things to promote your site.
- Don’t just list your items and let them sit there
- Excellent photos are a must
- Treat your online shop as a business, not a hobby
- Categorize and label your jewelry and jewelry lines; picture the words someone might type into a search bar in order to find this jewelry, and use those as key words in your labeling
- Let your passion shine

Many, many people you will be competing with do not necessarily have good business sense, particularly when it comes to pricing their jewelry. People, in general, tend to under-price their pieces. They go out of business quickly. But while they’re in business, you are competing with them, and often you find it hard to compete on price.

This is a given. That means you have to spend more energy on marketing your competitive advantages, in order to justify the prices you need to charge, in order to stay in business. Some of this will come down to better presentation — more facts and great detailed images about your jewelry, and more details about the how your jewelry will benefit your customer. Better presentation equals more trust; more trust should translate into more sales. Some more competitive advantages: your jewelry is better made; it uses better materials; your line of jewelry is broader; you have better customer care policies; your style is more unique; your jewelry supports a “cause”.

And many, many more people you will be competing with have very good business sense. There are over 6 million items of jewelry on sale on Etsy at any one time — many by sharp, savvy artists. To get seen, heard and responded to takes emphasizing your competitive advantages, as well as persistent, broadly targeted marketing.

Some Final Advice About Selling Online

Be sure your home page is optimized for search engine indexing.

Be sure your web pages are easy to navigate.

It is better to have a presence on a broad range of online social media sites and directories. Be sure you have selected sites that your customers use.

It is better to have your own domain name.

Use your online presence to create 10-20 meaningful customer relationships, and leverage these relationships, connections and experiences.

Keep your posts – text, image and video – short but frequent (actually, constant). Online, there is a strong bias to give more visibility to images and videos than text.

Make it easy for people to add their names to your email list.

Post your work and write about your process of development. Document your journey as a jewelry designer.

One key to online success is to consistently and more actively give your viewers an opportunity to buy. Don't rely on a more passive approach where you list your items for sale and depend on someone who sees your pieces to buy them.

Measuring Your Success Online

Here are some metrics to pay attention to:

- Number of followers / subscribers (expect 14 subscribers for every 100 views)
- Number of views / comments / likes (expect 5 comments per 1000 views, or 4 likes per 100 views)

- Average visitors per day
- Average length on site per visitor (expect greater than 82 seconds)
- Number of sales per week
- Average dollar amount per sale
- Percent of unique visitors resulting in actual orders (expect 4-5%, thus 4-5 sales per 100 visitors)
- Number of abandoned shopping carts (expect less than 70%)
- By typing in your URL into search engine, can determine number of sites that list your web address

Also, you might sign up for an analytics package. Start with Google Analytics.

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60.

SELLING:

Selling In Local Shops, Boutiques and Department Stores



Guiding Questions?

- 1. How do I approach local shops, boutiques and department stores, in order to get them to sell my jewelry?*
- 2. What is the best strategy for making the pitch?*
- 3. Should I cold call or make an appointment?*
- 4. Do I want to establish a retail, a wholesale or a consignment business relationship?*

<i>Keywords:</i> <i>boutique</i> <i>department store</i>	<i>retail</i> <i>wholesale</i> <i>consignment</i>	<i>local shop</i> <i>buyer</i> <i>cold call</i> <i>appointments</i>
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[Also see the chapters on 70. COLD CALLING AND MAKING THE PITCH, 15. RETAIL-WHOLESALE-CONSIGNMENT, and 39. PRODUCT PRICING]

Local Shops, Boutiques, and Department Stores

There are many types of shops which feature and sell jewelry. They are always looking for new talent. You can call and make an appointment or cold call. Either way, you will be showing pieces you believe will fit with their customer base and merchandise mix. And you will be making a pitch.

There are boutiques, gift stores, card shops, spas, beauty salons, nail salons, gyms, specialty shops, pet shops, craft shops, consignment shops, cafes, restaurants, jewelry stores, textile stores, yarn and crochet shops, clothing stores, department stores, bridal shops, museum shops, accessory shops, florists, eyeglass stores – lots of possibilities.

They may take your pieces on consignment, or purchase them out-right.

Retail:

Here, you have an original manufacturer (called the jobber), usually a go-between called a distributor or rep (called the wholesaler), and a seller, in this case, a retailer. Wholesalers buy from jobbers, usually at a mark-up of 25-40% (that is, the wholesale price is 25-40% above the jobber price). Retailers buy from wholesalers,

usually at a mark-up of 100% (that is, the retailer usually marks-up prices at 100 or more % (that is, the retail price is typically at least twice what the wholesale price was – this is called “keystone”). In jewelry, the retail mark-up is often 3x the wholesale cost (this is called “triple keystone”).

Wholesale:

When you sell wholesale, you usually drop your price (thus, gross profit), considerably, in exchange for selling more pieces (volume). When you sell wholesale, there is a great savings to you in selling more pieces, and knowing ahead of time that you will be selling more pieces and having a greater cash flow. So, it’s easier to lower your price in exchange for volume. A reasonable wholesale price for a jewelry designer is a 40% markup over costs.

As a guide, you are ready to sell “wholesale” when you are selling 10 or more similar pieces at a time to a particular business. They do not have to be the same. But they should be similar in the parts used and the amount of time it takes to make each piece.

Consignment:

Here you bring items to a shop or gallery, and work out a deal with the shop’s owner. In exchange for the shop taking a risk and taking up shelf space (and in a few cases, costing advertising dollars) with your pieces(s), you agree to receive a certain percentage when the piece sells. You don’t get any money up front, and it may be months before you get any money. A typical “deal” is to get 40% and the store keeps 60%. In consignment, the store always is taking the greater risk. A 60/40 split in favor of the store reflects this risk. Any split greater than 40/60 or 60/40, such as 70/30 or 30/70, is a yellow flag. It suggests the business owner does not understand consignment and its risk for their store. Because of this, it suggests to the artist that s/he may never get paid, or that the business won’t put any effort towards selling/marketing your pieces, or even keeping them clean and displayed well.

When approaching local shops, you are now wearing your *sales cap*, rather than your *designer cap*. But, remember, you do not want to come across as sales’y. You do not want to pressure the buyer. You want to come across as your authentic self, with a story about your design work that you believe will resonate with the shop owner or manager and their customers. No matter how the meeting ends, you want to leave on a positive note.

Plan to visit lots of stores. There is usually more opportunity with small businesses than large businesses because large businesses usually only want high-volume production work. But not always. Sometimes they are looking for unique local artisans.

Research each of your targets. You want to know who their customers are, what styles they prefer, and what they are willing to spend on any particular piece. You can find a lot of this information online. You can also make a secret site visit, look at what is on display, talk to employees. Visit their website. Search for what other sites they come up on the internet.

You will have to gauge whether cold calling or making appointments works best for you. Whichever approach you rely on, you will want to be able show at least 20-30 pieces. Have them displayed in an attractive manner, usually on boards or tray inserts and wood or plastic trays that will fit into a jeweler's carrying case. If you have made a specific appointment, arrive a few minutes early. Don't be late!

Dress for success. Be sure to wear some of your jewelry.

Come prepared to make your pitch. Rehearse it ahead of time. Don't do a seat-of-the-pants presentation.

Whether the response is *Yes*, *No* or *Maybe*, be sure to follow up on all of your site visits. Thank them. Try to see if they might be willing to see you another time. Ask them when a good time might be. Send a follow up note or notes periodically.

Deliver your pieces on time. Have a clear packing slip with costs or agreed-upon prices. State clearly in print what your payment terms are.

Check in periodically to see how things are doing. You might do a secret visit to see how your pieces are displayed or how employees are talking about your pieces to customers. You will also want formal visits to see if the store wants to order more pieces, or wants to change out some pieces for others. Ask the owner if some alternatives styles, materials, colors and the like might work better. Ask them what they need. Try to elicit information about their customer responses to your jewelry.

Do not keep your work in any store indefinitely if it isn't selling. Three to six months on display for any one piece of jewelry usually is enough.

Do not put your pieces in shops which are direct competitors with the shop you have your pieces currently in.

You never know when an opportunity might present itself. Always carry a small amount of jewelry (12 varied pieces will work fine) with you and ready to show these.

Selling To Luxury Department Stores

I think we all have dreamt having our pieces prominently displayed in a luxury department store like Neiman Marcus or Bloomingdales. It takes a little effort and strategy to get your pieces in these places, but it can happen.

Department stores will want to see that you are an established jewelry designer. They will look at your resume, your artist statement and your portfolio. They will want to know in what stores your pieces are already placed.

[Check out the later chapters on writing an 83. ARTIST STATEMENT and a 84. PORTFOLIO.]

Buyers for these stores will also want to know your capabilities in producing your pieces in higher volume and your ability to distribute and get these pieces to them in a timely manner. They may ask questions about your staffing, your manufacturing operations, and about your customer base.

You will need to be able to provide them with inventory sheets, SKU numbers and bar codes, and be able to send and receive purchase orders and invoices.

Concurrently, you will want to do a lot of research about the department store chain. You need an insightful, thorough knowledge of their typical jewelry-buying customer. This involves, styles, silhouettes, color palettes, price points, materials.

The trick is to find the buyer and establish a relationship. Some department store chains allow each store to make some independent buying decisions. Here the buyer will be at the store. Some department store chains organize their buying regionally. Others, nationally. Do some research. Ask employees at various stores. Find the buyer. Check LinkedIn.

Arrange an appointment with the buyer. Bring a look-book and about 20-30 sample pieces of jewelry. Have something to leave with them – a CD with images of your pieces, a print portfolio, a press kit, a brochure and business card. Usually you have only one shot to impress the buyer. No do-overs.

Know what prices each of your pieces will cost the store and what prices each of your pieces should sell for at the store. Do not leave the pricing decisions up to the department store. Department stores typically mark up their jewelry 5-6 times their cost.

Additional Pointers

Let the world know you sell wholesale. A sign on your table at an art and craft show. A link on your website to a FAQ about wholesale sales. Have something like *retail / wholesale* printed with your signature on emails, your business card, your brochures.

Make sure you have the economies to scale to sell at true wholesale prices and get a return on your investment.

Know ahead of time things like (a) minimum orders, (b) turn-around times, (c) shipping costs, (d) terms and payment plans (that is, how soon you need to get paid). Use professionally printed purchase order and invoice and other sales forms, with your name, business name, contact information and logo prominently displayed.

Your product photography should be first-rate. For each piece you will want a CAMERA-RAW image (that is, untouched up), and a FULLY TOUCHED UP IMAGE. At least 500 x 500 pixels, in 72-96 dpi (for web) and 300 dpi (for print).

Packaging is as important as the product. Some stores may want you to pre-tag prices and barcodes. Be prepared to do this.

You might create custom displays and display cases that you can also sell with your jewelry.

You might want to provide some signage for the store.

When you first introduce your pieces into a retail setting, you might ask if you can have a public reception for your “opening.”

61.

SELLING: Consignment



Guiding Questions?

1. What are the risks involved in consignment, and how do I control for these?

Keywords: consignment	payment terms contract / agreement	
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[Also see the chapters on 15. RETAIL-WHOLESALE-CONSIGNMENT and 39. PRODUCT PRICING]

Consignment Selling—A Last Resort: Over At The Consignment Shop

“*She’s CHEATING ME!*” the woman from Rhode Island screamed into the phone. She could hardly catch her breath, the anger overtaking her ability to explain why she was calling.

“*I read your article about **Pricing and Selling**, and I’m not getting my \$70.00 for my piece.*”

She didn’t have to say anymore. I knew right off the bat she was talking about CONSIGNMENT.

I recognize the anger. The frustration. The feeling that someone put something over on you, and you’re powerless to correct the situation. You don’t know what to do. You know the sweat, time and cost you put into all the pieces you let some stranger have, and now what do you do?

“*I put 10 of my pieces of jewelry in her shop in Northern Rhode Island—not a big shop, no sales, except, this one piece sold, not in a major place,*” she continued, taking breath after breath, to get it all out, in some way that made sense, and some way that kept her from losing it.

“*What do I Do?*” “*She sold my piece for \$70.00, and didn’t give me my money?*” “*Should she have given me my money right away?*” “*Should I take my jewelry out of her shop?*” “*Should I never do consignment again?*” She peppered me with questions, not waiting for an answer.

She indicated that the store owner told her that she paid her artists 30 days after a sale.

Her customers had 30 days to return something. If the store owner paid before that time, she would be out the money. Store owners can set whatever policies they want, and in this case, I told the woman it was reasonable to wait 30 days, given the policy.

Of course, it had already been 7 weeks.

“*Should she call her?*” Her husband told her not to call yet. He didn’t want her to make waves, or ruin this opportunity to sell her jewelry.

“*Call her,*” I said. If the store owner said 30 days, then 30 days it should be.

Consignment may be a necessary evil, especially when you are getting started in the jewelry making business. But consignment is not the best situation to be in. Most stores that accept consignment do not understand the consignment business. As a result, when the time comes to pay the artists, there’s no cash flow.

In Consignment, the store is at greater risk than the artist. The store has to make space available for the pieces, and forgo the opportunity to get something else in that retail-real-estate that might do better. The store has to display the pieces, and keep them clean and presentable. The store has to train its sales staff so that they have sufficient information and motivation to make the sale. And, of course, there’s the tracking and accounting that goes with every consignment piece on sale.

Your best clue to whether a particular consignment situation is a good or better one, is the percentage split between the store or gallery owner and the artist. Given the level of risk each party assumes, the optimum distribution is 60/40 with the store or gallery getting the larger amount. But if the split is 40/60 or 50/50, this would be an acceptable sign as well.

However, when the split is 70/30 or 30/70 or outside this 60 and 40 range, yellow flags should go up. This shows that the store or gallery owner is not aware of the level of risk in their business. You probably won’t get paid on time, and not get paid without a lot of time spent yelling on the phone. Your pieces won’t be maintained. They won’t be displayed in a prominent place. No one will be trained or motivated to sell your pieces.

Just because you confront a potentially bad consignment situation doesn’t necessarily mean that you should walk away. There are a few prominent boutiques in Nashville that offer a 70/30 split between the store and the artist. They rarely pay their artists when the pieces sell. It takes a lot of screaming, “*Bloody Murder!*” before you get paid. But these are very prominent shops. Letting other stores and galleries know that you have pieces in these shops will open many doors for you. You might view the delayed payments and the effort to get your money as “marketing expenses.”

Other reasons you might settle for a bad situation:

- You’re just getting started, and saying your pieces are in a shop anywhere has some marketing cache that goes with this
- You can direct customers to this shop. At least you have a place to send people. You might not have a central base from which to work. Your main business might be doing craft shows, and here you can direct people to your jewelry between shows.

- This might be the only game in town.

But otherwise, if consignment doesn't have some added value for you, you want to minimize your consignment exposure.

When you negotiate consignment terms with a shop, try to:

1. Get a feel for the amount of consignment they do (and how long they have been doing this), the range of artists, the range of types of merchandise on consignment, and the types of customers they have
2. Get a 60/40, 50/50 or 40/60 split
3. Work with store or gallery owner on final retail pricing of your pieces.
4. Get a written contract or agreement, if at all possible.
5. Get in writing if possible, but an oral agreement would suffice, to convert the situation to "wholesale terms", if your pieces sell well. (Be sure to define what "selling well" might mean.)
6. Determine a specific date when to take your pieces out, or trade them out for new pieces. Usually, it's good to trade them out every 3–6 months.
7. Determine exactly how and when you will get paid after any one piece sells. A 30-day waiting period is reasonable.

62.

SELLING: *Selling In Galleries*



Guiding Questions?

1. What is an art gallery? Why do you want to place your jewelry there?
2. How does a gallery survive successfully?
3. What does an art gallery look for in the artists it exhibits? In the jewelry designers it exhibits?
4. How do you best approach a gallery to see if they will represent your work?
5. How does a gallery pay the designer for their pieces which sell? What is a good financial partnership?

Keywords: gallery consignment pitch distinctive style	shared risk collector client portfolio artist statement biographical profile	curate consistency coherency pricing
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[Also see chapters on 15. RETAIL, WHOLESALE, CONSIGNMENT, and 70. COLD CALLING AND THE PITCH, and 82. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.]

About Working With Galleries

Typically, an art gallery is a small business which exhibits and sells art. Galleries attract different kinds of clientele. Some people who purchase art might want to have something to hang in their home or business. Or an art-jewelry piece to wear. Others would be considered art enthusiasts and collectors. They purchase art as investments. The profits the gallery takes in need to be sufficient to cover the cost to run the business, and have money left over to live on and play with.

The gallery owner, in effect, curates what is shown. The gallery will want to have some

variety, but also some consistency in what is shown. Galleries tend to have reputations around what they specialize in. The gallery owner is typically very knowledgeable about art and how art connects with the current culture. Many galleries are biased against jewelry because jewelry is not understood universally as an art form. When you research galleries, you will want to document which ones would be more amenable to carry your jewelry pieces.

Most galleries have physical store spaces, but with a website presence. There are also digital galleries and online sales platforms. Some are open to all artists; some specialize in gallery shop membership only. There are auction houses both physical and online. Also places like Amazon and Ebay have fine art and collectibles sections. Most sales are conducted in physical spaces, but more and more online.

Before you approach any gallery, be sure you have answered two important questions up front:

1. Does your work and your needs fit the gallery? Do some research. Look at the lines represented, the artists represented, how things are organized. Contact some of those artists and ask about their experiences with the gallery and how exhibiting there works for them.
2. What benefit(s) does your work offer the gallery, in other words, why should they represent you? It is important to establish and define your professional relationship with the gallery. Determine what the gallery needs from you to make things work out for both of you.

When your work is represented by a gallery, regular communication is important. Be on time with deadlines and materials needed. In a big sense, your relationship is a collaboration.

Gallery representation will increase your reputation, credibility and legitimacy. It will lead to you getting higher prices for your work. It will increase your visibility. It will enhance your brand.

Your Goals

The gallery needs to represent and promote you when you are not around. They will need to know a lot about you, and feel good about you as a designer and as a person.

That means your goals will be to:

- Research galleries which are a good fit between you, your jewelry, and *their* clients.
- Research artists/designers they represent and visit their websites; make note of their selection, styles, pricing and possible pricing formula they might have used.
- Create a strategy for presenting yourself and your work.
- Make your pitch to the gallery.
- Place your jewelry in a gallery for sale, priced so that you receive a good return.

- Create a collaborative relationship with the gallery owner around how best to serve the gallery's clientele and collector base.
- Maintain good and frequent communication.
- Create jewelry for the gallery which has a high degree of consistency and coherency with you as a designer and the brand you are promoting.
- Have a high enough level of productivity so that the gallery can be confident you will always have enough jewelry (usually 30-35 pieces available at any one time) for them to sell, particularly if they want to replace pieces which have sold

**First, A Self-Assessment:
Is Selling In A Gallery Right For You?**

Step back for awhile and answer these kinds of questions about you as a designer and your work. Be honest with yourself.

1. Is your jewelry consistent and cohesive? Have you developed a distinctive designer style and is this consistently reflected in the jewelry you want to place in a gallery?
2. Is your jewelry made of quality materials?
3. Have you implemented the best standards of technique, technology and craftsmanship?
4. Are your pieces appropriately finished from end to end?
5. How marketable are your pieces? Which are most marketable?
6. How should you refer to your jewelry style and aesthetic in marketing when talking with galleries and collectors? What labels would you give these? How accessible are these labels to galleries and collectors?
7. Where should you concentrate your efforts to find galleries and promote your jewelry to them?
8. Would your pieces fit in the highest-quality surroundings?
9. Are your presentation materials – portfolio, artist statement, business card, jewelry displays – professional and engaging?

Do this simple exercise. Imagine who the typical collector of a particular gallery might be. How does your jewelry look through their eyes? What would the collector think and feel and see when trying on a piece of your jewelry? What are their needs and desires, and how does your jewelry help them to meet these? How are the desires and values of collectors looking to purchase something in a gallery differ from clients looking to purchase something in a boutique or department store?

Make a good list of anything you can do to improve.

Also, you might get an objective opinion, say from another jewelry designer, or even a gallery representative. What kinds of things do they see which could enhance the appearance and marketability of your work?

Build Consistency Into Your Work

Consistent work makes it easier for the gallery owner to represent, market and sell your work. It makes it easier for the collector to connect with your body of work and purchase it. Consistency means that your jewelry is immediately recognized as designed by you.

Consistency can mean many things. If you are consistent on 3 or 4 factors listed below, then you have some wiggle room with the others.

Consistency can be conveyed by:

- Color, pattern, texture
- Use of point, line, plane and/or shape
- Theme
- Forms
- Rhythm, balance, volume, size/shape distribution, movement, dimensionality
- Medium
- Materials
- Techniques and technologies
- References to history, time, place, situation, culture
- How your pieces are finished off
- Signature elements, like a certain bead or tag, included with your pieces
- Comfort, movement, drape and flow
- Predominant silhouettes
- How your pieces feel and look when draped on the body
- Size adjustability
- Selection of clasp and design of clasp assembly
- Display and presentation

Getting Your Portfolio and Presentation In Order

You will be bringing several pieces of information with you when making your pitch, whether in person, through email or online. At the least, these will include an Artist

Statement, a Portfolio, and a business card or resume or biographical profile, and sample pieces and or images.

[Review the later chapters covering how to write an 83. ARTIST STATEMENT and how to put together a 84. PORTFOLIO.]

Some pointers:

1. Everything should be well organized and reaffirm your designer style and brand
2. You should have very clear images of your pieces; in a few of your pictures you want to demonstrate the scale of your pieces, such as sitting them next to a recognizable object or being worn on the body or laying on your work bench as you construct it
3. You want to have up-to-date information about pricing and sold works
4. In your portfolio, you may want to include current prices, but you also may want to leave off dates; track the dates for yourself in other records not to be shared with the gallery; always refer to your prices in retail values, not wholesale
5. Your pricing strategy should be consistent from piece to piece; it should be based on both the cost of creating a piece as well as your current brand value; it should be based on a simple formula that can be explained to others ***[See chapter on 39. PRICING YOUR JEWELRY.]***
6. The images in your portfolio should represent you as a jewelry designer today
7. If visiting in person, you want to always have samples of your work with you. The samples should be representative of the kinds of things you would want to place in this gallery.

Have A Clear Image About The Typical Buyer Of Your Work

You should be keeping good records of your buyers.

Who are they?

- Average age
- From particular neighborhood, city, area
- Buying for a business or for personal
- Situations in which they wear your jewelry
- Price points they favor
- Income / wealth
- Married / single

- Male / female

Why would your buyer come to a gallery rather than another setting to purchase jewelry?

Why would they come to this particular gallery you are targeting?

Some Notes About Pricing

[See the earlier chapter on 39. PRICING YOUR JEWELRY.]

Use a formula. Keep it simple and explainable.

Don't undersell your piece. You need to make a profit.

Don't underprice your piece. This disvalues it.

Keep your prices competitive with those of other designers you are competing with.

In a gallery setting, you want national or international prices. If you live in a lower cost locale, you do *not* want to base your prices on their expectations.

Don't overprice. You won't get repeat business that way. Keep your prices competitive.

Review your pricing regularly.

As you make more and more sales, adjust your prices upward for all your pieces accordingly.

It is better to suggest pricing to the gallery owner rather than ask their opinion of what prices to set. In this way, you come across as a more established, experienced designer. Depending too much on the gallery owner to set prices might make you come off as a novice with unproven market value.

Finding Target Galleries

Do online searches. Ask other jewelry designers.

Begin with galleries that are nearby to you. Do not limit yourself to the most prominent galleries. If at all possible, visit each gallery in person.

You want to answer for yourself these kinds of questions:

- Is the location good, bad or indifferent?
- Are the staff friendly and approachable?
- Are the staff knowledgeable about the pieces in the gallery?
- Do I like the way the pieces are displayed and labeled?
- Would the gallery be a good fit for my work?
- Does your work fall out of the general pricing of other jewelry in the gallery?

Making The Pitch

You can make your pitch by email, phone, online, or in-person. In-person is the best, if possible. Creating a personal connection with a gallery will make them more likely to want to work with you. Getting recommended to the gallery by an artist, designer or collector can often open doors for you.

[See the earlier chapter on 70. COLD CALLING AND MAKING THE PITCH.]

Emailing:

Start your emails by asking them if they are currently seeking new jewelry designers.

In your first email, do not include attachments. This makes it too easy for them to reject you. Instead, use this first email opportunity to establish a personal connection. If you get a positive response, follow-through with attached documents.

Galleries can be overwhelmed with emails, so this is probably your weakest strategy for contact. It is easy for the gallery to send a thanks-but-no-thanks form letter in response to an email.

Online Submission Through Their Website:

The gallery will present you with guidelines and a form to fill out. This helps them weed out designers who might not be a good fit. This helps the gallery discourage designers from approaching them. It may get you some attention, but do not depend on this approach.

In-Person:

Make sure ahead of time that the gallery is a good fit for your work. Otherwise, this will be a waste of time.

If feasible, you might shoe-horn yourself into their operations. Be *around*. Visit the gallery. Attend their openings. Strike up conversations. Talk to the designers they represent. Ask them how they came to be represented by the gallery. Talk to the clients walking around the gallery and looking at the pieces, particularly the jewelry. Ask them what they particularly like about the jewelry they are viewing. Casually mention you are a jewelry designer looking for galleries in which to place your work. Don't be sales'y. Perhaps email them after a visit thanking them for the showing or giving your take-aways about the show.

If cold calling or making a specific appointment, be sure your portfolio and presentation are in order. Make the talk very conversational. Try to elicit things which connect you and your experiences to those of the gallery owner. Be prepared with several questions. Also ask the gallery owner for feedback on your work and on your presentation.

NOTE: It is easier for the gallery to reject you if you try to make an appointment by phone, and more difficult to ignore you if you cold call.

Hand the gallery owner your portfolio. Give them space to review it. Don't do a running commentary as they page through this.

Always make eye contact. Don't be shy. Don't look away or look down when you are speaking with someone. Use their first name and repeat it during your conversation.

The gallery owner, if interested in your work, will ask you a series of questions. Always be upbeat in your answers. Keep your answers short and to the point. Often the style of how you answer will be just as important as the content of your answer.

Depending on where your target galleries are, you most likely will be making your pitch in all these different ways. So your materials have to be adaptable – file structure, size, both digital and print files.

One thing the gallery, if representing you, will want to do is tell your story over and over again. Part of your pitch will be some subtle introductory training of them towards this end. Your story should be easy to understand and easy to repeat.

Emphasize the consistency in your work.

Show how your work will fit with other designers the gallery represents, yet at the same time offer something different and special. Tell them how your work can be distinguished from your competition.

Demonstrate your in-depth knowledge of their clientele and their needs and desires. Explain how your jewelry will meet their needs and desires.

Demonstrate that you are serious about your work, and are always striving to improve your technique and further hone your style.

Even if you get a positive reaction to your work at one gallery, do not stop approaching other galleries until you have a firm offer.

Be persistent.

After each interaction, send a thank you note.

Now Your Work Is In A Gallery What Do You Do Next?

Maintain frequent communication with the gallery.

Keep the gallery informed of your new work. New work often sells best.

If your pieces are in more than one gallery, rotate them from gallery to gallery.

If you have ideas for the gallery, such as changes in displays, offer them as suggestions, not demands.

Frequent thank you notes are a good strategy.

If your pieces are getting a lot of positive responses, you might ask the gallery owner to do a show or special event for you and your work.

Ask the gallery for a letter of recommendation. The gallery owner should mention how great you are to work with, how buyers appreciate your work, and how sales of your pieces have done for them.

FOOTNOTES

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63.

SELLING:

Selling At Home Shows

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a home show? 2. What are the best things to do when hosting a home show?
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<p>Keywords: <i>home show inventory vendor direct-sales company</i></p>	<p><i>shared risk co-marketing / cross marketing</i></p>	<p><i>location refreshments email list / guest list</i></p>
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[Also see 64. SELLING AT TRUNK SHOWS chapter.]

About Home Shows

A home show is where you host a special event involving, at least, selling your jewelry in a home setting. The home might be your own, or a friend's, or at a good location where you have negotiated a deal for hosting. It might be in a meeting room or taking up several adjacent sleeping rooms at a motel or hotel.

Home shows usually are scheduled for 1-4 days.

More successful home shows are those which have these characteristics:

- Ideal location where clients have easy access and feel comfortable visiting
- Location which has attractive features that entice people to visit, such as in a historically significant house
- Two or more vendors selling complementary goods
- Scheduled for 2-3 hours per day, typically on one day, but can be over a few days
- Have refreshments
- Have some kind of presentation or demonstration or something dramatic that gets people talking

- Have a solid list of contacts to invite
- Offer a range of price points

Pick A Date

When you pick a date, make sure you check into all the events going on around you in your community. You do not want any conflicts.

The date should be convenient for you.

Blocking out 2-3 hours/day is better than staying open all day. A 1 day to 4 day event frame is good.

Holding regular home shows, say 2-3 a year, will get you a more committed following. If you are doing this, then you want to have your next date picked and ready to be announced to those who come to your current home show.

Locations

Determine how many people will fit into your home. Anticipate the space the displays will take up. Assume about 1/4 to 1/3 of those invited will attend. Assume that 1/2 to 3/4 of the clients who responded YES to their invites will actually show up.

The show does not have to be held in your own house. Think about what parts of town would be the most accessible, most attractive, and safest. A friend of yours might live in one of those neighborhoods and let you use their home. Another option is to approach a realtor who is showing homes in this area and see if you can use that home. It's a great way for the realtor to get exposure without having to do any work.

You might set up at a local motel meeting room.

If it is not at your own home, think about how you will compensate the hostess. It might be with jewelry. It might be money. Something to think about.

Assembling Guest List, Sending Out Invites and Promoting Your Show

Who should be invited? The major key is to have a solid, up-to-date contact list. Again, assume about 1/4 to 1/3 of those invited will attend. Assume that 1/2 to 3/4 of the clients who responded YES to invites will actually show up. If you invited 100 people, you might get 10-30 people to attend.

Tag your guests in your list as A, B or C. A-Listers are those you ideally want to attend. The B-Listers include those on the A-list who didn't RSVP, as well as serving as a backup list. The C-Listers are people you can invite that can fill in the spaces (called *event fillers*) if you

are worried you won't have enough people attend.

You will be sending out invites. Mailed post cards work better than emails. Email E-vite services work better than your own emails. Your own emails are OK.

Ask for an R.S.V.P. response and by such-and-such a date.

Indicate which payment methods you will accept: cash, check, credit card. If you haven't done so already, set up a credit card account so that you can accept payment and use your cell phone to run the charges.

The marketing message on your invites or e-vites should anticipate who will be attending and what they most likely want to gain from the experience of attending.

On your invites or e-vites, use a font that is easy to read at a glance. Include some images of your jewelry to grab people's attention.

Put signs up in places your customers frequent.

Follow up with phone calls to confirm who is coming.

Inventory

Anticipate how much revenue you would like to make at your show. You will need 4 times as much inventory (calculated as total retail prices) to reach your goal.

You will want to have at least 2 pieces per person attending.

A wide mix of price points is best.

Know what your guests might expect to pay for, say, a pair of earrings, or a bracelet, or a necklace. Price accordingly.

Typically, you would be selling jewelry you make yourself. However, it is equally acceptable to sell jewelry from various direct sales companies. This is up to you.

Set-Up

The set-up in your home should be cohesive, visually interesting and functional. The look of your jewelry should coordinate with the look of the home. You do not want your home to be disorganized, disinviting or intimidating.

You will find that table covers, display pieces and the like work best with solid colors and lighter colors.

Have pretty containers to hold things.

Think of your displays in terms of levels. You do not want everything lying flat on a table. You want to have a mix of low tables, higher tables, tall heights, stands, pedestals, hanging items.

Your displays should be attractive, but not compete for attention with your jewelry.

Good lighting is important.

You want to devote one area for a check out station. You definitely want to be able to accept credit cards. You will want to have on hand shopping bags, gift bags or boxes. You will want sales receipt books.

Be sure all your marketing materials – business cards, catalogs, brochures – are out.

It is a good idea to create a mini-catalog handout. This would show images of each piece, the name of the piece, and the asking price. You might be able to fill in a table on one sheet of paper with 5 rows and 4 columns – thus for 20 pieces.

Have your tools on hand in case you have to adjust or repair anything.

Have several mirrors handy (wall mirrors, hand mirrors, counter mirrors).

Have cotton balls and rubbing alcohol so guests can try on earrings.

Refreshments

Make things festive and casual. Have plenty of snacks and refreshments on hand for your guests.

When People Arrive

Be sure to have a guest book at your front door. As people arrive, have them sign in. This is a great way to expand your email list.

Name tags or badges is a good idea. NOTE: You will make more sales if you can repeat someone's first name as you are talking with them.

Put jewelry on people to entice them. Pass around trays of jewelry.

Tell everyone your getting started story, why you love selling jewelry, and how you began to make it. Stories encourage people to feel more connected to the artist and their work.

Explain the *process* and *procedures*.

Give door prizes. Or run a contest.

Offer discounts. For example, if they buy \$100.00 of stuff, they can get 25% off another piece.

Introduce your guests to the other staff and vendors. Give them a tour of the place. An electronic photo frame can display a continuous slide show for your guests. Let your guests know of future parties.

If you think your guests will be bringing children, set up a play area away from the selling area.

Co-Marketing / Cross-Marketing

Having 2 – 4 different vendors at the show is best. You can share email lists. You can share the burden of running the show. And your guests will more likely want to attend. The vendors can all be jewelry designers. If so, you want the styles of each vendor to be noticeably different. The vendors can be selling complementary products. Think jewelry and purses and artwork and cosmetics and clothing.

Growing Your Business

You will want to develop your home show business. You might offer people chances to become a hostess and get a percent of the profits. You might try to hold home shows on a regular basis.

Evaluation

Whatever business activity you involve yourself with, including home shows, you want to build in an evaluative component. What worked / didn't work? What were the guest comments? What necessary adjustments do you want to make for the next show?

Evaluate your attendance statistics. If you received a low response rate, you might want to consider changing your dates or your email list or postponing or cancelling any future events.

Take the time to fine-tune your guest list.

Final advice

Be sure to wear a lot of your own jewelry

Don't make this stressful for you. Keep things manageable.

Don't be late to your own home show.

64.

SELLING:

Selling At Trunk Shows



Guiding Questions?

1. What is a Trunk Show, and how do I organize one?
2. Do I have to be present at my Trunk Show?

Keywords: <i>trunk shows</i> <i>wholesale</i>	<i>private showing /</i> <i>public showing</i> <i>venue</i>	<i>contract / agree-</i> <i>ment</i> <i>deposit</i> <i>inventory control</i>
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The Jewelry Trunk Show

Trunk shows are a great way to take your business on the road and build a broader clientele base. This is also a good way to demonstrate your line for businesses not yet carrying your merchandise, and expanding your wholesale sales.

Here you might approach a store or a non-profit organization or a school and the like and ask if they might be interested in hosting a trunk show. In the trunk show, you provide a wide selection of your pieces for sale. The host would get a percent of the sales.

The trunk show offers these stores or other venues an opportunity for the venue to provide something different, with drama and interest, to their customers or members. They do not have to invest in merchandise or ways to display it. They can try out new types of merchandise, again, without the investment. They get the profit based on what was sold. They are a great way for both venue and artist to get more customers.

You might bring the trunk show with you and be there in person. Or you might ship the show to them. If shipping, you pay for shipping to them, and it is negotiable who pays to return any items that haven't sold. If you have a sales rep, they can come and manage the show on site.

You might also include display items which coordinate with the style and sensibilities of your jewelry.

The show might be open to the public or open by invitation only. You might have a private showing for select customers on day 1, and then open it to the public on subsequent days.

Sometimes trunk shows are tied in with a charity event. These can be very lucrative and help expand your client base.

The Contract or Agreement

You would provide a contract or set of terms. These terms would include:

1. Dates and hours
2. Who pays to ship to the show and return shipping after the show
3. Host compensation (typically 50/50, but it could be as little as 15%)
4. How missing items (stolen, broken, otherwise missing) get accounted and paid for
5. A listing of all inventory provided
6. A listing of all display pieces and aids provided
7. A listing of all marketing and promotion activities, agreed-upon wording, and who is responsible for doing and paying for what
8. Staffing: who will be on site and responsible for watching the merchandise and making sales
9. How will returns and repairs be handled?
10. If refreshments will be offered.
11. Sometimes, usually when a Venue has approached you to ask if you will do a show for them, you will want to collect a deposit (10% or \$500 is typical) from the Venue before sending out your trunk show

Some of the larger stores may have their own guidelines for hosting trunk shows.

Finding Venues

As with any business venture, you want to match what you are selling to customers' needs, wants and desires. You want to have attractive price points for these customers. So you begin by looking for venues, locally or not, you feel there is a good fit. Approach them and make a pitch.

You might look for advertised trunk shows and visit these.

Plan The Best Time For Your Event

Pick a time of year that works well with your merchandise. Avoid, however, those typical time periods where there are major promotional sales events.

Best months: April, August, September, October. Think either: (a) beginning of a selling season, or (b) a slow season that needs a pick-me-up.

A trunk show might last 1 – 4 days, and be held for 5-8 hours each day. It might be during business hours, or after hours.

Usually, you do not want to do more than 2-3 trunk shows in a particular locale. Customer interest will drop off considerably if you hold too many trunk shows in the same general locale.

Inventory

You want to bring/send enough inventory to make a major impression. You will want to fill up at least 2 six-foot tables worth with merchandise and displays.

Before you send out your merchandise, create an inventory list. You will list each piece and the suggested retail price. CHECK IT TWICE.

When the Venue receives the merchandise, instruct them to CHECK IT against the inventory list. When the Venue is set to return the merchandise, instruct them to CHECK IT AGAIN against the inventory list. Instruct them to validate their trunk show revenues related to the items no longer on the inventory list.

Promote, Promote, Promote

A trunk show will never be successful without a lot of promotion. You want to begin several weeks before the event. Notify the venue's customers or members with an email or postcard. Notify your own customers as well. Ask the venue to hang a sign or signs prominently displayed. If you want certain images used, make the venue aware.

Be sure you get a clear idea of which marketing materials need to be written from the Venue's frame of reference and point of view, and which ones from your own.

Create an event on your Facebook page and on your Venue's Facebook page. Post images and short videos several times over the several weeks on Instagram. As you get closer, post frequently on Twitter, as well. Posts on your and your Venue's websites, other social media sites.

If you are going to be there in person, highlight a *come-meet-the-artist* angle.

Follow-up with a second email 7-14 days before the event. People need several impressions to remember things.

About discounting and haggling: Usually you do not discount or haggle. Trunk shows are special events. You might promote that you have *special prices for this special event*. But keep any discounting to a minimum.

Put a guest book at the front door of the show.

Perhaps have a door prize in order to collect names and email addresses.

At The Trunk Show

You want to create a fun, relaxing environment.

Dress the part. Wear your jewelry.

Be prepared to tell your story over and over again. Getting started. Design process. Inspirations. Competitive advantages. Your business history.

Bring a photo album with you (or electronic photo album for a slide show) that shows you at work, your studio, some of your pieces. You want the customers to appreciate the hand-made quality of your work.

If there are different ways to wear your jewelry, demonstrate these.

You might want to take custom orders. You should have the necessary paperwork/forms/receipts to accomplish this. If there are color or other selections that can be made, you should have samples or images of the available choices.

After The Trunk Show

Keep these customers coming back to you.

Make them aware how to reach you after the show. Business cards work well here.

Collect names and emails of customers who purchased pieces. You might provide them with a coupon good for a future purchase.

Always build in an evaluative component to gauge whether your return on investment was worth it.

If any items are to be shipped to the customer, make them aware of when these will ship.

Don't forget to thank your host and anyone who assisted in the show.

65.

SELLING:

Selling At Jewelry Making Parties



Guiding Questions?

1. What is a Jewelry Making Party, and how do you organize one?

Keywords: <i>jewelry party</i> <i>Invite / evite /</i> <i>postcard</i>	<i>vendor</i> <i>host /</i> <i>hostess</i>	<i>workspace</i>
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The Jewelry Making Party

Invite guests to your home or at work or a store or a community meeting room setting and have fun making jewelry. Here you have all the parts – beads, stringing materials, findings, charms – to put together earrings, bracelets and necklaces – and all the necessary tools and other supplies. You might provide the parts as kits. Or you might let people pick their own parts from trays and dishes on your tables.

You might begin by teaching your guests how to make things. You can show them samples of finished pieces. You can show them pictures in magazines for inspirations.

You might pre-price kits. Or you price items based on the assembled cost. In some cases, some of your guests might want to pay you to put their pieces together, and here, you would charge a per hour rate for your time in addition to the cost of the parts.

You can organize the whole process on your own. Or, with a quick Google or Bing search, you can find companies that specialize in prepackaged jewelry making parties. They send you a catalog of pieces that can be made and all the parts you need to make them. Your guests pick a piece from the catalog they'd like to make, and you have the parts handy. If contracting with an outside vendor, see if you can speak to people who have used the vendor before. Bad things that can happen and you want to avoid: (a) the parts sent don't match the images in the catalog, (b) the quality of the parts seem too low, given the costs and the images in the catalog, (c) they don't send you enough parts, (d) it's unclear how to make the pieces.

The Invitation

Send post cards, emails or evites to friends, relatives, people on your email list. Tell them they can bring a friend. Emphasize in the invitation things like:

- Lots of fun
- Creativity, endless possibilities
- Much less expensive to make your own
- Will teach and provide instruction
- Lots of beads, findings, charms to work with
- Great for yourself and great for gifts
- Payment with cash, check, credit card
- The who / what / where /when / how
- Your contact information
- Ask for R.S.V.P.
- Include enticing, inspiring jewelry images

You should accept credit card payments. It is easy to get a credit card account where you can run credit cards on your cell phone.

The Set-Up

Select or suggest projects which can be completed in an hour or less.

Be sure you have recorded the cost of each bead, finding, stringing material and determined a fair price to charge (typically 2-3x your cost). You can reduce some costs to a flat fee, like charging a flat fee of \$5.00 for the crimp beads, crimp covers, wire protectors and cable wire.

Have everything laid out ahead of time. Be sure you leave enough workspace for each guest – typically a 3' x 3' area per person to work in.

When getting the party started, explain all the parts and the tools to your guests. Orient them. Guide them in thinking more efficiently and effectively about how to approach the jewelry design and making processes.

Demonstrate some steps.

Providing refreshments will enhance the party.

Have a clear start and end time so people don't camp out.

66.

SELLING:

Selling Through Mail Order Catalogs



Guiding Questions?

1. How do I sell my jewelry through mail order catalogs?

Keywords:

mail order catalogs

*mark ups
exclusives*

*production
capabilities*

Selling Jewelry Through Mail Order Catalogs

Over the years, so many of my students and shop customers have drooled over the jewelry selections in catalogs like from Sundance. Usually, they want to try to duplicate the pieces they see. But occasionally they wonder how they can get their designs into these catalogs.

To sell jewelry in catalogs, you need to show that you are an established designer. You have the production ability to manufacture many pieces in a short period of time. You are reliable. Your products maintain a consistent standard of quality. You can deliver within a set shipping schedule.

You need a solid handle on your costs because you will most likely be working with small profit margins per piece.

You want to create jewelry which is not easily found in stores. It needs to be stylish. There may be a six or so month delay from getting accepted by a catalog to when that catalog is sent out to its customers. So your jewelry needs to feel relevant in that later time frame. You want your piece to photograph well.

To Start

You must understand the catalog's target market, styles and culture, and price points. Do some research. See if you can contact any of the designers whose pieces are included in the catalog. Read online reviews of the catalog.

Review your costs if you were producing your pieces in large quantities, say, 500 pieces or more. The catalog will want to mark up your item 4 – 6 times. Can you produce each piece at a cost where both you and the catalog can make a profit, given reasonable customer expectations about price?

Catalogs may pass along some additional costs to you. Be sure to find this out ahead of time. You may be partly responsible for things like:

- Photography
- Ad copy
- Maintaining a certain amount of inventory on hand, and storing your merchandise
- Freight/Shipping your merchandise
- Paying for cost of returns and repairs
- Paying for merchandise (returned back to you) which has not sold within a certain time frame
- Paying for packaging, particularly price tags, labels, display cards

If a lot of your merchandise is unsold, and gets returned to you, this can increase your actual costs considerably. It is a good idea ahead of time to do several break even analyses under different assumptions about how many of your pieces will actually sell.

Catalogs will probably want to feature 1 or 2 items of yours at a time.

Catalogs probably will want to use their own packaging supplies.

Catalogs might restrict your ability to sell the same product elsewhere for a set period of time. It is in your interest to keep any exclusive agreement to as short a timeframe as possible.

Approaching The Catalog

As best as you can, try to find out the key buyer or decision maker at the catalog operation. A direct call to the catalog or a LinkedIn search might identify the buyer.

Often, they scout out artists in various galleries and other venues, but you can contact them and make a pitch as well. You may have a jewelry rep or agency that represents you and has some ties and connections to a catalog operation.

You might periodically send them a piece of your jewelry and ask if any interest. They probably will not return any samples you send them.

In your accompanying letter to them,

- Demonstrate that you know how your piece fits with their customers' wants and

desires

- Detail your production abilities to make large quantities in short time frames
- Include top quality photos
- Identify the wholesale pricing; you may show this as a sliding scale, depending on the quantity of pieces in your production run

Find out about their circulation, how many issues they put out each year, and how long they keep an item available for sale.

If they are interested, then carefully review their Agreement before consenting to it.

Will they pay anything in advance?

How will your name and business name be displayed with your merchandise?

What Happens If You Get Too Many Orders?

Be prepared to increase your production at a moment's notice, should the catalog receive too many orders for your product. That means, locking in staffing, material supplies, production requirements, and distribution plans.

You want to line up ahead of time arrangements for securing the same materials. The materials need to be the same colors, sizes, shapes – exactly as they were in the first batch of pieces manufactured.

You might make contingency arrangements with a secondary supplier. Be sure this supplier can meet the deadlines and quality requirements.

You might want to line up another manufacturer who can step in at the last minute and assist you to make your products.

Waiting For Payment

The catalogs may not pay you for 60-90 or even 120 days.

How will this affect your cash flow? If you had to do a second run because of the popularity of your products, will you have access to sufficient cash? Will you need to get a loan based on your future receivables? If so, what additional costs will you incur? Again, find answers to these questions ahead of time – before you sign any agreement with the catalog.

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67.

SELLING:

Selling On TV Shopping Sites and Streamed Web

	<p>Guiding Questions? 1. How do I go about getting my jewelry sold through TV shopping networks or web streaming services?</p>
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<p>Keywords: Streamed web webcast</p>	<p>TV network home shopping</p>	<p>pitch</p>
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[Also see the chapters on 66. SELLING IN MAIL ORDER CATALOGS and 70. COLD CALLING AND MAKING THE PITCH.]

Selling On TV Shopping Sites and Streamed Web

Home- and jewelry-shopping TV networks, JTV, QVC, and HSN to name three, offer another opportunity to sell your jewelry. They look for either (a) established designers with proven records in production and sales, as well as (b) newly discovered designers whom they believe they can groom to have proven records and sufficient production capacity and experience. Competition for on-air time is huge.

TV and streamed Web are the media. They want designers who can bring life to their products. Excitement, passion, great story telling. An ability to engage with their viewers.

Visit their websites. Closely evaluate the jewelry they offer for sale – materials, techniques, price points, silhouettes, names of designers or companies. As they make their online marketing pitches, what are the key points and key word phrases that they use? How are the pieces displayed? How do they demonstrate the pieces – the way they are to be worn, versatility, relationship with other fashion items?

Now think about your jewelry. Is there a good fit? If so, can you demonstrate a proven record of sales and sufficient production facilities. Does your product solve a customer problem that can be fixed, fill a void, or make daily life easier? Does your product have universal appeal while at the same time provides something unique that is not easily found elsewhere? What’s your story? Does your brand have a compelling narrative? Why does your brand resonate with consumers? Are you at ease in front of a camera? Can you demonstrate your product in front of a camera? [Think about how you have to position your hands and

your product so that the camera can focus on them.]

Assume your product will have 8-12 minutes of airtime. The network will expect to sell hundreds or thousands of your product with this short amount of exposure.

If your product is selected, it will be scheduled for delivery to a warehouse just before the scheduled TV appearance. It gets presented on air. You will be sharing airspace with a host. *[You want to have chemistry between you.]* You want to be able to talk about your product in short, brief sentences with visually attractive presentation and demonstration. Customers order by web or phone. Products get shipped. Any returns or unsold merchandise is at your risk and cost. 30-90 days later, you get paid for what sold. If they had a good experience, they will schedule you again.

The networks judge products based on sales per minute. They might expect to sell \$6,000 per minute of product. If your on-air time is 10 minutes, the network might expect to sell \$60,000 of product. Given your product, is this reasonable for you.

An on-air appearance might incur additional costs: travel, hotel, food, transportation. If the product does well and the network takes backorders, how quickly can you meet this un-anticipated demand?

The Application

Each TV shopping network will have forms to fill out and submit on their websites. They will ask some obvious questions. They will also ask:

- If you have a tax id number (state resale number, federal EIN number)
- If you have a Dun & Bradstreet number (D-U-N 's number) (D&B maintain data about company performance. (<https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html>) to apply.)
- Your website address
- How many manufacturing facilities you have, either owned or contracted
- What your lead time for an order shipment is
- Your years in business and annual sales
- Trade references (at least 3)
- Employees
- Details about all costs involved in your operation (in anticipation of negotiating a fair profit for both you and the network); the network will want to be able to mark up your product 3-5 times your unit cost
- Willingness to give preferred status to the network over your other vendors; willingness to make products shown on their network exclusive to them
- Description of your jewelry you want to sell on the network (obviously written in

terms from *their* point of view)

Make your pitch to them online. If they like it, they will contact you. It is virtually impossible to speak to a buyer ahead of submitting your forms online. They make ask you for samples (or multiple samples of the same product). Your sample will be quality controlled tested. It will not be returned.

If they contact you, you get to make another pitch, this time in person or face-time online. Remember: your buyer is very busy. Keep your pitch to a few minutes. Then answer questions as these arise.

- Be ready to explain your financials
- Be ready to show how the product can be presented and demonstrated
- Identify the clear benefits of your product to their consumers
- Explain your competitive advantages and why your product will resonate with their customers
- Why might your product appeal to an impulse buy?
- How will your product connect emotionally with their customers?
- Is your product easy to use and understand?
- Does your product have a mass audience appeal?

They prefer that your product has already been created, but occasionally entertain ideas for products.

The networks do not share in the responsibility for manufacturing any product. You are on your own here. Be ready.

Do not leave any part of the application blank.

It may take 2-3 months before you receive a response.

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68.

SELLING:

Selling Through A Mobile Truck Business

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do I get started selling through a mobile truck business?2. How do you know where to park your boutique on wheels?
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<p>Keywords: <i>mobile truck trailer</i></p>	<p><i>vehicle insurance maintenance</i></p>	<p><i>licenses regulations parking certificates permits</i></p>
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A Jewelry Truck?

Ever think about purchasing a truck and converting it into a jewelry boutique on wheels, and taking your business on the road? With the ever-rising costs of commercial rents and a little bit of wanderlust, this could be a reality for you.

With a boutique on wheels, you can be flexible with your time and opportunistic about where you sell things. Start up costs are relatively low. And off you go, bringing your store to your customers.

Mobile shops are becoming very popular across America. Using your cell phone and social media, you create a lot of buzz, and you reach a broad customer audience. You can announce specials and deals to attract customers. You can plan a *Grand Opening*. And your mobile business is a novelty and that attracts customers, as well.

Be aware of the risks. You have vehicle maintenance. Each locality has its own licensing rules and regulations about where and when you can set up. The state may have additional rules and regulations. You may need a seller permit, a fire certificate, a public health certificate. You may be required to have a local inspection. Some locales may prohibit setting up on public spaces, and limit you to private spaces. Bad weather can be a bummer. But with some planning and management, these risks can be minimized.

Startup Costs

- The Vehicle: A used truck or trailer might be \$10,000 – 30,000. A new one might be \$100,000-200,000.
- You need to outfit your vehicle to suit your business needs. This might run another \$5,000 – 10,000.
- Don't forget to register your business (local and state where your home base is, and federal).
- Get all your social media and website designs established, ways to generate email addresses, and organized email campaigns to target your audience.
- You will need a way to accept credit cards, as well as a bank account for writing checks and depositing funds.
- Research all the locales you are targeting. Who are your potential customers and how do you reach them with your marketing and promotion? What are the licensure requirements and related regulations? Where will you park? What is the best inventory mix you should bring?
- Business and vehicle insurance.
- Of course, your ongoing fuel costs.
- Determine if you will need to hire any local help, and if so, where to find them.
- Determine how you will restock your inventory while you are travelling.
- Plan for your food and lodging expenses; some national chains offer large discounts for repeat business or when you use their corporate sponsored credit cards.

If you will be returning to that locale, be sure to let all your customers know.

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69.

SELLING:
Advertising

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is advertising and how does it benefit me as a business? 2. What advertising channels would work best for selling jewelry? 3. How do I begin to write promotional copy?
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<p>Keywords: SEO optimization content marketing social media marketing affiliate marketing radio and web streaming influencer marketing email marketing your own website</p>	<p>pay per click pay per impression budget ad buys / ad words click through rate</p>	<p>advertising print / online conversion tunnel promotional copy advertising channel ad spec sheets gated content</p>
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[See also all the chapters under the 42. MARKETING SECTION including 51. BRANDING]

What Is Advertising?

Advertising includes all the means of communication for getting your product or service’s marketing message across to potential customers in your target market in order to attract attention, recognition, legitimacy and sales.

There are many types of advertisements. The most obvious are messages you see in print in newspapers and magazines. You also see ads on TV or on computer monitors, or hear them on the radio or streaming web broadcast. You pass by billboards, murals, banners, flags, and people twirling signs along the roadway. You may be reading articles written with subtle but intentional slants about a particular brand.

You may hear a jingle, perhaps staying in your mind as an ear-worm. Or read a slogan, perhaps repeating to yourself because it has some rhythm or metaphor that resonates with you.

Ads may involve some recognition of sponsorship for an event or program. They may be found on signs posted in stores, on lawns, on telephone poles, just about everywhere.

You might come across a social media post or pop-up or review or comment. Or several. Maybe hundreds.

You may have seen product placements in TV programs, movies or on YouTube.

The average person is exposed to over 5,000 advertisements every single day.

Ads communicate.

They influence and persuade.

They remind, reassure, explain, guide.

They focus on customer needs, benefits, problems solved or to be solved.

They may be generally targeted, narrowly targeted, or specially targeted at one individual.

Someone has to have paid for them in some way.

There is no-one-size-fits-all advertisement. In fact, you will probably be using several different kinds of advertising channels to get your message across. Go slow, however. Be deliberate.

Advertising can be expensive. So, similar to all the other business and promotion activities you do, you always want to build in an evaluative component. Given the cost of a particular ad, are you getting a sufficient return on investment? What is the unit cost of an ad – that is, what is the cost per person reached? Per person who responds to the ad? Per person, in response to the ad, actually purchases something?

If you have in any way begun to establish your business as a *brand* [***see chapter on 51. BRANDING***], all advertising becomes much easier and more effective.

Magazines, newspapers, other venues often have *ad spec sheets* they can share with you. These detail information about size, color, content, font, pricing.

Conversion Tunnel

In any of your campaigns, you most likely will want to plan for a series of ads. Collectively, the ads in the series build upon one another. They serve to gradually tighten up the message and narrow the target audience.

The first in the series will be very general, and the last in the series will be a very specific call to action.

Basically, you can't hit your customer over the head with too much information at any one time, and you cannot expect your customer to respond to your ad the first time they see it. Hence, you develop a strategic series of ad marketing message campaigns.

- **Awareness:** Your first ad: Gain customer awareness of you and your product.
- **Interest:** Second ad: Guide the customer into recognizing how you and your product meets one of their major needs.
- **Desire:** Third ad: Entice the customer to want to buy your product.
- **Action:** Fourth ad: Turn your potential customer into an actual customer.

Writing Promotional Copy

Your promotional copy should be simple, obvious and direct. It should focus on the benefits to the customer, not the features of your product or service per se. It should validate how your customer thinks about their needs, desires, problems, and potential solutions. Don't give the customer a laundry list of things. Be sure to anticipate the customer's level of awareness.

Jewelry purchases meet customer needs including,

- Fill out a wardrobe
- Match a dress
- Something for a special occasion
- Feel good about themselves
- Make a power statement
- Compete with someone
- Signal that you are a bona fide member of a group or culture
- A memento
- A reward for a job well done
- Make yourself more attractive
- Connect with a mate
- Wants an heirloom
- Remember a special event, moment, date, occasion
- Reaffirm a particular psychological, social or cultural identity

Visualize, as you are creating your promotional copy, that you are talking to a specific customer. Tell them what they need the most, and how you are the right person, business, event to fulfill that need. In your ad, *validate* their thinking / feelings / understandings / desires.

Next, reinforce what you just wrote. There is an important need. Yes, the customer is thinking about this need. Yes, the possible solution is an idea shared by both you and the customer. Yes, you are there to meet this need when, where, and how the customer needs you to meet this need. Again, you want highlights, not an exhaustive listing.

Print vs. Online Advertising

CRITERIA	PRINT	ONLINE
1. COST	Usually more expensive; more difficult to control the unit cost per message received	Usually less expensive, sometimes free; greater ability to control the cost per message received; often can control budget with spending limits placed on ads
2. IMMEDIACY	Needs lead time from concept to ad product to implementation	Can be instantaneous
3. TRACKING	Difficult to track whether someone has seen the ad or has responded to it	Easy to track and link the message as it is received by a person; easy to track if person responded to message
4. TARGET AUDIENCE	Can control a little bit who the demographic audience is that is targeted, particularly within the local vicinity; can target those not online	Can control a lot who the demographic audience is that is targeted; can reach anyone in the world
5. TIME SPENT WITH AD	Ad may be visually present all the time the person is reading the text on the page	Ads may be visible to the viewer for very few seconds as the viewer surfs from link to link

Online Advertising Channels

- SEO Optimization
- Content Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Radio and Web Streaming
- Influencer Marketing
- Email Marketing
- Your own website

SEO Optimization

SEO stands for *search engine optimization*. All the search engines, like Google and Bing, send out robots constantly to search the internet for information that can be categorized – identified, ranked and rated. Your online presence may extend to Facebook, Instagram, a personal website, Etsy, a blog post, a comment on a post, and just about everywhere in cyberspace. But you are nothing – not known, not seen, not heard, not acknowledged – if you don't get indexed by the various search engines.

You want to be well-indexed. This means you need things wherever you are present online which are indexable. These include things like,

- Keywords and keyword phrases
- Captions for images
- Comments on posts
- When you/your business is tagged or hash-tagged
- Links back to your website
- Listings of your business in directories
- Reviews of your business and your products

This increases the chances that when someone searches for products like you carry or businesses like your own, you are more likely to be found.

71% of online jewelry sales begin with a Google search!

Selecting Keywords and Keyword Phrases.

Do some research here. You can plug in a keyword into a search engine search bar. Typically, a drop down menu will appear that shows other words that come up when people look for that keyword. These become keyword phrases. Keyword phrases (2-3 words) will have

better visibility outcomes for you than single keywords. That is because as you add words to a phrase, you begin to narrow down the relevant possible sites that might get flagged and presented.

Check the key words your competitor is using. Look at their websites and what words/phrases they emphasize. Plug their name into the search engine search bar, and see what comes up.

Content Marketing

Here you write an article or review or response to an online post, or create images and videos, and place these somewhere online. This might be a social media site, a site specializing in hosting articles, your own website, or a blog. You include somewhere (top, within, or at the end) links back to you and your website or your products listed online.

With this content, you are trying to educate the reader. Your content in some way is providing a solution or answer to a problem or question the reader might have.

The better connection between you and the reader, the more likely the reader is to create a link back to your content. More links to your content means greater SEO optimization.

Another type of content is when you are presenting one of your products or a type of jewelry product, and you do a *soft-sell*. You explain how to wear it, how it was made, interesting facts about it, how it fits with current fashions, or other interesting characteristics about it. Don't list a price. List a link to where the reader can find more information about it.

As with most things, this is not a one-shot, one-time approach. You want to post content on a regular basis, probably daily.

Social Media Marketing

[Also see the chapter on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING.]

You can leverage the power of various social media sites, like Facebook, Tik Tok, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube and Instagram.

These sites have

- Pages you can set up a profile on (*for your personal page as well as separately for your business page*)
- Postings you can place.
- Postings you can respond to.
- Events you can participate in or create.
- Groups you can join or set up.
- Targeted Ad programs you can take advantage of (*You might be able to target your audience by location, language, education, work, age, gender, birthday,*

relationship status, likes and interest).

In some cases, you can tack on a short commercial message or signature to the end of your posts. In other cases, commercial messages may be forbidden, but you can create a signature that generates enough interest and curiosity so that someone might link back to your site.

Some social media sites limit how many places or times you can use the same ad-copy-post. That limit might be 3 places or times. If you want to do more than that, you will have to substantially modify your ad-copy-posts.

A lot of the advertising tactics you use here are free. It just takes a lot of time.

Other tactics will cost you. Targeted ad programs let you send a message to some demographically limited group which you define. You set a budget. You either pay for the number of click-throughs (*someone has clicked a link in your ad*), or the number of impressions (*someone has visited the page where your ad appears*). Some jargon: PPC for pay for click or PPI for pay for impression. You may also want to measure the click-through rate (*5% is great, below 2% is not great*).

You can use both your personal page as well as your business page to tell your story and get your products seen. Soft-peddling the message will work better than any hard sell. For example, creating seven consecutive posts following you as you create a piece from inspiration to finish – of course with images – will get you better responses than creating what looks like a magazine ad for a specific piece of jewelry. A friend posted an image of her wearing a piece of jewelry she just made with her hair all messed up. She gave the image a simple caption: *Bad Hair Day – What Do You Think?* And sold 43 pieces in response. People feel more connected when they feel you are sharing your life with them.

Images are important. Short videos are the best.

If someone responds to any of your posts. Thank them. Always repeat their first name in your response.

You can use your personal and business profile pages to have conversations with your customers.

Think about reposting your customers' pictures wearing your jewelry.

Or, create a branded hashtag (or two or three) and always list this at the bottom of all your posts. Think of something like: #warrengems, or, #jewelrybywarren, or, #warrendesigns.

You want to post at least one thing every day. Most likely this is physically impossible timewise to do this for every social media site. So, create a presence on as many social media sites as possible. Then concentrate on two of them with your daily posts.

Keep your ads short, and the messages well targeted to your intended audience.

If paying for ads, the social media site should also have some statistical information you

can access to gauge how well your ads are doing.

Affiliate Marketing

Here you invite another party – referred to as third party – to drive sales for your business. This might be an influencer, a thought leader, a celebrity, another shop which sells accessories or clothing. You rely partly on the reputation and networking of some other business to advertise and advocate for your jewelry.

You might work out a co-marketing arrangement and split costs. You might pay them a commission or a percent of the sale.

Radio and Web Broadcast Streaming

Radio has always been an effective channel for advertising jewelry. It is a lot less expensive than TV, and has a loyal audience. It is very targeted at a local audience. Today, however, you might use the internet to place ads similar to the ones you might have used for radio.

Webcasts offer you an on-demand and more targeted connection to your intended audience. They allow you to reach a broader and more internet-savvy audience.

Influencer Marketing

Rely on one of the many influencers in fashion and jewelry to promote your stuff. Most established influencers have media kits to share with you so you can get an idea of the kinds of things they promote and who their target audience is.

[Review the chapter on 49. INFLUENCERS for more details.]

Or, make yourself into an ***influencer***. Create an online audience on one or more social media sites which follows you and pays attention to your recommendations. The key to becoming an influencer is to establish a clear brand identify for yourself. Create a branded hashtag. Encourage your customers to use your hashtag when sharing images, videos and advice from your own feed.

Email Marketing

Email marketing is one of the most effective marketing methods in existence. It keeps your business in front of your customers on a regular basis.

The key is to grow your email list. So, you need to make your emails special in some way. Your emails might include what is called *gated content*. They might include special discounts. They might present advanced notice for sales or other special events. They might include content that your customers may want to save, such as explanations about what certain gemstones mean or how to clean sterling silver jewelry. You might give first access to a new product.

Be sure you have secured permissions to send emails to them from each contact on your email list. You can create simple forms that can be posted online on your website or blog, and simple print forms to hand out to people.

Emails are effective, but you do not want to overdo them. People get annoyed if they get too many emails in their box.

I suggest using an email service like MAILCHIMP. Not only do they make creating and sending emails easier, but they offer some tracking and analytic services, as well.

Your Own Website

Build a site that supports your business. Be sure it is optimized for search engine indexing. Decide whether your website serves primarily as a billboard – a place to find you. Or decide whether you want to include a shopping cart system and make your website an e-commerce site for your jewelry.

You can have your own domain name, or be part of a larger web-hosting company which may or may not allow you to use your own domain name.

Having your own website gives you credibility. It allows people to more easily find you and contact you. It gives you another channel for selling your jewelry.

Be sure to add an analytics package to your site. Some will be available for free. You always want to build in evaluative components with whatever you do.

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70.

SELLING:

Cold Calling And Making The Pitch



Guiding Questions?

1. What is the best way to approach a venue for purposes of carrying your jewelry for resale?
2. What information is necessary when making the Pitch?

Keywords:

venue
the pitch

cold calling
email / phone
shoehorn strategy
direct strategy

push vs. pull
opportunity cost

REACHING OUT TO STORES AND GALLERIES

Although some jewelry designers may feel uneasy mixing art with business, for most it is a necessity. Yet, you do not have to sacrifice *wonder* for *reality*. Most designers sell their pieces, so recognizing the things about coordinating art with business become very important.

Typically, small stores and boutiques, websites and online sales platforms, and galleries will sell your jewelry, either outright, or on consignment. Their goal is to turn a profit, and they are at greater risk than the artist. That means their interests, in most cases, take precedence over those of the artist. It is the venue that displays, promotes, prices, trains employees to talk about your jewelry to customers, and keeps the pieces clean. Available selling-space is always limited. When your jewelry takes up space in these venues, it is an *opportunity cost* to the business – they lose the opportunity to carry someone else’s work which might be more appropriate to the setting, or might sell better.

There are different types of stores, websites and galleries. Each satisfies a different market niche for jewelry. Each has a different level of understanding about what jewelry really is, and all the choices the jewelry designer has made to design and create each piece.

When approaching stores or galleries to display and sell your pieces, it is critical that the artist understands how these venues function, who their audiences are, and what the attendant risks to them are, should they decide to exhibit and/or sell your pieces.

The first step is to be your authentic, passionate self. Your jewelry will not speak for itself. So, in spite of any feelings of vulnerability you might have when approaching stores and galleries, you will need to talk about yourself and your jewelry. You do not want to feel “salesy”

when speaking with business or gallery owners and representatives. You do not want to feel pushy. Or desperate. But you want them to get to *Yes*.

You speak to them on their terms. They want to know the real you. What excites you. The history behind the design choices you make. Your understanding of yourself as an artist, and your understanding of your virtual client, her desires, wants and motivations. How do you connect to your audience through your jewelry?

- *Who are your best customers likely to be?*
- *How would you describe them: demographics, shopping behaviors, wants and desires?*
- *Why are they attracted to your work?*
- *How and where do they find out about you and your work?*
- *What is your Getting Started story?*
- *How would you go about persuading someone to buy a piece of jewelry you made – what's in it for them?*
- *How does it connect with them emotionally? How would it make their lives better?*

Do some research ahead of time. The internet has a wealth of information you can pull up. Before you meet with them, find out the owner's name. Identify all contact information (phone, email, address). Get an understanding of the types of jewelry artists and their materials they carry in their venues. These venues are always on the lookout for new talent. They are most likely to say *Yes* to a jewelry designer whose style and materials fit in, but do not duplicate, what they already are showing.

Also, research who their customer base is. They are most likely to say *Yes* to a jewelry designer whose audience either mirrors their existing customer base, or incrementally adds to and expands it at the margin. They most likely will not want to spend resources (and thus add risk) by going after a completely new and different customer base.

Push vs. Pull. One more thing. You can either *push* your way in, or use *pull* to get in. For most of us, particularly when we are getting started, have only *push* at our disposal. We might cold call, or set up a formal interview, or initiate a conversation with someone at a gallery opening or art show.

But *pull* always works better. Here we leverage something or someone to get to the right place or person at the right time. An established designer or academic might set up an appointment for you with one of their contacts, for example. You might be wearing one of your pieces and someone comes up to admire it. You might work out an arrangement with an influencer online.

Some Options

You can send a letter or email, make a phone call, or cold call. If feasible, cold calling will often work best for you. It is difficult to get turned away if you appear in person.

With cold calling, you have two basic strategies: (a) Shoehorn, or (b) Direct.

With a *shoehorn strategy*, you begin to ease yourself into the world and universe of a particular store or gallery. You visit as a customer and ask questions. You contact and talk with other artists represented in the store. You participate in open houses and other events. You add your name to the emailing list. You begin to have more and longer conversations with the owner. Gradually you introduce the idea of having your jewelry represented in their venue. Always wear one or more pieces of your jewelry.

With a *direct approach*, you come into the store unannounced. Hopefully the owner is there then; otherwise, ask the staff when the best time to return is. Always wear one or more pieces of your jewelry. Be prepared with about 20 pieces, nicely organized and displayed in trays, that, if you are making headway, you can bring into the venue with you. It is also OK, if you have the inventory, to have even more pieces in your car that you can bring in, if it seems the owner is interested in purchasing some things.

If sending a letter, keep it short and to the point. Write about,

- Who you are
- Your style and design sense
- Why you think your jewelry would be a good fit for *their* customer base
- The materials and techniques you typically use
- Your previous experience selling your pieces
- Some sheets showing inventory, description, pricing
- End with a phrase like, “I’d like to get together with you to show my work in person. I will call you to set up an appointment, if interested.”
- Add links to your website of places which show your jewelry.

Making Your Pitch

Your Pitch, whether cold calling or emailing or phoning, will consist of the following parts:

1. Introducing yourself and your credibility as a jewelry designer
2. Clearly identifying the fit between your design work and their customer base
3. Showing your pieces and suggested pricing

You want to be sure to show your passion and enthusiasm for how you design and what you design. What is it that you love about making the piece? What is it that you love about wearing the piece?

You want to sound authentic, not sales'y.

You want to keep your conversation and presentation short and to the point.

You want to clearly make the connection between your pieces and why they will sell in this particular venue.

You want to clearly present your competitive advantages. Why taking a risk on you would be a better bet than taking a risk on one of your competitors.

Let the owner speak and ask you questions.

Be prepared to ask questions of the owner. Do they have different buying seasons? How do they view and understand their customers' shopping behaviors? Administratively, how would they handle carrying your jewelry – payment for and payment from, time frame, turn-over suggestion?


Have something where the owner can view several of your pieces. These may be pieces you brought with you. They may be pieces you have photographed and included in a look-book or spec sheets.

Remember that the venue will want to at least double the prices of your pieces.

71.

SELLING:

Working with Sales Reps, Agencies, and Show Rooms

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What advantages are there for working with sales reps, agencies and show rooms?2. How do you find good sales reps, agencies and show rooms to work with?
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<p>Keywords: sales rep agency commission</p>	<p>show room gift mart apparel mart merchandise mart</p>	<p>rep-ready</p>
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[Also see the chapter on 77. RELYING ON OTHERS TO SELL YOUR JEWELRY.]

WORKING WITH SALES REPS, AGENCIES AND SHOWROOMS

Sometimes, you get other people to represent you and sell your jewelry. This might be very simple and not terribly formal such as getting a friend or relative or someone local to sell your jewelry locally and paying them a commission (typically between 15-20%).

It might be more formal in getting a sales representative to sell your work. A sales rep will usually cover a larger regional or even national market. The sales rep will also work on commission (again between 15-20%). The sales rep takes your jewelry and shows it to stores with which they have relationships.

An agency might have a staff of sales reps and a set of agreements with various stores (usually franchises or department stores) and will make arrangements to showcase your jewelry at these venues. An agency might have a centralized, dedicated showroom where your jewelry is on permanent display and various retailers can come see, view and order. The showroom may relate to a large regional area. It might be national. In larger cities, they may have a space in a wholesale merchandise and/or apparel mart. In smaller cities, they may have their own office space. The agency will collect a commission (between 10% and 25%). They may share the cost or expect you to pay for some display space and fixtures. They may charge a monthly agency representation fee, which could range from \$500-1,000/month.

Often these days sales reps, agencies and show rooms will not only have a physical

presence, but also an online one as well. Ask them if they do, and whether your jewelry will be posted online. There may or may not be additional fees or requirements here.

Relying on others to sell your jewelry allows you to expand your business. You might feel uncomfortable in the sales-role. Or you might want to grow your business beyond what you currently are managing. In any case, there are some significant extra costs to you, and you have to determine if you can still price your pieces with this in mind.

Finding Sales Reps, Agencies, and Show Rooms

Sometimes you find them, and sometimes they find you.

Sometimes you find someone who puts a lot of energy in representing you; other times, you might end up with a dud.

You want to find someone or some operation which

- Knows jewelry
- Is experienced representing jewelry
- Already represents jewelry which is compatible and complementary with your own brand, but does not too closely mirror your brand
- Can give you references to check out; ask them how they like working with the sales rep or agency
- Sounds excited about your work as you show it to them

To find a sales rep, agency or showroom,

- Ask stores which carry jewelry you like who the sales rep is for that line
- Visit wholesale showrooms in the large cities like New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, San Francisco and Los Angeles.
NOTE: Often not open to the general public, so contact them and see what kinds of credentials you will need to show in order to gain admittance.
- Check out classified ads for available sales reps in jewelry and gift trade journals such as Giftware News, Metalsmith Magazine, Niche, Ornament, CraftsReport and the like
- Place a classified ad seeking a sales rep in one of the magazines listed in the previous bullet point
- Check out LinkedIn and Instagram for sales reps
- Social media sites typically have groups representing jewelry entrepreneurs; post there and ask for recommendations
- Check online directories such as www.greatrep.com, www.findfashionrep.com, www.rephunter.net

- Attend trade shows and discuss representation with sales reps showing jewelry complementary to yours
- Show at a trade show, hopefully attracting sales reps and agencies to find you
- If you know any sales reps that you like, but who are unable to show your jewelry, ask them for recommendations

Once you identify sales reps or showrooms you feel might be a good fit, set up an appointment, talk with them at length, and show them a complete line, perhaps 30 pieces.

Once You Have Found Someone To Work With

You need to ask some questions before setting up an agreement with a sales rep, agency or showroom.

These questions would include,

- What are your specialties? If jewelry, what types / materials/ target audience? If not jewelry, then how does jewelry fit in?
- How long have you been doing this?
- Are you accepting new jewelry lines?
- What are the major price points you work with?
- What jewelry lines do you currently represent?
- Where do you show your product lines? Territories, types of stores, online, trade shows
- How many accounts do you work with?
- How often do you visit or contact each account?
- What is your commission? Other fees?
- What volume of sales are you looking for and that would make our relationship worthwhile?
- What volume of business do I have to be prepared for?
- What samples and marketing materials would you need from me?
- Can you provide references?

You will want to formalize an agreement. This will define exclusivity, commissions, other fees, expense reimbursements, expectations from both of you, payment schedules, how disagreements are to be handled, any time frames to be set. The agreement will detail the description of services to be provided and any performance expectations for providing them.

They will list the samples and marketing and display materials you will provide. They will identify rules for termination and return of samples, marketing, display materials. They will detail all confidentiality agreements.

Working With Sales Reps, Agencies, and Show Rooms

Sales reps and agencies will want to know why customers will want to buy your jewelry. How does your jewelry meet the customers' needs at the moment? Will this hold over into the future?

You will want to provide information and training so that the sales reps will be able to speak about your jewelry in your absence. They will want to know about inspirations, materials, techniques, and the main selling points.

Be prepared to provide a lot of free samples and marketing materials. You will need to prepare display boards that the sales reps can take with them. The boards will have each piece of jewelry available for sale, as well as labeling the names, SKU #s, and wholesale prices. If you have a very large line, you might provide boards for your newer pieces, and rely on a catalog or spec sheets to show your full line.

You will want to clearly establish that you will be able to keep them supplied with everything they need to do a great job of selling your work for you.

You want to hear how the sales rep will talk about your jewelry. Ask them to compare it to the other lines they represent. Ask them how your line fits in, but is different enough, from the other lines, so that your jewelry will sell, not replace or be replaced by any other existing line. Ask them what kinds of information they might provide or what questions they might ask a customer in order to sell your pieces.

After your arrangement is agreed-upon, you will want to maintain consistent and regular communication. You want to keep up with their experiences and the feedback they are getting.

Other Advice

Stores, where the sales rep has a relationship and has sold them your jewelry, may approach you directly for subsequent orders. These are still clients of the sales rep. That sales rep will still qualify to receive commissions on those sales. You never want to cut the sales rep out of the transaction.

It is a good idea to try wholesaling on your own to get a good feel for it, before contacting a sales rep or agency. Sales reps and agencies will also feel more comfortable with you when you have some experience with wholesaling.

You are more likely to find someone to work with if you have an established, well designed presence online, such as your own website with shopping cart or on Etsy. This is one

way to demonstrate that your product line is *rep-ready*.

Hire slow, fire fast. If it's not working, cut the cord quickly.

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72.

SELLING:

Selling At Trade Shows



Guiding Questions?

1. What is a trade show?
2. How can I expand my business at a trade show?

Keywords: <i>trade shows</i> <i>wholesale</i>	<i>show room</i> <i>gift mart</i> <i>apparel mart</i> <i>merchandise</i> <i>mart</i>	<i>cash and carry</i> <i>take orders</i> <i>delivery</i> <i>timeframe</i> <i>terms / Net 30</i> <i>COD</i> <i>references</i> <i>credit sheet</i>
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[Also see the chapter on 58. SELLING AT ART AND CRAFT SHOWS for more details about setting up, marketing and promotion, conduct during the show, accepting money and security, and more.]

SELLING AT TRADE SHOWS

A trade show is where multiple vendors set up to sell their wares wholesale to other companies for resale. Sometimes the trade show is jewelry only; other times, it is a variety show with lots of different kinds of merchandise.

As a jewelry designer looking to build up a clientele and sell wholesale, you would rent a booth space, put your pieces on display, and either take orders or sell cash-and-carry. When taking orders, you decide on the delivery timeframe. Sometimes it will be for immediate delivery; other times, for some future date.

You will also have to decide whether you will want to get paid on delivery of the merchandise, or whether you will extend terms. Terms are usually net 30, sometimes net 15. That means you would expect payment in 30 days (or 15 days). Before you extend terms to a company, you will want to get some reassurance that they can pay. Usually, you would ask for a credit sheet which gives information about their company and lists other companies they

already have terms with.

[See chapter on 27. GETTING TERMS for details about credit sheets.]

Some companies will want some information at the show, and then contact you after the show to make purchases. Be prepared to optimize this kind of interaction.

Trade shows require a big commitment. The rental can be very expensive. Creating attractive displays can be expensive. I know many jewelry designers who share booths with one or two other designers in order to spread out the costs.

Finding Trade Shows

There are 100s of trade shows every year. A Google search will help you find them, and find reviews about them. If possible, plan to visit trade shows, walk the show, and evaluate whether your jewelry would be a good fit.

Major trade shows are held throughout the year at all the merchandise and apparel marts in the larger cities. There are various specialty hand-crafted, craft, and jewelry shows to check out. These often are held in motel/hotel meeting rooms or convention centers.

As you narrow down your possibilities, ideally, try to visit each one. Evaluate the merchandise there and your fit. Talk to the various vendors and ask how well the show does for them.

Before the show, let all your current customers know that you will be there.

At the show, be sure potential customers have information from you so they can find you again – both at the show, and after the show.

Trade show agreements can be elaborate and confusing. Talk to the management to clarify anything that is not clear or is confusing. Be sure to make note of every deadline. Be very clear on when you can enter the show area and set up your booth.

Your merchandising display and great lighting will be critical for success. If you have walls, use them strategically. Hanging large images of people wearing your jewelry is a great idea. Good signage and labeling is critical.

Be sure you check out availability of electrical and WiFi. You may be able to rent tables and lights.

If you are traveling to a show, you may have to ship your merchandise and displays there. Designate that your items be shipped directly to the venue site and be placed in your booth area.

It is a good idea to follow-up (email is good) with everyone you have met at the show. Don't depend on them to remember you.

FOOTNOTES

Kramer, Robin. Top Tips For Having Maximum Sales At Jewelry Trade Shows, 9/3/2013.


As referenced in:

<https://www.flourishthriveacademy.com/top-tips-for-having-maximum-sales-at-jewelry-trade-shows/>

73.

SELLING:

Teaching Classes and Selling Patterns and Kits

	<p><i>Guiding Questions?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. How do I go about teaching classes?</i><i>2. What do I need to do to sell my pattern instructions and kits?</i>
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<p><i>Keywords:</i> <i>teaching kits patterns / instructions</i></p>	<p><i>pretest</i></p>	
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TEACHING CLASSES and SELLING PATTERNS and KITS

If you have been beading and making jewelry for awhile, you might consider either teaching classes and/or selling patterns and kits.

You might start small by teaching family and friends, or developing instructions and testing them out with a small group.

There are many opportunities to teach or sell patterns and kits. These include at stores, at traveling bead and gem shows, at bead and jewelry making societies, at schools, at community organizations, online.

You basically are creating a business. You want some promotional materials. You want to be able to post your schedule in print and online. You may want a logo. You may want to set up a shopping cart connected to a website online. Or post on Etsy.

Market your classes, instructions and kits on all the social media sites.


Keep good communication with current, past and prospective students.

Great photos are key, as are short, catchy project names, descriptions and clever tag lines.

Some people learn from oral instruction, some from text, others from figures and diagrams. Anticipate all of these. Be sure to pretest all your instructions.

74.

SELLING:
Other Selling Venues

	<p>Guiding Questions? 1. What other options are there for selling my jewelry?</p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>fundraiser</i> <i>niche marketing</i> <i>work / friends / family</i></p>	<p><i>wear it – sell it</i> <i>pick box</i></p>	<p><i>repairs</i></p>
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Fundraisers

Nonprofit organizations are always doing fundraisers. Jewelry is a very popular item at these fundraisers.

You can approach a nonprofit and suggest some jewelry making and sales ideas. This is formally called *niche marketing*. Here you channel all your design and marketing efforts at one very narrow market segment.

You make an agreement to give up a certain percentage of the sales. As long as you cover your costs and give yourself some profit, this can be as low as 10-15% or as high as 90%. 40-50% is a good goal.

Use the opportunity to market your overall business. At the least, give away one of your business cards with each sale. If you have an online presence, be sure the link to your site is displayed on the business card.

One student of mine visited the Atlanta Merchandise and Apparel Marts. She went showroom to showroom looking for items that would be appropriate for and sell well at fundraisers for Breast Cancer Awareness. Obviously the color pink and the right color pink was desirable.

She spent time with the product reps to gather information about (1) best price and minimum quantities, (2) order lead time, (3) payment terms – after a fundraiser was best, (4) spec sheets for each item, (5) how to handle/return unsold merchandise. She sat down and computed what amount per item she wanted to recoup, including a 15% commission for herself. She met with statewide breast cancer awareness organizations in several states. She

presented the options, the costs to the organization, and the likely profits. They were impressed. And also happy that they could bring in so much saleable merchandise and only have to deal with one sales person.

Selling At Work, To Friends And Family

Many jewelry makers, especially when they get started, sell to their co-workers, friends and family.

Be sure that you get permission from your boss, if this might be a problem.

You might take the time to do a mini-trunk show during the lunch hour.

If any of your work-mates, friends or family ask for an extra discount, learn to say NO! They most likely are already getting a discount, if they had to buy the same piece in a store.

Wear It – Sell It

Wear your jewelry all the time. So many of my customers and students have told me stories of people coming up to them at a store or at the supermarket and asking if they can buy the pieces they are wearing.

Never miss an opportunity.

Be prepared to know what price you might settle for.

Repairs

Take in repairs. People are always looking for someone to repair their costume and bridge jewelry or do hand-knotting. Established jewelry stores do not often do these kinds of repairs.

There are many advantages here:

- You get to see how other designers construct their pieces
- You get challenge after challenge in problem-solving, thus opportunities to expand your Designer Tool Box
- You build up a great customer base and great word of mouth
- You get great extra money, and repair work is not as seasonal as regular jewelry sales are

When you price your repairs services and anticipate the time any repair will take, you should assume you'll have to do each piece twice, before it is repaired to your satisfaction. Your first stab at repair will be OK, but a second try will be perfect. You tend to always miss

something or see something you could have done differently on that first try.

You might also sell your jewelry repairs services to stores, where they pay you as an independent contractor.

Similar to repairs is pearl knotting. Jewelry stores can charge \$4.00-6.00/inch for pearl knotting. You can easily charge \$3.00-5.00/inch to those stores, and still make lots of money.

Pick Box

You might find retailers (or wholesalers) whose businesses are far from where you live, and offer to send them a pick box. Here you send them a lot of pieces to look at. They can pick and choose what they want, pay you for those, and return the rest to you.

If they decide to purchase none of the pieces, you are merely out the cost of shipping.

Strategically Give Away Samples

One of my students gave bracelets, at least once a year, to all the bank tellers at several local banks. Her goal: bank customers would ask the tellers where they got their bracelets, and they would direct their customers to her. Worked like a charm!

Co-Market

There are sellers of other products you can coordinate sales with. One of my students was enamored with a particular fantasy fiction writer. The writer traveled to book stores around the country and signed copies of newly released books she authored. My student approached her and suggested that she could design small jewelry collections which matched the book cover art of her books. In this way, the author would also have jewelry available for sale at her book signings. A very successful partnership was formed.


Another student of mine approached wedding planners. She created lines of custom bridal jewelry strongly associated with various wedding party themes. She included, not only the basic necklaces, bracelets and earrings, but also jeweled gloves, tiaras, veils, shoulder and upper arm jewelry, which made her collections extra special and noteworthy. She demonstrated how wedding planners could profitably increase their offerings. With three successful events under her belt, creating future co-marketing relationships became very easy.

[Also see the earlier chapter on 30. CROWD FUNDING.]

75.

SELLING:

About Contracts and Agreements

	<p><i>Guiding Questions?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. What are contracts and agreements?</i><i>2. When negotiating them, what kinds of things do I need to account for?</i><i>3. How do I protect myself from contract or agreement violations?</i>
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<p><i>Keywords:</i> <i>contracts</i> <i>agreements</i></p>	<p><i>scope of services</i> <i>warranties</i> <i>deadlines</i> <i>deliverables</i> <i>mutual obligations</i></p>	<p><i>delinquency</i> <i>disputes</i> <i>jurisdiction</i> <i>termination</i> <i>enforceable</i></p>
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Contracts and Agreements

As a business person, you will be negotiating and signing contracts and agreements. The purpose of these is to define, in advance, how two parties will handle situations that may or may not arise in the course of doing business. If there is a breach of the contract, the other party may sue. Contracts and agreements, whether formal or informal, are legally enforceable.

You might be involved with,

- Consignment sales
- Craft or Trade shows
- Rental agreements and insurance agreements
- Certificates of authenticity
- Contests and competitions
- Production agreement
- Having your pieces duplicated, cast, or otherwise manufactured by someone else
- Purchase orders for supplies, materials, tools
- Creating marketing and promotion materials, signage

There are a few important things you need to agree on:

1. How you list your/their name, your/their business name, and responsible parties
2. What you will do for them and what they will do for you (scope of services and mutual obligations)
3. Compensation, and how and when and under what circumstances
4. What happens if one party is delinquent in payment or in delivering services, and how to define delinquency
5. What are the deliverables
6. Who owns what when; are there any time limits or geographical limits or other limits to be imposed on who owns what when
7. Is there to be a warranty of any kind, and what are the terms and conditions
8. What happens if either party terminates the contract early
9. How disputes will be handled, and under what jurisdiction

I suggest always having a lawyer sign off on any written contract. You might generate a draft based on online research and samples. This might save you some money in lawyer's fees. But a lawyer will know best about the correct language and the legal system in the place you do business.

Courts prefer you to be very specific. For example, you might want a level of exclusivity. If your contract reads merely "exclusive," the court will not honor that clause. You would need to define and clearly spell out in writing *exclusive within what geographical and time-frame boundaries*.

While doing business, you might find yourself involved in both formal (written) and informal (oral) contractual relationships. When informal, such as many agreements to sell your pieces on consignment, create a thorough journal entry documenting everything said. Send a letter or email to the other party listing all your agreed-upon points and conditions. Get a certified receipt or an emailed response of agreement. Keep all this informal documentation together in one place.

When I sell a custom piece of jewelry, I give the buy a certificate of authenticity. In this certificate, I indicate that I am the artist who created the piece. I give a 6-month warranty. If something breaks or is defective, I will incur the costs to fix this within a 6-month period after they take possession of the piece. Afterwards, they would incur any costs.

[See chapter 87. CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY.]

[Also see the earlier chapter on 27. GETTING TERMS.]

FOOTNOTES

Run Your Business, Don't Let Your Business Run You.


As referenced in:

<http://lesseverything.com/business-advice/small-business-contracts/>

76.

SELLING:

Overcoming Setbacks and Fears of Rejection

	<p>Guiding Questions? <i>1. How do I overcome setbacks and fears of rejection?</i></p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>rejection doubt / self-doubt</i></p>	<p><i>No!</i> <i>paralyzing motivating</i></p>	<p><i>setbacks designer tool box questioning metacognitive</i></p>
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Overcoming Setbacks and Fears of Rejection

When trying to sell your jewelry, there will always be rejections. Someone doesn't want to buy your piece. A customer complains about a repair or that something doesn't fit right. Some business does not want to carry your line of jewelry. Your application to an art show gets turned down.

It is your choice whether living with *No!* becomes paralyzing or motivating. Hopefully the latter.

When you get a *No!*, your first step is to figure out why.

The next step is to learn from your assessment.

And last, incorporate what you learned into how to approach the next situation.

Concurrently, keep practicing your sales pitches so that you become comfortable making them.

Doubt and Self-Doubt

For the novice, all that excitement at the beginning, when thinking about designing things, sometimes collides with a wall of developing self-doubt. *It's not easy to quiet a doubt.*

The designer organizes their life around an inspiration. There is some fuzziness here. That inspiration has some elements of ideas, but not necessarily crystal-clear ones. That

inspiration has some elements of emotions — it makes you feel something — but not necessarily something you can put into words or images or fully explain. You then need to translate this fuzzy inspiration into materials, into techniques, into color, into arrangements, into a coherent whole.

You start to create something, but realize you don't know how to do it. But you want to do it, and do it now. However, to pick up the needed skills, you realize you can't learn things all at once. You can't do everything you want to do all at once. That initial excitement often hits a wall. Things take time to learn. There are a lot of trial and error moments, with a lot of errors. Pieces break. Projects don't gel. Combining colors and other design elements feels very awkward. Silhouettes or structural layouts are confusing. You might get the right shape for your piece, but it is difficult to get the right movement, drape and flow, without compromising that shape. Or you might get the right placement of objects, but find it difficult to get everything into the frame, without compromising the placements. Things take time to do.

To add to this stress and strain, you need to show your designs off. You might want someone to like it. To want it. To need it. To buy it. To wear or use it. To wear or use it more than once. To wear or use it often. To exhibit it. To collect it. To publicize it. And how will all these other people recognize your creative spark, and your abilities to translate that spark into a wonderful, beautiful, functional design, appropriate for the wearer or user and appropriate for the situation? Things need to be shared.

Frequently, because of all this, the designer experiences some sense of doubt and self-doubt. Some paralysis. Can't get started. Can't finish something. Wondering why they became a designer in the first place.

Doubt holds you back from seizing your opportunities.

It makes getting started or finishing things harder than they need to be.

It adds uncertainty.

It makes you question yourself.

It blocks your excitement, perhaps diminishing it.

While sometimes doubt and self-doubt can be useful in forcing you to think about and question your choices, it mostly holds you back.

Having doubt and self-doubt is common among all artistic types. What becomes important is how to manage, channel and overcome it, so that doubts do not get in the way of your creative process and disciplinary development.

8 MAJOR WAYS DESIGNERS FALL INTO SELF-DOUBT

There are 8 major ways in which designers get caught beginning to fall into that abyss we call self-doubt:

1. *What If I'm Not Creative Enough or Original Enough or Cannot Learn or Master or Don't Know a Particular Technique?*
2. *What If No One Likes What I Make?*
3. *What If No One Takes Me Seriously As An Artist And Designer?*
4. *I Overthink Things and Am A Bit of a Perfectionist.*
5. *How Can I Stay Inspired?*
6. *Won't People Steal My Work?*
7. *Being Over Confident or Under Confident*
8. *Role Confusion*

1. *What If I'm Not Creative Enough or Original Enough or Cannot Learn or Master or Don't Know a Particular Technique?*

Everyone has some creativity baked into their being. It is a matter of developing your way of thinking and doing so that you can apply it. This takes time.

So does originality. Originality is not an all-or-nothing proposition. Originality grows in stages. At first, you'll try different ways of personalizing projects. There are always things you can do to bring some aspects of originality to your pieces. This might be the choice of colors, or using a special component or object, or rearranging some elements in your composition. Again, as with creativity, the ability to be more and more original will evolve over time. It is helpful to think of originality, not necessarily as coming up with something completely new, but rather as *differentiation* — how you differentiate yourself from other designers.

For almost everyone, you don't begin your design career at the height of your levels of creativity and originality. Yes, if you look around you, other people are more creative and original than you or have more skills than you. Don't let these observations be a barrier to your own development as a designer. You get there through persistence and hard work. You handle your inner critic. You may not be there, yet — the key word here is *yet*. But you will be.

2. *What If No One Likes What I Make?*

We all have fears about how our creativity and originality are going to be evaluated and judged. We project our self-doubts to the doubts we think we see and feel from others. What if no one wants to wear my pieces, or buy my works, or use my projects?

We can't let these outsider reactions dictate our lives and creative selves. A key part of

successful design is learning how to introduce what we do publicly. At the least, it is the core nature of the things we create that they are to be worn on the body. Design is a very public thing.

Turn negative comments into positive ideas, motivators, insights, explorations. Allow yourself some give and take, some needs to step back awhile, some needs to tweak. Design is an iterative process. It in no way is linear. Your outcomes and their success are more evolutionary, than guaranteed.

Distressing about what others may think of your work can be very damaging to your self-esteem. It can amplify your worries. Don't go there.

Don't become your worst critic.

3. What If No One Takes Me Seriously As An Artist And Designer?

Design is an occupation in search of a profession. You will find that a lot of people won't recognize your passion and commitment. They may think anyone can design. They may think of design as a craft or some subset of art, not as something unique and important in and of itself. They may wonder how you can make a living at this.

The bottom line: if you don't take yourself seriously as a designer, no one else will.

People will take you seriously as they see all the steps you are taking to master your craft and develop yourself as a professional.

4. I Over Think Things And Am A Bit Of A Perfectionist

Some designers let a sense that their work is not as good as imagined get in the way. They never finish anything. They let doubt eat away at them.

Perfectionism is the enemy of the good. It's great to be meticulous, but emotionally, we get wrecked when anything goes astray, or any little thing is missing, or you don't have that exact color or part you originally wanted.

Go ahead and plan. Planning is good. It's insightful. It can be strategic. But also be sure to be adaptable and realistic. Each piece is a stepping stone to something that will come next.

The better designer develops a *Designer's Toolbox* — a collection of fix-it strategies to deal with the unfamiliar or the problematic.

Overthinking can be very detrimental. You can't keep changing your mind, trying out every option, thinking that somewhere, someplace there exists a better option. Make a choice and get on with it. You can tweak things later.

Yes, attention to detail is important. But so is the value of your time. You do not want to waste too much time on trivial details.

Be aware when you begin over-analyzing things. Stop, take a breath, make a decision, and

move on.

5. How Can I Stay Inspired?

Designing something takes time, sometimes a long time. That initial inspirational spark might feel like it's a dying ember.

Don't let that happen.

Translate that inspiration into images, colors, words, sample designs, and surround your work space with these.

Talk about your inspiration in detail with family and friends.

6. Won't People Steal My Work and Ideas?

Many designers fear that if they show their work publicly, people will steal their work and ideas. So they stop designing.

Yet design is a very communicative process which requires introducing your work publicly. If you are not doing this, then you are creating simple sculptures or paintings, not designed work.

Yes, other people may copy your work and co-opt your ideas. See this source of doubt as an excuse. It is a self-imposed, but unnecessary, barrier we might impose to prevent us from experiencing that excitement as a designer. Other people will never be able to copy your design prowess — how you translate inspiration into a finished piece. That is unique and special to you, and why the general public responds positively to you and your work.

7. Over Confidence can blind you to the things you need to be doing and learning, and Under Confidence can hinder your development as a designer.

Too often, we allow *under confidence* to deter us from the design tasks at hand. We always question our lack of ability and technical prowess for accomplishing the necessary tasks at hand. It is important, however, to believe in yourself. To believe that you can work things out when confronted with unfamiliar or problematic situations. It is important to develop your skills for thinking like a designer. Fluency. Flexibility. Originality. There is a vocabulary to learn. Techniques to learn. Strategies to learn. These develop over time with practice and experience. You need to believe in your abilities to develop as a designer over time.

With *over confidence* comes a naivete. You close off the wisdom to listen to what others have to say or offer. You stunt your development as a designer. You overlook important factors about materials and techniques to the detriment of your final designs and products. You close yourself off to doubt and self-doubt, which is unfortunate. Doubt and self-doubt are tools for asking questions and questioning things. These help you grow and develop as an

artist and designer. These influence your ability to make good, professional choices in your career.

8. Role Confusion

Designers play many roles and wear different hats. Each has its own set of opportunities, requirements, and pressures that the designer must cope with. It's a *balancing act* extraordinary.

First, people who design often wear different hats: Artist and Designer, Manufacturer, Architect and Engineer, Distributor, Retailer, Accountant, Exhibitor, Marketer and Promoter.

Second, people who design have different needs: Artistic Excellence, Recognition, Monetary Gain, or Financial Stability.

Third, the designer needs to please and satisfy themselves, as well as other various clients.

Fourth, the designer constructs things which need to function in different settings: Situational, Cultural, Sociological, Psychological.

Last, the designer must negotiate a betwixt and between situation — a rite of passage — as they relinquish control over the piece or project and its underlying inspirations to the user (and the user's various audiences), who have their own needs, desires and expectations.

This gets confusing. It affects how you pick materials and supplies. Which techniques you use. What marketing strategies you employ. How you value and price things. And the list goes on.

It is important to be aware (*metacognitive*) of what role(s) you play, what goals you have, what clients desires you need to satisfy, in what contexts your work will function, when, and why. Given these things, it is important to understand the types of choices you need to make, when constructing an object or a project. It is critical to understand the tradeoffs you will invariably end up making, and their consequences for the aesthetic, emotional and functional success of your designs.

Some Advice

While doubt and self-doubt can hinder our development as designers, some degree of these may be helpful, as well.

To develop yourself as a designer, and to continue to grow and expand in your profession, you must have a balanced amount of both doubt and self-doubt. Uncertainty leads to questioning. A search for knowledge. Some acceptance of trial and error and experimentation. A yearning for more reliable information and feedback.

Design uses a great deal of emotion as a Way of Knowing. Emotions cloud or distort how we perceive things. They may lead to more doubt and worry and lack of confidence. But they also enhance our excitement when translating inspirations into designs.

- *Don't let your inner doubts spin out of control. Be aware and suppress them.*
- *Be real with yourself and your abilities.*
- *Keep a journal. Detail what your doubts are and the things you are doing to overcome them.*
- *Create a developmental plan for yourself. Identify the knowledge, skills and understandings you want to develop and grow into.*
- *Remember what happened in the past the last time doubt got in your way. Remember what you did to overcome this doubt. Remember that probably nothing negative actually happened.*
- *Talk to people. These can be friends, relatives and colleagues. Don't keep doubts unto yourself. Surround yourself with other creatives.*
- *Don't compare yourself to others. This is a trap. Self-reflect and self-evaluate you on your own terms.*
- *Worrying about what others think? The truth is that people don't really care that much about what you do or not do.*
- *Don't beat yourself up.*
- *Get re-inspired. This might mean surrounding yourself with images and photos of things. It might mean a walk in nature. It might be letting someone else's excitement flow over to you.*
- *Take breaks.*
- *See setbacks as temporary.*
- *Celebrate small steps.*
- *Keep developing your skills.*
- *Set goals for yourself.*

FOOTNOTES

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77.

SELLING:

Relying On Other People To Sell Your Jewelry

	<p>Guiding Questions? 1. How do you best manage situations where you rely on other people to sell your jewelry?</p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>commission consignment</i></p>	<p><i>sales rep showroom</i></p>	<p><i>modelling</i></p>
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At The Trunk Show

The women were so excited about the jewelry. Trying it on. Adjusting it to see if they could wear it a different way. Changing up the silhouettes. Pretending they were wearing different outfits to visualize what the pieces would look like. It was a very versatile line of jewelry, and all the women noticed that very quickly. They could wear necklaces as bracelets. Combine bracelets into necklaces. Take one bracelet, add it to a necklace, and create a longer piece. They could purchase different pendant drops, all as add-ons as they wished or none at all. And the drops easily converted into earrings. Imagine that! And the awe and glee and elation and animation — yes, these women were more than happy to have found this jewelry designer and her custom pieces.

I was there that day. In the store. At this one-day trunk show. I saw it all. These women were purchasing almost every last piece. It was the right aesthetic. Contemporary but conservative as well. An individualized look but not outlandish. Easy to wear. Easy to adapt. Easy to visualize what it would look like with different outfits and in different situations.

The jewelry designer was very attentive. She demonstrated the flexibility of each piece in the line. She, at first, asked the women individually a lot about themselves and how they liked to wear jewelry. Then she subtly shifted the conversation a bit so they were talking about themselves and how they would want to wear **her** jewelry.

At one point, I slowly looked around this upscale clothing, accessories and jewelry store. There were seven store associates standing around. Standing around. A glazed look on their faces. The enthusiasm and energy before them somehow foreign. After the trunk show, when the designer was no longer there, they would be the ones to represent her and her jewelry.

They stood there with blank faces. As if watching a movie they found uninteresting. None of them stepped in. None of them stepped up. Even though the jewelry designer was mobbed with seven or eight women at any one time. They obviously were unable to empathize with the crowd. They had no clue how to sell the pieces because these were pieces of jewelry they didn't wear themselves. Nor did the store they worked in carry anything of a more contemporary nature. The jewelry they sold day to day was very conservative and conventional. They were somewhat clueless about how to suggest how these store guests could put things together in a stylish, more contemporary, more individualized wearable way.

At the end of the day, the jewelry designer was very happy with her sales. But it hit her. Her jewelry would remain at this store for the next several months. But she would not. She would be leaving that day. And she was worried. She thought that over the 10 hours, her purpose was not only to sell to customers, but her purpose was also to *model* for the sales staff the smart ways for working with these customers and selling her product.

Had the store associates been reliable deputized partners with the jewelry designer that day, all would have made many more customers happy, and made a lot of money and commissions for store, sales staff and designer. But the designer did not interact with them very much. Her attention was on the customers. Now, going forward, the designer had doubts.

Jewelry Designers Often Have To Rely On Others, The Designers' Success Relies On Their Whims

Most jewelry designers do not own their own shops. They rely on other people to sell their stuff. They might put their jewelry in a clothing, accessories or jewelry store on consignment. They might be represented by a gallery or sales representative, with their jewelry spread out in many stores. They might package their jewelry into trunk shows or pick boxes where they send out their jewelry to various stores. These other venues can pick and choose and sell what they want, then return the rest.

The success of sales becomes the whim of who sells it. Their understanding of the designs. Whether they like the pieces or not. Their motivations to keep things clean, neat and displayed well. If they can see themselves or their friends or spouses wearing these. Their sense of style, knowing what things might work well together with what fashions. How well they communicate with their customers. Perhaps even *IF* they communicate with their customers. If they follow-up with their customers.

Designers Must Take The Lead In Preparing Others To Sell Their Jewelry

The designer must play a leadership role here. The designer as leader must effectively influence, persuade, train and convince whoever will be selling their jewelry how to sell it. As best as possible, the designer must build shared understandings about the product with those who will sell it.

Passive assumptions won't work here. The designer cannot assume that store owners and their sales staff, because they supposedly want to show a profit, will be good at their jobs. More likely, they are not — particularly when it comes to selling someone else's stuff. The consequences of poor salesmanship are virtually invisible until many months, even years, later. That's too late to wait.

To add to the difficulties, the opportunities in terms of time, resources, and follow-up are very limited. The designer may get just one shot to build shared understandings and accomplish several goals. Ideally this should happen in person. Often, it is not. Often it is reduced to shared emails, some printed materials, and some phone calls.

Six Key Shared Understandings

There are six key understandings which the designer must influence others who will be selling their jewelry to share. These include,

1. *The Key Product Details*
2. *The Primary Product Benefits*
3. *The Smart Ways To Use The Products To Build Customer Relationships*
4. *What Rewards The Sales Staff Should Expect For Themselves, Based On Their Performance*
5. *At All Times, How To Maintain The Optimum Inventory and Product Mix*
6. *How To Routinize Timely Feedback*

The Key Product Details

Think of every line of jewelry as its own culture with a group or tribal identity. Which three to six words or simple phrases encapsulate what that identity is all about? What were the key, primary design choices made which give this line of jewelry its character and resonance? How would anyone know that any piece of jewelry was a part of that group or tribe?

These key words or details might relate to materials and techniques. They might reference fashion, style and taste. They might be things about the designer or about jewelry design in general. There will be lots and lots of details which can be conveyed, but the list of details will need to be severely culled.

People have what is called finite rationality. They can only handle and remember between 4 and 10 pieces of information at a time, with 7 pieces of information usually the upper limit for most people.

Don't confuse the sales staff. Don't let them confuse the customers. Limit the descriptive words you use when explaining your jewelry, your design choices, and your design goals. Keep these descriptors simple, un-jargoned, devoid of business babble and clichés.

Keep repeating these 4 to 7 things. Repeat them in ways you want the sales staff to learn them, understand them, and be able to repeat these 4 to 7 things to their customers when you are not around.

The Primary Product Benefits

It is not the features of your jewelry that result in sales; it is the benefits people perceive the jewelry will provide for them. People do not focus on what the product *is*. They focus on what the product *means* to them.

People buy things to solve problems. These problems might relate to needs and wants. They might relate to achieving status and position. They might resolve emotional desires.

What problems for the potential customer does your jewelry solve? Think carefully about this. Make lists.

Then reflect awhile on how you think your jewelry solves these problems for your customers better than any of your competitors. What are your competitive advantages?

Convey to store owners and sales staff the results of your thinking and synthesis. You do not only want to list for them what customer problems your jewelry solves for them. You do not want your explanation divorced from the actual selling situation. You are not presenting an academic assessment; you want to present a marketing assessment. You want to convey how your jewelry resolves customer problems better than anyone else's. This is a little more difficult to do and get the words out, and requires some practice.

And, again, remember that people have finite rationality. That is, there is a limit to the amount of information anyone can focus on at any one time. Don't talk about everything. Focus on the couple of primary competitive advantages your line of jewelry has.

As best as possible, make your benefits concrete and specific. Think of which benefits would most readily stick in people's minds.

The Smart Ways To Use The Products To Build Customer Relationships

Any sale is an interaction based on communication. The sale is not the only result. The building of a relationship also results. Too often sales staff performance is rated based on number of sales, and too rarely rated on building relationships. But it is in the building of relationships where we get those repeat sales and bigger sales and broader sales and better word of mouth and more new customers and, you get the idea.

Ideally, if you get the chance, like in the trunk show described above, you can *model* these relationship building behaviors in front of the sales staff. You can demonstrate how you elicit customer needs, wants and problems to be solved, and how you gain their awareness and trust in how your jewelry will meet these in an advantageous way. If there are other types of products in the store, you can demonstrate how to co-market, such as your jewelry with the store's clothing.

Absent the in-person approach, you can provide ideas in periodic emails. You might do some simple one-sided-page images and short descriptive content. You might create a fun video that you can share.

You can also work with store staff in developing customer lists detailing the who, how to contact them, the what they bought, the dates, the follow-up sales, customer preferences, any descriptive information about the customer to help future sales.

To help guarantee that sales staff keep these lists and fill them out completely, you can ask to see them periodically to review. You can encourage sales staff to communicate with customers pre-, during, and –post sales. Based on your review, you can suggest specific items in the line that each customer might like to see, and possibly buy. Even though you are not physically present, you can still show how building relationships can generate sales and profits.

What Rewards The Sales Staff Should Expect For Themselves, Based On Their Performance

It is helpful if you not only generate commissions and sales for the store, but also some kind of reward for the sales staff each time they sell one of your pieces. Show you recognize their efforts and appreciate them. If sales staff get paid no matter what they do, they may not give your line of jewelry the attention and promotion it deserves.

Besides some reward, perhaps a thank you note, or giving either a monetary extra commission or a piece of your jewelry, you most likely also want to reward the sales staff' customer follow-ups, without actual sales, such as sending thank you notes or calling them when you send new pieces to the store.

At All Times, How To Maintain The Optimum Inventory and Product Mix

Do not assume that the store will maintain the optimum inventory and product mix of your jewelry at all times. There will always be other companies, other designers and other product opportunities competing for any store's attention. So, you will need to step in and capture that attention on a regular basis.

Create an easily update-able plan for the store that details the ideal mix of product — types of jewelry, price points, color, finishes and textures.

Reduce this to a simple product inventory sheet to give the store.

Contact the store periodically to update the inventory, compare to your plan, and make inventory suggestions accordingly.

How To Routinize Timely Feedback

You need to get feedback routinely, say at least every 3 to 6 months. You need regular feedback on your jewelry, on the sales process, on other things you can do to help sales staff become better at selling your jewelry.

If your jewelry is not turning at least twice a year, the particular store is probably not right for you. It might be the inattentiveness of the sales staff. It might be a lack of fit with the store's customer base. But, if you are not getting a minimum of 2 turns a year, this location is not working either for you or the store.

You might formalize requests for quarterly results. You might call the store or any of its sales staff periodically to get information feedback. You might send a questionnaire to customers who have previously purchased your jewelry.

It helps the feedback process along when you provide rewards. This might be in the form of refreshments, such as sending an evaluation form with a box of cookies. This might take the form of adding some free pieces of jewelry to be sold, or one-time discount on purchases.

What expense will this add to your pieces?

- *10-15% commission; may be higher*
- *Rent in a showroom might be \$500-1000/ month*

FOOTNOTES

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78.

SELLING:

Saying Goodbye To Your Jewelry

 <p><i>Canyon Sunrise, Necklace by Warren Feld, 2008</i></p>	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <p>1. How do I deal with relinquishing my emotional connection with the pieces I make, so that I can sell them to other people?</p>
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<p>Keywords: <i>rite of passage</i></p>	<p><i>separate transition reincorporation</i></p>	<p><i>liminal betwixt and between</i></p>
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***Saying Good-bye! To Your Jewelry:
A Rite Of Passage***

One of the most difficult things I have had to do as a designer is say Good-Bye! to my pieces. I make something. I put it out there for sale. Someone buys it. I will probably never see it again. Yes, I can make another one, but that's not the same thing. That's not the point.

I submitted the necklace piece pictured above to a Swarovski Create Your Style Contest in 2008. The theme was *Be Naturally Inspired*. My inspiration was this sunrise image of the Grand Canyon.



Grand Canyon at sunrise

I was selected as a Finalist. I was invited to their offices in New York City to attend the awards ceremony. I was so excited.

I had poured my all into this piece. Hours upon hours upon hours perfecting the stitching. Experimenting with using the stitching in a 3-dimensional way. Creating a curvature along the upper sides where normally it would be a sharp edge. Selecting a 5-color scheme and figuring out how to create sharper boundaries between colors when using Swarovski crystal beads. Varying the shape, size and type of beads used within the stitch. Designing a clasp assembly which I hoped looked like a mirror of the rising sun. None of these were easy tasks. Because the fully completed piece took about 100 hours to do and contained over \$1500 worth of parts, I did all this experimentation and trial and error using 3" long samples.

I had to send off my piece to New York prior to the ceremony. And from there, my piece would be flown to Innsbruck, Austria to reside in their Swarovski Museum.

I was proud. Got the big head and paraded it around. Shared my news widely, of course.

But when the day came to pack my piece up, ... not a good day.

This day actually dragged on for a week.

First, I started with one jewelry box to place the piece in. Not satisfied. So another box. Not satisfied. And another box. Still not satisfied. I combed my jewelry packaging catalogs, and found 3 more choices I thought would work. I ordered these and had them shipped overnight.

Success. One of the three was perfect.

Next, I had to put this jewelry box into a larger shipping box. Easy to find a box. But my stupid brain could not come to grips with how I wanted to place the jewelry box into the shipping box. How much filler would I need? What type — paper, styrofoam, bubble wrap. Normally, I do not have difficulty making these kinds of choices. But not this time.

I would line the shipping box, sit the jewelry box in one direction, then stop. I would remove the jewelry box, change how I lined the shipping box, replace the jewelry box in another direction, then stop. I would remove the jewelry box, again decide differently how it was to lay in the shipping box, then try to line the box, cover the jewelry box, add some paperwork, and seal the shipping box. Plastic tape or paper tape? Another delay while I decided.

I did not want to let go of my beautifully designed piece of jewelry.

I let my next choice create a particularly high barrier. Which shipper?

The postal service was less expensive, but less reliable.

UPS was very expensive, more reliable, but what if they weren't? It was going to New York City. How does any shipper reliably ship to New York City?

FedEx? Maybe, but I was not familiar enough with them.

Insure the package? For how much?

Certified? Signature required?

I struggled considerably over each choice. And I never struggle over these kinds of choices.

Well, at this point, my piece was in its jewelry box. My jewelry box was in its shipping box. My shipping box was sealed. I took my jewelry cum jewelry box cum sealed shipping box to UPS. The clerk had to pull it out of my hand.

And there it went.

Good-bye!

Don't worry, it arrived safely.

I traveled to New York City for the ceremony. There was champagne and hors d'oeuvres. There were the other finalists mostly from America, but from other parts of the world, as well. There was even the Brazilian consulate general there to represent an artist from Brazil. We were all packed in the very, very bright and sparkly offices of Swarovski.

There was my piece. My Canyon Sunrise. Sitting pretty among the other pieces. Reassuring it was still there. It was in good company. I enjoyed listening to the comments of people as they admired it. I learned a lot from speaking and sharing with the other jewelry designers.

Canyon Sunrise won 4th place.

And, I had a chance to say Good-bye! one more time.

When I returned home, I immediately went to work on recreating my piece, but this time with another challenge. I took the same 5 colors I used in the original piece, and shifted the proportions around. I did not add a pendant drop in the center, nor did I recreate the elaborate clasp assembly in the back. But I had a physical piece — a cousin — to put on display with my other jewelry pieces. I could show people more than a photograph of the original piece. This was very satisfying. I was ready to move on to other projects.



Canyon Twilight, necklace by Warren Feld, 2008

Relinquishing Your Jewelry Design To Others: A Rite of Passage

One of the most emotionally difficult things designers do is saying *Good-bye!* to their designs as they hand them over to their client or otherwise expose their work publicly. The designer has contributed so much thinking and has spent so much time (and sometimes so much money) to the project that it is like ripping away an integral part of your being.

This is the moment where you want to maintain the conversation and engage with your audience, but look at this from a different perspective. Your relationship with your design is evolving and you need to evolve with it. Its innate intimacy is shifting away from you and getting taken over by someone else.

But you still have needs here. You want that client to ask you to design something else for them. You want the client to share your design with others, expanding your audience, your potential clients, your validation and legitimacy as a designer. And you want to prepare yourself emotionally to take on the next project.

Relinquishing control over your design is a *rite of passage*. At the heart of this rite of passage are shared understandings and how they must shift in content and perspective. Rites of passage are ceremonies of sorts. Marking the passage from one status to another. There are three stages:

1. Separation

You pass your design to others. You become an orphan. You have made a sacrifice and want something emotionally powerful and equal to happen to you in return. Things feel incomplete or missing. There is a void wanting to be fulfilled. You realize you are no longer sure about and confident in the shared understandings under which you had been operating.

2. Transition (a betwixt and between)

There is a separation, a journey, a sacrifice. The designer is somewhat removed from the object or project, but not fully. The shared understandings constructed around the original project become fuzzy. Something to be questioned. Wondering whether to hold on to them or let go. Pondering what to do next. Playing out in your head different variations in or changes to these shared understandings. Attempting to assess the implications and consequences for any change.

These original shared understandings must undergo some type of symbolic ritual death if the designer is to move on. Leverage the experience. Start again. As simple as putting all the project papers in a box to be filed away. Or having a launch party. Or deleting files and images on a computer. Or accepting payment. Or getting a compliment. Or having a closure-meeting with the client to review the process after it has been completed.

3. Reincorporation

The designer redefines him- or her-self vis-à-vis the designed object or project. The

designer acquires new knowledge and new shared understandings. There is some reaffirmation. Triumph. This usually involves a new resolve, confidence and strategy for starting new projects, attracting new clients, and seeking wider acceptance of that designer's skills and fluency in design.

The designer has passed through the rite of passage. The jewelry or other designed object or project has been relinquished. The designer is ready to start again.

But as a designer, you will always be managing shared understandings. These most likely will have shifted or changed after the design is gone. And new ones will have to be constructed as you take on new assignments.

FOOTNOTES

Wikipedia. Rite of Passage.

As referenced in:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rite_of_passage

79.

SELLING:

Merchandising and Display



Guiding Questions?

1. What kinds of things do I need to think about when developing strategies for merchandising and display?

<i>Keywords:</i> <i>merchandising</i> <i>display</i>	<i>levels</i> <i>layers</i> <i>color coordination</i>	<i>jewelry is the star</i>
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Merchandising and Display

How you merchandise and display your pieces will have a big impact on whether they sell. A brief discussion follows.

- Keep things creative, but not complex or cluttered.
- Don't let things get barren, either, what I call a "TOOTHLESS LOOK".
- Your displays should be attractive, but should not compete for attention with your jewelry. With this in mind, you do not necessarily have to put all your inventory out at once.
- Do not let your displays compete with your work.

Visit stores, craft shows, trade shows and the like, and look at what other people are doing.

How you merchandise and display your jewelry should enhance its attractiveness and appeal. These should be functional in that it should make the shopping process easier. These should make obvious the usefulness, purpose and quality of your jewelry pieces. These should create a comfortable atmosphere of your shop.



FLAT VS LEVELS

Displaying your merchandise, Some pointers:

- Cover any tables with attractive fabric, in a solid color which complements your pieces. Lighter colors work better than darker ones.
- Have pretty containers to hold your wares. If the items in the container get low in supply, transfer them to a smaller container so it looks full.
- Think of display in terms of levels. You do not want everything lying flat on a table.
- You might have a mix of low tables, higher tables, tall heights, stands, pedestals, hanging items.
- Coordinate your use of color with the colors prominent in your jewelry, business cards, brochures and signage.
- A warm, airy feeling is much better than a dark, cave feeling.
- Open bookcases work better than ones with closed backs.
- Be careful, if using displays which are glass enclosed, that the glass reflection does not diminish the ability to view jewelry inside these displays.
- Keep things creative, but not complex or cluttered.
- Don't let things get barren, either, what I call a "TOOTHLESS LOOK".
- Your displays should be attractive, but should not compete for attention with your jewelry. With this in mind, you do not necessarily have to put all your inventory out at once.
- Great lighting is a must.



Kabana (<https://kabana.com/>)

CREATE NATURAL PLACES FOR THE CUSTOMER'S EYE TO SETTLE

Build displays around these natural focal points.

I loved how this octopus bracelet worked as that key focal point for Kabana Jewelry. Kabana Jewelry had most of their pieces in glass display cases. But they kept this octopus bracelet in a central point on top of their counter.

Boy, did this bracelet ever attract people to their booth. Everyone wanted to touch it and try it on.

CLEANING

Keep your glass clean.

Keep your jewelry shiny.

Keep your displays tidy.

SIGNAGE, LABELS, TAGS

Your sign or signs should be visible from all sides from which customers will be approaching.

Your signs should be simple, clean and with a clear font. The colors red and yellow are seen from the furthest distance away.

Your sign should say what you sell, not necessarily your business name or jewelry category. For example, "*JEWELRY TO LOVE*" is much better than "*IMOGENE'S CREATIONS*".

Signs should generate interest and help sell your products.

Don't use "superlatives" like best, most, cheapest, largest and the like.

In as few words as possible, tell the customer how your product will solve his or her

problem, or meet his or her needs. Why would your pieces be valuable to someone else? *“What you need for that special occasion.” “The earrings you always wanted but could never find.”*

Be positive and diplomatic in your wording. Writing *“Unruly kids will be sold as slaves”* makes the point much better than *“No Kids”*.

Be sure all items are labeled and have price tags.

Explain that which is not obvious. What’s it made of? When using the product, what must be avoided — such as getting it wet? Are there any disclaimers or conditions? What are the advantages of your product over others?

Use colors, typefaces, and images on your sign which have the same feel as your merchandise. Don’t overdo your signage, so that the signs overwhelm your inventory.

Be sure you have a clear, prominent sign that includes the name of your business.

You might have **framed little write-ups** sitting with various displays and telling the customer something about yourself, your technique or your jewelry.

Without good and **prominently visible information**, customers often walk away without asking for help.

PRICE TAGS

Information is important

Price tags are a must. If you have the time and can afford it, use professionally-printed price tags. You can buy label makers now at stationery stores, and with which you can generate printed price tags. Price tags give credence to the price, and reduce the times customers may try to haggle.

TAKE-AWAYS and SIGN-UPS

Have business cards, postcards, brochures, and newsletters easily available.

Put out a sign-up book or sign-up sheets to expand your mailing and emailing lists.

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SELLING:

DesignerConnect – Interview With Tony Perrin



Be Dazzled Beads is a community of Creatives. Some people use our beads to make jewelry. Some to do mosaics. Some to adorn and embellish costumes. Some to enhance things like wine classes or drapes or mirrors or sweaters or cross stitch patterns. Some to embellish paintings or sculptures. Some actually use our beads in science experiments. To us, all Creatives are Designers. That is, they make artistic and functional choices about how to incorporate the types of supplies we sell into personal visions. Some design for themselves. Some design for friends and family. Some design as a business. It is not as much fun to work alone or isolated when you realize you are part of the larger Be Dazzled, Land of Odds and Nashville communities. We can learn a lot of insights from each other. We can support each other. It's all about Connection!

DESIGNER CONNECT PROFILE

Tony Perrin, Jewelry Designer

Founder and Designer, Lock & Key (www.lockandkeydesign.com)



Tony: "I feel lucky. Blessed. Is the world easy? No. I have multiple jobs. I am part of the gig economy. I am trying to succeed in a world that favors large businesses. But I am working creatively. Finding my groove. There are a lot of sleepless nights. It's not easy to be a Professional-Creative. But I would not change things for the world."

STARTING OUT

Tony: "I have memories of always being surrounded by the arts."

Tony comes from a family that was very arts-oriented, and very supportive of him pursuing the arts and crafts -- wherever it took him. His mom was a watercolorist and oil painter. His father was a small business owner as well as a photographer. His dad's dad sculpted for Lockheed, and even was a street dancer. He had a great uncle in New York who had a jewelry business, and Tony remembers, even at age 5 or 6, his uncle was always making jewelry for everyone in the family.

Starting out with gymnastics, Tony graduated to dancing (because his older sister danced). As a dancer, he had to teach himself to sew for costumes as his Mom was much better with a glue gun than a needle. He remembers his family always making things -- food, pastry, lapidary, painting. He has fond memories of always being surrounded by art and creativity.

A family friend -- Frank -- taught him how to bead weave the summer he was ten. That Summer Frank and his wife exposed Tony to the artisan craft as well lapidary, jewelry festivals and much more.



As many designers are, Tony is self taught.

Warren: "Do you think now, with all the creative things you are doing, that you, in some respects are re-creating your childhood?"

Tony: "Oh, for sure! I would say that's part of a goal I have. I swore I would never be a teacher, but kids gravitate towards me like a moth to a flame. I realized it is because I am

'5'. Kids get me, which should be the other way around. I am young at heart. I think trying to retain that naivete, that sort of blissful ignorance, especially as a Creative, just allows you to be a little more free with your aspirations. All of a sudden you grow up. It's like Peter Pan. You lose that sense of innocence and exploration."

Tony grew up in Los Angeles, spent some time pursuing a career in fashion in New York City. He moved back to Los Angeles for a few years. And then he came to Nashville with his wife who is a singer-songwriter. Today Tony wears several hats: Jewelry Designer, Dance Educator, Choreographer, Costume Designer, Jewelry Design Educator.

Tony: "Growing Up, I always thought I had to do one of these things, or the other. Before I moved to Nashville, jewelry making was just a hobby. When I moved here, one of my goals was how do I interweave all of the creative aspects that make me whole. I think a lot of creatives are creative in more than one discipline, as well. So I'm just trying to figure out how to make it one -- one happy world."

KEEPING GOING



Tony: *"It's been a curvy road."*

Warren: *"How would you describe what your jewelry making is like today?"*

Tony: "I describe Lock & Key as a modern interpretation honoring an artisan craft. I am doing something that is ancient in terms of its art, as a form of communication and expression. The loom that I use is about 80 years old at this point, so it's touched many different hands and many different stories. It's definitely art jewelry. I describe what I do as boho eclecticism. Tribal influences, so I say it is international in feel. One of the main feedbacks I get is that it is fashion, but not trendy."

Tony continues by describing his core consumer.

Tony: "My core consumer is 40+. Is a woman who appreciates artisan product, as well as pieces which make them feel modern with a sense of timeless appeal."

Warren: "So, that first day you decided to become a business. What was that like?"

Tony's first piece, done around 1998, was a custom piece. He was asked to design a piece for the head designer at [Betsey Johnson](http://www.betseyjohnson.com/) (<http://www.betseyjohnson.com/>), a New York fashion designer of clothes and accessories. It was a loomed piece, 1 1/2" wide choker with multi-colored skulls in it and dangling feathers. He was excited, to say the least. He shared the story about making this one piece, which inspired other people to ask him to design a piece. People responded to his authenticity, and then it became all about the product.

When Tony moved to Nashville, he decided to focus on jewelry. It was in part, what was he going to do to make a living? And in part, honoring his childhood mentor who had made the Indian jewelry. Part passion about his loom, and gradually adding precious metal clay to the mix of media he relied on for his jewelry designs.

Tony: "And I still love it. Exhausted. Up until 3am getting production ready. Fingers chewed up by my drill bits. But I absolutely still love it!"

CREATIVE PROCESS

In describing a typical piece, Tony begins with multi-media. This includes some loom bead weaving. He incorporates ball and chain. He likes to use a lot of color and texture, and mix matte and glossy. People respond well to his color sensibility. He uses many square shaped beads with round beads. With the beadwork, he includes a piece of metal, like a sculpted metal clay piece, either an integral part of the piece, or as a pendant. He often includes semi-precious stones. He likes to mix metal finishes. *"Silver and Gold is the same conversation as Navy and Black. If it is well-balanced, it makes it very versatile."*



Tony mentions that, to understand his creative process, you have to go back to his goal of trying to meld together all his creative worlds. His creative process is not a linear process.

He cites as an example a very successful pair of earrings he designed which are precious metal clay based. But they were flowers, which is very specific seasonal iconography. When he started thinking about what he wanted to do the next season, he thought about how he could adapt these earrings. He mentioned that a lot of his pieces and his bead weaving have an almost art deco or art nouveau feeling to them. At the time, there was an Egyptian revival style that was prominent because of a world wide tour of Egyptian antiquities.

He reflected on his artistic style and the current revival trend, and asked himself: *This was a successful piece. I'm thinking business here. How do I creatively then come up with the next version of it?* So for the Fall holiday he explored hieroglyphics and lotus flower motifs. And for the following Spring, he thought about incorporating the scarab and other Egyptian touches.

Tony: "Things started to trend in High Fashion -- snakes, beetles, insects, and bees. I have a scarab beetle tattooed on my back that is about 14" long, the whole width of my back. It's an icon that is important to me. It symbolizes the sun god Ra. It represents newness and renewal, and I have chronic back pain, so it was interconnected. It started from something that was authentic and meaningful for me, and which started to become a trend years after I had gotten my tattoo. I introduced this sculpt and coupled it with beadwork. People responded to it. Then I started thinking how to tie this all up from a business perspective. If we're just creating 'pretty', who cares? You have to be able to speak to an audience."

Tony discussed that jewelry artists have to be able to synergize the Business-Creative Mind. Both worlds need to be respected. It's a hard business, he agrees. Artists have to monetize their creative output and still remain authentic to themselves.

Frequently, he asks himself: *Do I need to break up with my design?* It is OK, he indicated, to say *Yes!* His scarab beetle was a good idea, but some reality testing was in order. Was it too early before the trend? Would it be marketable?

On a second business level, Tony poses the question: *Can I stand behind my product?* Can the store that sells his pieces be able to stand behind his products?

A third major consideration is whether he has successfully differentiated his products from the mass market. That is one reason he incorporates glass seed beads and Czech beads within his work. Glass beads allow him to inject colors, where more mass market pieces are mostly metal and look very machine made.

MOVING ALONG

Tony reflects daily how art jewelry, as opposed to jewelry mass produced overseas, will be accepted by the general public.



Tony: *"Art Jewelry is a term I use a lot in my marketing. At an apparel show, where people are used to mass produced jewelry, it's starting to change in perception and openness to my product."*

Warren: *"Is the world helping you change people's perceptions, or do you feel you are out there alone doing this?"*

Tony: *"It will be four years in September since I started pursuing jewelry as a business. In my microworld, there has always been acceptance. My wife is very accepting, but at first was hesitant. I said, Let's look at this year by year and see what happens. She gets it now."*

Warren: *"And in the broader world?"*

Tony: *"In the macro level, I think it's interesting. I think if you look at the culture today, with technology and oversaturation and what is happening in mass market production, and fast fashion, which is down-trending, I think you're having baby boomers that are looking for nostalgia in terms of smaller, handmade jewelry."*

He sees that consumer demand for artisan jewelry is on the rise, but there are still nagging questions whether you can make a viable business out of it. Can you make enough product? Can you do it efficiently? Can you transition from a one person designer business to having staff make the pieces, as well? Meeting business goals gets more complicated if you are not going to produce your jewelry overseas.

One of his biggest challenges coming up is to create sufficient infrastructure -- studio space, supplies and personnel -- to be able to easily kick out 30 pieces of 20 styles on demand.

MARKETING

Tony is natural marketer, so I asked him what kinds of things he does to reach his target audience. The extent of things he does can provide a lot of ideas and insights for all of us.

Tony: "I always try to make marketing creative so I still enjoy it."

Things Tony Does...

- *trunk shows at boutiques*
- *pop-up shows*
- *collaborates with fashion designers and creates evening events with them*
- *collaborates with sculptors, painters, and ceramic artists to do a joint show, say in a donated gallery space*
- *always thinking about marketing ideas which merge his interests in dance, photography, jewelry and sculpture*
- *for people who have bought, or even collect, his jewelry, he sends snail-mail post-cards, hand-written notes, email blasts, and personal emails*
- *posts images with captions on Instagram*
- *follows other people's Instagram sites with whom he feels some kind of fit or opportunity*
- *sometimes buys ads, but has not seen a risk/reward balance from purchased ads*
- *puts himself in situations where he can meet people, shake their hands, and talk with them*
- *develops relationships and works at maintaining them*
- *plays the "6-degrees of separation" game, identifying among his network of friends and relationships, who they know, who those people know, who those people of those people know, and so forth, to search for opportunities*

- *develops different strategies for returning customers as opposed to new customers*
- *visibly creates understanding that he sticks behind his products, and will immediately fix something if it breaks*
- *works with "influencers" -- people who, usually in return for some free jewelry, will promote your products and show images of people wearing your products in social media sites*
- *looks for examples of "market-disrupters" -- people who disrupt the market to be noticed -- that he can be inspired by*
- *always carries samples with him*

FUTURE PLANNING

Tony is a planner. He's developed a clear vision for the future. Some of the things he wants to accomplish over the next 3 years include,

- Maintaining a 60% year-over-year rate of growth
- Grow from a more regional line to a national one
- Focus on his infrastructure -- studio space, materials and personnel -- to keep production, shipping/receiving, website and marketing all on track

The big questions before him: How does he meet demand that he has created for his jewelry? How does he enhance his brand? How does he grow his ability to distribute his products?

He wants to continue to be flexible, given the instability of our economy. He wants to maintain his constant rate of sales so his business can sustain itself. He sees, perhaps, his line represented in a showroom. Perhaps he can gain more presence in museum shops.

Tony: "I have a lot of jobs right now and it would be great to have one focus. Or add a couple hours to the day."

FINAL WORDS

Tony: "The true test of a good designer is an ability to sell it."

Tony: "If I don't get that gut feeling that my piece is going to be successful, it's time to move on."

Tony has had to create the opportunities himself. This has involved a lot of reflection, reality testing and planning. He has created a business plan framework with year over year goals for design, production, and distribution.

Tony: "In today's world, you always have to be creating your own rules to stay on your feet. There is wide competition. Email inundation. I like the challenge but it's exhausting."

Tony: "Whether or not these jewelry artists work professionally, they need patrons, and that sometimes is even more important than being an artist."

Tony wishes there was more of a connected jewelry designer/artist community in Nashville. It is still very fragmented. He finds that politics gets in the way of creative collaboration.

Tony: "There's room at the table for everyone."

He wants to call artists attention to the Arts and Business Council of Nashville (<https://www.abcnashville.org/>), as well as their Periscope (<https://www.abcnashville.org/periscope/>) program. There are opportunities for networking, expanded contacts, a support system of creatives and their ideas, developing business skills and confidence.

Jewelry designers in Nashville still need a more functional, consistent support system, particularly to thread the business-needle better. Help to find studio space. Getting a small business loan. Finding an angel investor. Connecting to mentors. This is all important, and we need more organized systems to make these kinds of things easier, smoother and more reliable.

WHERE TO FIND TONY'S JEWELRY

Tony has taken a shot-gun approach to getting his jewelry out there. He does a little direct retail through an e-commerce site. He finds that this is a great billboard for him, but not a great selling outlet. He does art and craft festivals. He likes to focus on juried or well-curated shows in particular.

He wholesales his products to stores. Sometimes this involves cold-calling on stores, with product in hand. But he also does wholesale markets, like the Atlanta Gift and Apparel Market. In 2017, he did 2 shows there; in 2018, he plans on doing 4 shows. His pieces currently

are in 28 stores in the United States and the Virgin Islands. He is looking at other wholesale markets. He is exploring options to lock in with a jewelry rep or a jewelry show room.

Find Tony online at www.lockandkeydesign.com

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RESILIENCY



Guiding Questions:

- (1) What does it mean and require for you to be resilient as a jewelry designer?
- (2) What does it mean and require for your jewelry design business to be resilient?
- (3) What does it mean and require for you as an individual to be resilient?
- (4) Why is it important to be resilient?
- (5) How do you manage resiliency?

<p>Key Words: <i>resilience organizational / professional / psychological systems / foundation functions / functionality continuity risk skill-set inventory</i></p>	<p><i>survive thrive mitigating professional development continual learning adaptability anticipate literacy / fluency / flexibility strategic</i></p>	<p><i>business cycle disruption challenge opportunity re-act, pro-act, post-act repair respond prepare recover</i></p>
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[Also review chapter 29. DEVELOPING GROWTH MINDSET].

Resiliency

Resiliency is a form of power. It describes our ability to bounce back from overwhelming challenges. It is necessary for survival. Organizationally. Business-wise. Professional-wise. Psychologically. It should be at the top of the To-Do list for every designer and for every design business to be resilient.

There are always unexpected disruptions. Sometimes these disruptions are negative; other times, positive. All present challenges and opportunities.

We want to be able to manage vulnerabilities, absorb stress, recover critical functionality, and continue to survive and thrive when our circumstances change. We want to be able to find, evaluate, negotiate and grab opportunities before they disappear or become unattainable.

Over The Course Of My Business

I have been in the jewelry making and design business for over four decades. There have been many ups and downs. For most, my business and my skills were resilient enough to keep things afloat until they found their footing again. But not always.

There's the ever-present business cycle which fluctuates between prosperity and recession. There are changes in fads, fashions and styles, manytimes leaving me with some dead merchandise, a rush to design new styles of jewelry, and the need to change my inventory of parts. A few years, brooches were the hot item; then, all of a sudden, brooches are out and bracelets and rings are in; and, on and on. One color like blue is in, and then it is not. Occasionally, I needed some retraining in new techniques which became popularized. Then there was the slowly increasing shift from brick and mortar businesses to online ones. I had to develop the knowledge and skills to put part of my business online.

At one point, for eleven years, my business was located downtown Nashville in a historic district. It was full of mom-and-pop shops, from rock shops to junk stores to small boutiques and restaurants. It was an exciting place. Too exciting, it turned out. The large corporations decided to move in – Hard Rock Café, Planet Hollywood, Wild Horse Saloon. To accommodate them, the city renovated the district. Part of this renovation included removing over 6,000 parking spaces within an 18-month period. Parking costs skyrocketed from \$2 – 3.00 to \$15-20.00. People stopped coming there to shop. Things changed so fast, I had to maneuver out of my lease, and put my business into bankruptcy.

Nashville's downtown was hit by a tornado. The tornado landed one block from my shop. I could see it from my doorway. It left an unbelievable amount of devastation and debris in the downtown.

The Nashville economy was booming for a while around 2005. Unemployment was below 2%, and I was unable to fill two staff positions.

After the 2008 financial crisis, my business spiraled downwards, at times dramatically, for the next 10 years, before I regained some level of control. When the 2020 COVID pandemic struck, there were 3 months where people had to quarantine themselves, and my business dropped to nothing. For the next year, I had to let all my staff go, and curtail my business hours. I had to maintain a level of inventory and a mix of products which customers wanted with little money coming in.

Then, there are always those moments when you need a good back-up strategy, such as when internet and wi-fi services fail, and you depend on these to process sales and credit cards.

When we think of ourselves as designers, and think about the design businesses we lead or participate in, we need to add *resiliency* as an important factor, -- and, I think resiliency is the most important factor -- among such other key factors as design sense, creativity, skill-set, marketing and selling, which support our success.

RESILIENCY: What Is It?

Resiliency is a form of power. It describes our ability to bounce back from overwhelming challenges. It is necessary for survival. Organizationally. Business-wise. Professional-wise. Psychologically. It should be at the top of the To-Do list for every designer and for every design business to be resilient.

There are always unexpected disruptions. Sometimes these disruptions are negative; other times, positive. All present challenges and opportunities. Changes in fashions, styles, fads and tastes. Changes in technology and equipment. Changes in competition. The world changes whether it is in a direction we want or not. We want to manage these disruptions gracefully. We want to recover nicely. We do not want to fail, but if we do, we want to be able to pull our life, our emotions, our businesses back together again.

Resiliency means doing enough things right. It requires some leadership and self-direction. It requires that we continually reflect on what we do and the positive and negative consequences which follow. We want to be able to manage vulnerabilities, absorb stress, recover critical functionality, and continue to survive and thrive when our circumstances change. We want to be able to find, evaluate, negotiate and grab opportunities before they disappear or become unattainable.

Types of Resiliency

Changes and disruptions affect us on many levels. They affect our businesses and organizations. They affect our professional development. They affect us emotionally and psychologically. As professional designers, we need to come to recognize how resiliency plays out and how it should be managed at each of these levels.

- 1. *Business and Organization***
- 2. *Professional***
- 3. *Psychological***

Whatever level, resiliency should be understood as a process involving all aspects of the organization, the professional self and the individual self.

Business and Organizational Resiliency

The business and organization must be structured in such a way as to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and adapt to sudden disruptions so as to survive and prosper. They must protect the organization as a whole, as well as the people who work within it, from the overwhelming influence of risk factors.

This translates into every design business needing to have people and systems set in place

so that the business can *re-act* to a disruption as it occurs, *pro-act* to prepare for any disruption before they cause a problem and create a solid systems foundation, and *post-act* to overcome any disruption.

From a business standpoint, *re-act resilience* (adaptive), *pro-act resilience* (anticipatory), and *post-act resilience* (robustness) should be built into the following business prerequisites:

1. Access to designer expertise and skill-sets, particularly if current staff may need to be furloughed or let go
2. Staying competitive by maintaining control over risk and costs, including a functioning accounting system, and efficient/effective management over risk assessment, costs and returns on investment
3. Compliance with client expectations and any government rules and regulations
4. Protecting any intellectual property and data
5. Readiness to respond to changing market conditions, which may involve increased research and development costs, developing new ways in response to new competitors and competitive pressures, and creating new ways of linking up your products with potential buyers

Business Continuity vs. Business Resiliency

When you are scouring the internet for ideas about how to make your business more resilient, you need to differentiate between *business continuity* and *business resiliency*. Both involve processes for creating systems of prevention and recovering, dealing with environmental threats to the company. Both deal with preparedness, protection, response and recovery.

Business Continuity focuses on what the organization needs to resist *one-time crises*. These are things put in place to maintain the capability of the business to continue to deliver products or services at acceptable levels following a disruption. These systems and skill-set foundations are able to continually define the market and market conditions, assess risks and impacts, implement controls, adjust training and awareness, act in accordance, and monitor the evolving situation. Continuity deals with crises one by one as they occur.

Business Resiliency is a more strategic approach for dealing with larger, perhaps more desperate in the moment, crises. Resiliency deals with what the organization needs to *continuously* anticipate and adjust.

Professional Resiliency

As a professional designer, you also need to have *re-act* resiliency, *pro-act* resiliency and *post-act* resiliency. Your current skill-set may get out of realignment. Your client may have

changed their thinking midway through a project. The company you work for may have had to let you go. Some major changes in technology or fashion or style may be occurring. Some of the colors, objects, computer code – you get what I mean – no longer exist, are outdated or sunset'ed.

You may have hit a wall or some other unknown or unfamiliar situation with a project and are uncertain how to proceed. Your work may have been handed over to another designer, or you may have been required to work with another designer, and you do not share ideas, values and objectives. You need to cope with rejection and dismissal.

Designers depend on the responses and reactions of clients to determine the degree to which their projects are seen as finished and successful. There can be a lot of misunderstanding here. The things they design must be both functional and appealing, and this is not an easy task. Often the design process is one of fits and starts, evaluation and re-evaluation, some tweaking, some adaptation, and some trial-and-error. We design over a period of time, sometimes anticipating that the environment will change and the client may change, but oftentimes hoping these will not.

This is why building in a professional resiliency matters so much for designers. It reduces the uncertainty. It reduces the struggle. It enables us to maintain a positive outlook. It enables us to create, to push boundaries, and to get things done on time, acceptable to the client and the situation.

Buzzanell describes five different processes which professionals use when trying to maintain resiliency –

- Crafting normalcy
- Affirming professional identity and Can-Do attitude
- Securing communication networks
- Putting alternative logics to work
- Downplaying negative feelings and emotions, while reinforcing positive ones

Towards these ends, the resilient designer strives for a high level of *literacy* in all aspects of design. This involves becoming *fluent* with all the types of tasks and skills involved. This involves an *expectation* that learning is a continual, lifelong endeavor. This involves a level of *comprehension* about what goes together well, and what does not. This involves developing a high level of *flexibility* – what I call, having a *Designers-Toolbox* of fix-it strategies handy. And this involves getting very *metacognitive* – that is, fully aware – of your thinking and motivations.

Psychological Resiliency

As a human being, a major crisis may shake you to the core. It may increase your level of self-doubt and self-esteem. It may make it difficult to cope emotionally or to quickly regain

your composure and sense of self-worth. You may lose control or motivation over your design work.

Psychological resilience is when you use your perceptual, cognitive, behavioral and emotional resources to promote your personal worth and assets, and minimize negative emotions and stressors. Psychological resilience allows you to maintain calm, to reflect clearly, and to develop a plan of action, minimizing any future negative consequences. While some individuals can handle greater stress than others, everyone needs to develop within themselves this ability to be resilient.

It is important for any individual to recognize when their psychological resiliency is threatened. People respond to adverse conditions in three ways. Can you recognize these reactions in yourself?

1. Erupting with anger (and it's important to note that anger follows fear)
2. Imploding with negative emotions, perhaps becoming paralyzed to act
3. Simply becoming upset

Only the third response – *simply becoming upset* – will allow the individual to become more resilient and promote well-being. They are able to change their current pattern of behavior to better cope with the disruption. Otherwise, coping mechanisms tend to be rejected, ignored, or misunderstood. Psychological resiliency requires that coping mechanisms be *intentional*, not *instinctual*.

Resilient designers resort to these psychological resources:

1. Maintaining some *emotional detachment* from the project, and not taking things personally
2. Seeing *critique* as a positive resource, rather than a punishing one, and recognizing that you won't have all the skills or all the answers at all times
3. *Reframing things* when the initial conceptions of problem or solution no longer serve their purpose, in realistic terms and practical follow-through
4. Recognizing that everything done is a *learning experience* and a *developmental investment* in yourself in some way, and never a waste of time and resources
5. Knowing *when enough is enough*, or, similarly, knowing *when to say No!*
6. *Finding a passion* for their work in design which is inspirational and motivational and keeps them engaged
7. *Knowing productive things* to do during “down-time”
8. Having a *sense of self-esteem and self-worth*, projecting a confidence in the work, even when that work is questioned or where it is difficult to measure its success
9. Having an *ability to communicate* and be heard and understood about how problems get defined, skills get applied, and solutions get developed and implemented

RESILIENCY: How Do You Manage It?

One way to visualize how best to manage your resiliency is to group all the activities which need to get done into these four categories:

- 1. PLAN**
- 2. DO**
- 3. MONITOR**
- 4. ACT**

PLAN

You create accessible databases, reports, lists and the like about equipment, inventory, supplies and suppliers, costs and revenues, location adaptability or alternative and feasible locations if you have to move things, and backup systems for documents, documentation and inventory supplies.

DO

You quantify in dollar terms the risk of loss in inventory, personnel, equipment, and the like. You define and measure

1. Impacts
2. Threats
3. Impact scenarios
4. Recovery requirements

MONITOR

You put into place ways to monitor risks and responses. You create *trigger systems* which alert you, preferably with some good lead time, when disruptions are approaching, occurring, cascading out of control, and when responses are stumbling.

You maintain strong networks of communication with colleagues, suppliers, clients, and other related businesses.

ACT

Building resilient enterprises and professional lives is not a one-shot, one-time thing. It's

a continual process. It is something you always need to be acting on.

Strategic things to embrace:

Redundancy: some duplication

Diversity: some variety

Modularity: some insulation of each thing apart from all others

Adaptability: some ability to evolve through trial and error

Prudence: some sense that if anything plausible could happen, it probably will

Embeddedness: some alignment of business, professional or personal goals with the systems and activities within which these get put into effect

Resiliency strategies will require leadership and decisiveness in order to be put into place and managed day-to-day.

They may require taking an active, not merely a passive, response in shaping the future environment in order to create and exploit new opportunities to flourish.

They may require greater communication and collaboration with other businesses and professionals, in order to increase a broader, more collective resilience and a greater sharing of risks and rewards.

RESILIENCY: Why Is It Important?

Resiliency is a company's, a professional's and/or an individual's capacity to absorb stress, recover critical functionality, and thrive as circumstances change.

Resiliency is especially important these days because of how rapidly global markets, distributional channels, technology, access to resources, and skill-set foundations change or develop, get disrupted, and redevelop.

Too often, designers and the businesses they work for focus on short term results – the number of designs sold, the number of current and new clients, the returns on investments. And too often, the paramount concern is stability and stasis. There is too much devoted to making things predictable. There is too much of a Have-Design-Will-Travel mentality.

Resilience requires a multi-timeframe outlook – *short, medium and long*. There most likely will need to be some inefficiencies in the short term so that the long term challenges are not too disruptive. It is highly unlikely that the design which worked today will still be workable tomorrow. Resiliency anticipates that things will be unpredictable, changeable, unknown, even unlikely. Significant consequences will present themselves, but you will not know it until you are faced with them, and you will have to adapt to them and recover, in order to survive.

Managing for resilience will require a mental model of business which embraces complexity and uncertainty and the here-to-fore unidentified. It must interrelate all the functional

human and technical systems which come to bear during any design process.

On the personal and professional levels, resiliency can keep you from feeling helpless and paralyzed. It can motivate you to keep going, be decisive, and overcome obstacles. It can provide more clues to you, faster, more readily, more frequently about how to approach the unknown or unfamiliar, be flexible, and fix things.

A more resilient organization or individual can provide a competitive edge over other businesses or individuals unprepared to meet various contingencies. You can become better resistant to withstand any initial shock. You can be more agile in your responses. You can respond and recover smarter and more rapidly.

RESILIENCY: How Do You Become More Resilient?

There is no single strategy for making organizations, professionals or individuals more resilient. However, we can know those things which enhance resilience and to which you can work into your own business, professional or personal life.

To become more resilient, basically, you need to seek advantages in adversity. Towards this end, you will need to continually invest, in an integrated and coordinated manner, with concurrent attention to both management and creativity requirements, in these five things:

1. **Infrastructure** (technology, inventory, accounting systems, displays, systems structure and analysis)
2. **Knowledge** (technical skills, marketing and other business skills, risk assessment, criticality, reflection, metacognition, prediction, anticipation, leadership)
3. **Relationships** (establishing trust, credibility, legitimacy, visibility, ways to communicate and dialog, collaboration, ways to sell)
4. **Assessment** (measuring fluency, flexibility, adaptability, diversity, capability, cost/benefits, redundancy, modularity, embeddedness, prudence, and critical responses)
5. **Attitude** (always designing with the end user in mind, and developing a change- and developmental-mentality and culture within your organization or professional network)

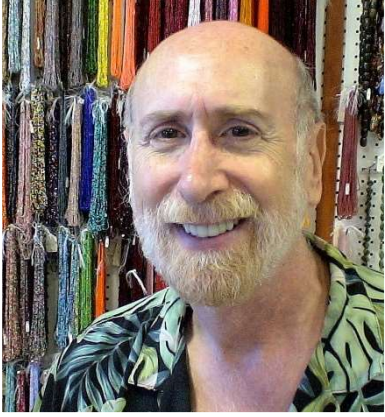
A continual series of incremental investments, implemented as a framework and as an integrated strategy, will usually be more cost-effective in the long run than any one-shot response to a sudden and overwhelming change or disruption.

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82.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do I learn, train, and connect myself professionally? 2. How do I get other people to understand what I do as a jewelry designer? 3. How should I present myself publicly? 4. How should I integrate my creative process with the need to manage it? 5. How do I develop and write things like a resume, a portfolio, an artist statement, an application for an exhibit or craft show? 6. Besides my jewelry, what other jewelry designer and business documents do I need, when approaching a store or gallery, asking if they would sell my pieces? 7. What do I need to think about and develop in order to promote myself? 8. What kinds of things do I need to think about, develop and implement to gain the trust of people I design jewelry for, or people/businesses who I want to carry my jewelry for sale?
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<p>Keywords: <i>artist statement</i> <i>portfolio</i> <i>look book</i> <i>images</i> <i>videos</i> <i>digital vs. print</i></p>	<p><i>biographical sketch</i> <i>profile</i> <i>resume</i> <i>certificate of authenticity</i></p>	<p><i>FAQ – frequently asked questions</i> <i>self care</i> <i>policies / rules</i> <i>warranties</i></p>
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PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

You are a professional jewelry designer. That means a lot of things. You provide a service to your clientele which adds value and meaning to their lives. You present yourself, your jewelry and your business in a manner commensurate with your role. You continually strive to balance your work life with your personal life in ways which improve both. You are happy with becoming a jewelry designer.

A lot of what the public will see about you and your business will be represented by various written documents and images / videos. These include business cards, brochures, signage, advertisements, online posts, online content, written articles, front-door pages on websites and the like. These should include a high quality head shot, as well as high quality images of the jewelry you want to sell. They include the forms you use from invoices, statements, financial and other accounting reports, credit sheets, line sheets, spec sheets, and the like.

They include the following which I want to discuss in a little more detail:

1. **Artist Statement (chapter 83)**
2. **Portfolio and Look Book (chapter 84)**
3. **Biographical Sketch and Profile (chapter 85)**
4. **Resume (chapter 86)**
5. **Certificate of Authenticity (chapter 87)**
6. **FAQ – A summary of business policies for your clients and customers (chapter 88)**

HOW MANY OF THESE PROFESSIONAL THINGS DO YOU HAVE PREPARED?	Have It?	Up-To-Date?
1. Resume showcasing my creative experience	Yes/No	Yes/No
2. Artist Statement detailing my creative style(s) and philosophy	Yes/No	Yes/No
3. Portfolio showcasing each of my projects with a high resolution photograph (at least one) and some written description	Yes/No	Yes/No
4. A month-by-month Calendar (at least 12-36 months) where I list my events, appointments, submission requirements for shows, deadlines, my to-do list	Yes/No	Yes/No
5. Contacts list – my network, store / show / gallery index, including notes about each one	Yes/No	Yes/No
6. Getting Started Story	Yes/No	Yes/No
7. Business Card	Yes/No	Yes/No
8. Brochure or hand out	Yes/No	Yes/No
9. Head Shot (hi-res photo of myself)	Yes/No	Yes/No
10. Testimonials / Reviews	Yes/No	Yes/No
11. Background statement	Yes/No	Yes/No

12. Logo	Yes/No	Yes/No
13. Pricing Strategy / Formula	Yes/No	Yes/No
14. Inventory of Parts / Pieces / Spec Sheets	Yes/No	Yes/No
15. Elevator Pitch (Pretend I am in an elevator, have 15-30 seconds to say something about myself, which is rememberable)	Yes/No	Yes/No
16. Business Name	Yes/No	Yes/No
17. Tag Line	Yes/No	Yes/No
18. Mailing / Emailing list / Customer Profiles	Yes/No	Yes/No
19. Website or some web presence / domain name / email address	Yes/No	Yes/No
20. Business Licenses / Resale Numbers	Yes/No	Yes/No
21. Certificate of Authenticity / Product Tags with name on them	Yes/No	Yes/No
22. Teaching Statement / List of Classes-Workshops	Yes/No	Yes/No
23. Sales Order Form	Yes/No	Yes/No
24. Invoice Form	Yes/No	Yes/No
25. Statement Form	Yes/No	Yes/No
26. Credit Sheet	Yes/No	Yes/No
27. Press Kit with Press Release	Yes/No	Yes/No
28. Travel Log	Yes/No	Yes/No
29. Business Insurance	Yes/No	Yes/No
30. Strategic Business Plan / Input-Throughput-Output analyses	Yes/No	Yes/No
31. Sales Pitch (cold calling / letter or email)	Yes/No	Yes/No

For all your written materials, it is important to think about and incorporate the following ideas and advice:

- **No templates.** Overall, you do not want anything to look like you copied a template. You will want to research what others have written. You want to pay close attention to the kinds of content and images they include. But you do not want to

layout your document the way they did. If your document looks too similar to everyone else's, it won't get the attention it deserves.

For some standard forms, like Statement, Invoice and Sales forms, however, a template might actually come in handy. You will find many examples online. But, you still want to personalize them a bit. Include a logo. Add a tag line. Add some critical rules/policy information, such as about returns.

- **Multiple versions.** You probably will want to have different kinds of audiences which get targeted with your written documents. You may need 2 or more versions of some of your documents, so they seem targeted and relevant to each audience niche.
- **Multiple platforms.** For many of your documents, you will want at least one print version and one digital version. You may need more than one of each.
- **Updating.** Keep documents updated routinely. Your materials are living documents. That is because you are constantly evolving as an artist, fine-tuning or changing your approaches to design practice, working on new projects, incorporating new ideas or techniques.
- **Press kit.** Some of your documents will have more power when presented together as a set, such as in a press kit. For example, a typical press kit would include: (a) company overview, (b) designer biography, (c) photos of your work plus a head shot, (d) responses to frequently asked questions by the general public, (e) other press clippings and/or testimonials.

In the next few chapters, I will discuss some of the more important documents in greater detail. However, I am not going to present examples. That is because following a tight template will not serve you well. What I do discuss, however, is all about content, presentation and strategy.

When beginning to prepare any document, Jot down key words you want to include.

If someone were interviewing you, what 5 questions would you want them to ask.

Write down your getting started story.

Write down who or what influences you, how, and why.

BEGIN WRITING

At this point, write anything. Things will be edited and re-edited. It's important to begin writing. Don't worry about length. Don't worry about grammar or style. The more you write, the more options you will have for fashioning various pieces later on.

If you have difficulty getting started, do a *CONNECT – EXPAND thinking routine*. Think about how a particular piece of yours is connected to an inspiration or event or person or locality, then elaborate, then think about how all this is represented in your other pieces or your jewelry making practice.

Now Edit

Remove all clichés, unnecessary art jargon, repetitions, things which are irrelevant.

Ask other friends or jewelry designers to read over your stuff and comment. Always ask them What is or isn't working?

Images and Videos

If you want to sell your pieces, you will want great images. You might be able to create these yourself using your own cellphone or tablet and an image editing software program like Photoshop. Or you can rely on a professional photographer.

You want to verify that your images are bright (not dark), that the colors appear as you intended, and that the objects have sharp (not blurred) boundaries.

There are different digital image and video formats. Familiarize yourself with these. The most important ones are .jpg, .gif, .tif, .mp4.

Colors appear differently on white backgrounds (most print is on white backgrounds) than they do on black backgrounds (online -- computer, cellphones, TVs -- uses a black background).

For a zoom-in to work online, the images need to be a minimum of 500 x 500 pixels.

Become familiar with the concept of pixels per inch (ppi). Best online ppi is between 72 and 96. Best print ppi is between 300 and 600 ppi.

You want your images, videos and texts to be *responsive*. That means, they won't end up distorted, blurred, or misplaced on the screen, given whatever browser is used and whatever device (phone, tablet, computer) they might appear on.

With jewelry, you will want an enticing overall shot of each piece, as well as some close-up details. You want to represent, in one way or another, the relative size of the piece, and what the piece looks like when worn.

Copyright, Trademark, Service Mark

You will want to protect all your intellectual property.

[See the earlier chapter on 11. PROTECTING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.]

Stamping Your Jewelry

If you work with precious metals, you will probably want to stamp your jewelry, such as .925, 14K, etc. You can purchase stamps from jewelry tools suppliers, like Rio Grande.

You can also create a small tag with your initials or logo or business name stamped on it. You add a tag to each piece of jewelry, usually near the clasp assembly.

Press Kit With Press Release

A Press Release is something you write and send to a newspaper or magazine, hoping they will print it, or that this will trigger a story about you that they might want to write about.

You might announce an award you just received, or some other accolade. You might announce a new line of jewelry, or that your jewelry will be sold in a new venue.

You might announce that a celebrity or otherwise famous person wore your jewelry.

Typically you would email a press release. Include your business name, address, contact information, and logo. In big font, write the words PRESS RELEASE at the top. Under that, include a HEADLINE, and include in that headline, your most important key words. Below the headline, be sure to include the date of the release, and then, a short list of what readers might be most interested in the information you are sharing.

Keep it to 1-2 pages. The first paragraph should be the most important, and be able to stand on its own, should all the subsequent paragraphs be cut. The 2nd paragraph should be more important than the 3rd, and so forth down the page.

You will want to attach 1-3 high resolution photos.

A Press Kit will include copies of your most recent Press Releases. It should include a Biographical Profile. Your resume. Perhaps a listing of your works. Some images of your works. Some background information about your business. It might include ad copy you have used elsewhere. It might include copies of articles you have written.

The look of your Press Kit should reflect your brand and your jewelry. Presentation should be imaginative and not too dry.

Networking and Collaboration

You hear about and learn about and get access to opportunities *through the grapevine*, that is, your social and professional networks. Part of your professional responsibilities is to expand your network. You want to maximize your visibility as a designer. This will involve many things, such as

- Face-to-face contact
- Social media posts, reviews and connections, such as on Instagram, LinkedIn, or Facebook
- Writing a blog or newsletter
- Recruiting, Maintaining, and Retaining email contacts
- Connecting with venues which might sell or allow you to sell your jewelry
- Keeping in touch and a lot of follow-thru and follow-up
- Asking for favors in a respectful way
- Sharing studio space or teaching responsibilities or doing a group show
- Co-marketing your products with that of someone else's
- Joining groups, such as local and state arts commissions, craft organizations, bead societies, jewelry making groups, makers groups
- Getting listed in directories
- Selling in multiple venues

A point-of-fact, the quality of your work will be strongly affected by the 5 people/artists you spend the most time with. Who are they? How can they help you expand your network and your professional opportunities?

Collaboration on a project will have many positive outcomes for you, from gaining more visibility, tapping into someone else's networks, and learning new techniques and perspectives.

Continual Learning and Skills Development

The professional designer continually learns and develops new skills. She or he does a lot of experimentation and reflection. Developing oneself is a never-ending process. It's your life's work.

Educating Your Customers and Building Customer Relationships

The more your customers understand the design process, the materials you use, and the techniques you choose, the more engaged they will be with you, your jewelry and your

business. Don't keep them in the dark. Teach them. And, don't be surprised, if they, in turn, teach you.

Jewelry design is communicative. Interactive. Socially impactful. Personally impactful. Jewelry sets the stage for a conversation. Help make that conversation intelligent and intelligible.

A Note About Business Ethics

It's important to retain a sense of fair play in whatever you do.

You do not want to represent your jewelry as something other than it is. So, for instance, you would not use metalized plastic beads when making an heirloom bracelet. You would not call reproduction vintage glass as "vintage". You would not label Chinese crystal as Swarovski crystal. You would not say Chinese glass is from the Czech Republic. You would not claim that Greek Raku beads were rare gemstones sold by weight. You would not sell Chinese and Indian seed beads and label them as Japanese. You would not claim that Griffin silk bead cord for pearl-knotting was only available by special order through you. You would not sell gold-plated brass beads as solid 24-karat gold. You would not imply that silver-plated plastic is sterling silver.

You want to price things fairly. It is never about getting as much money as you can from people. Rather it is about enhancing their lives and receiving a fair reimbursement for your creativity and time in return.

Self Care


In addition, in this series of chapters, I want to discuss a little about *Self Care*.

[See chapter 89. SELF CARE]

83.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Artist Statement

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is an Artist Statement?2. How do I write one?
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<p>Keywords: artist statement</p>	<p>design philosophy</p>	
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Your Artist Statement

Simply, your Artist Statement is a description of you, your work and your design philosophy. It is usually 1-2 pages, with the first 3 sentences able to stand on their own and substitute for the longer version. *Note: some applications will set a 200-250 word limit.*

Your *design philosophy* is all about how you think through the designing process. You make choices about materials, techniques, styles, silhouettes, colors, patterns, construction. You anticipate the kinds of customers who will wear and purchase your pieces. What are all these choices? Explain what you think about when making these kinds of choices. How does making these kinds of choices lead to pieces which are appealing, wearable, collectible, situationally appropriate, whatever?

When writing your Artist Statement, you do not want to follow anyone's template. This won't serve you well. In reality, too many Artist Statements sound the same.

Make the Statement deeply personal. You want the Statement to feel like you are speaking to a client, but maintaining a professional tone of voice. Visually, you want the look to be comparable in relation to your brand identity.

You share your Artist Statement with venues in which you want to sell your jewelry, such as a boutique or gallery. You share it with sales reps and agencies. You share it with your customers and collectors. You share it with the press. You share it in print. You share it online. It can be written from the first person (that is you) or the third person (referring to you).

Your Artist Statement tells your audience who you are, what is significant about your work, your methods and techniques.

As with most things in business, you will probably want to have more than one version of

your Artist Statement – one for galleries, one for stores, one for the press, and one for submissions to juried contests, competitions, shows and other venues.

Topics which might be included and get you thinking:

1. How you got started
2. Your inspiration(s)
3. Your design approach and process and philosophy
4. The challenges you face as a designer
5. Artistic influences
6. How people understand you and your work
7. What about you and your jewelry makes you stand out from the crowd
8. The materials you use
9. The techniques and technologies you use
10. What makes your jewelry a *collection*?

Start by thinking about these topics, and make a long list of keywords that you free-associate with these topics.

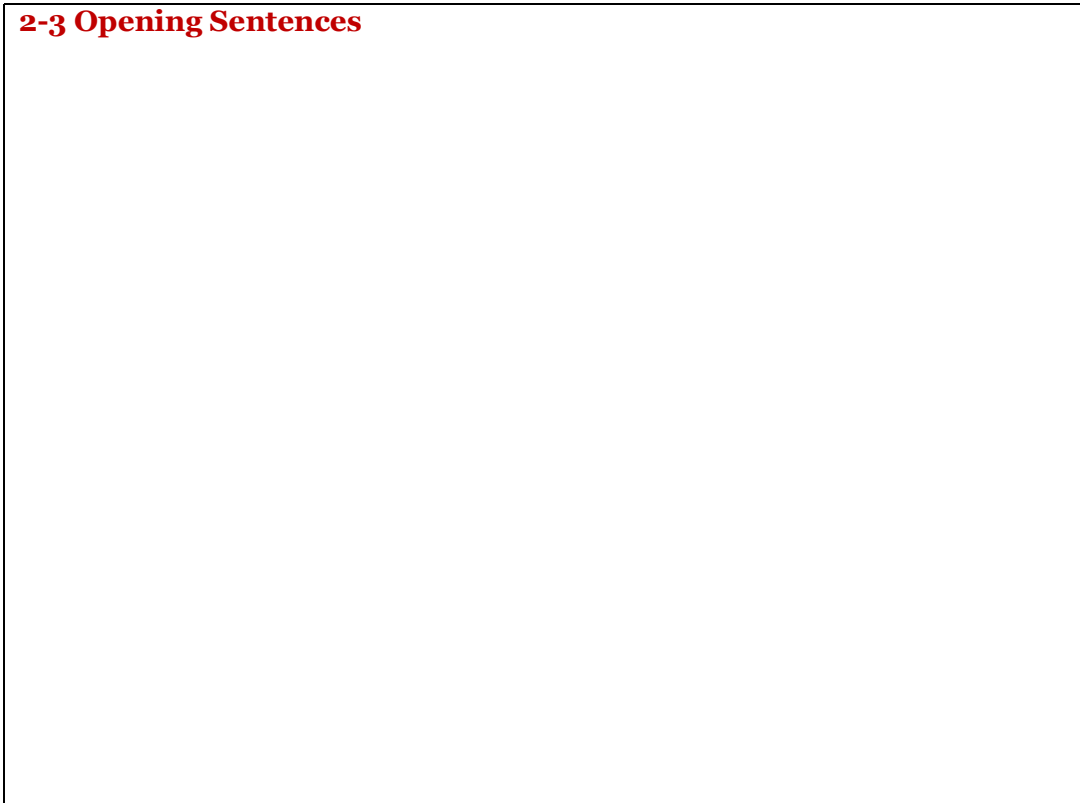
If you have difficulty thinking of keywords, write down 5 questions you would like an interviewer or reporter to ask you about yourself as a designer and about your work.

KEYWORDS (generate at least 25-30)



Next, organize these key words into 2-3 sentences.

2-3 Opening Sentences



Next, elaborate on each thought, perhaps over 1 – 2 written pages.

Last, edit. Remove cliches, any jargon, repetitions, and tangents which do not fit or flow.

Strengthen weakly sounding adjectives and adverbs. Your words should be descriptive, visual, active, colorful, powerful.

Can anything be re-written or expanded up to help your audience even better understand you and your work?

Keep things focused, consistent and coherent.

You want to avoid using words like unique or best or other superlatives.

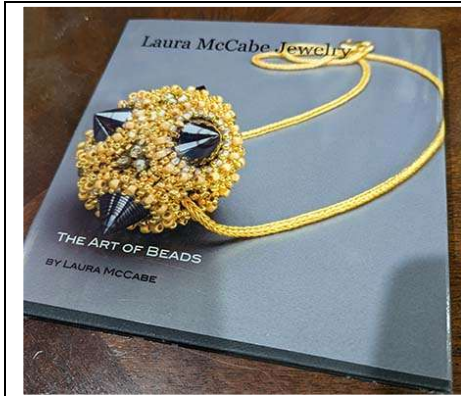
If your work is very varied, do not try to encompass everything with one particular Artist Statement.

Expect to have to generate multiple drafts before you settle on a finished Statement.

Periodically, review your Artist Statement and revise it to reflect what is currently happening in your artistic life.

84.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: *Portfolio and Look Book*



Look Book by Laura McCabe

Guiding Questions?

1. What is a Portfolio? A Look Book?
2. How do I write either one?

Keywords: portfolio look book	artist statement	
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[Also see the chapter on 62. *SELLING IN GALLERIES.*]

Your Portfolio

Your Portfolio will most likely be the first impression a gallery, store, or collection gets of your work. You want to make it a positive and lasting one.

As with the Artist Statement, you do not want to follow anyone's template when designing your Portfolio. This won't serve you well. In reality, too many Portfolios look the same.

You will most likely want several versions, say 3 or 4, of your Portfolio in anticipation of different audiences and different ways you might use this. Specifically, you might want versions differentiated by one or more of these characteristics:

- Document without dates for jewelry pieces
- Document with dates for jewelry pieces
- Organized by theme
- Organized by audience
- Only those pieces representative of the brand you are trying to sell to a particular venue
- All your pieces

- Digital, including an online copy, an online copy with some graphical animations, an ebook, or a video online

*NOTE: Your digital versions should be **responsive**. That means they are created in such a way that no matter what browser or what device (computer, tablet, phone, TV) they are viewed on, they will look good.*

NOTE: I suggest sharing your digital copy with a URL link to where it would be posted online, say on your website. I suggest not sending a digital copy on a CD, disc or flash drive. I think the potential viewer might get annoyed having to set up their computer to read the digital copy off these formats.

- Print, including something you print yourself off an office printer, or something available from a bookseller as a print-on-demand.
- Presentation folder: basically a binder with plastic sheet holders, into which you can place sheets of printed images of your work and related text.
- PowerPoint slide show. Can easily be shared on a Tablet or Computer or Notebook Computer.
- With or without prices

Your **Portfolio** will include images, short text descriptions of each piece, its materials, techniques, and inspirations. You might include your Artist Statement, Testimonials, resume, copy of a significant press article about you. Of course, you would have all you contact information present.

A **Look Book** is a more focused portfolio. It includes a limited number of your best pieces and pieces representative of your brand. The images are the stars. There is limited text, most often in the form of captioning or a short relevant quote. The Look Book should feel cohesive and feel like it targets a very specific audience.



In Print: These days it is easy and very inexpensive to develop a print-on-demand book for your Portfolio. You have many size options. It can be printed in high quality color. You can have a hard cover and/or a soft cover. You can go with a high quality paper if you want. A printed Portfolio is something that you can give away or sell. This format ups your legitimacy and credibility significantly. You only have to print one copy at a time. It is not difficult to keep the book updated.

Check out kdp.Amazon.com and Ingram Publishing for information about print-on-demand book publishing.

The print version would include,

- Front cover art, back cover art, and side binding art
- Back cover text
- Bar code
- ISBN number
- Library of Congress number
- Your content with images

Designing Your Portfolio

STEP 1: *Decide who this is for.*

Research and delineate who the audiences are and to which these have to be responsive. For example, a gallery and its collector patrons. Or a store and its core customer base.

Given who it is for, what format and content would they prefer? How do you want them to respond after they view your Portfolio; what action (of course in your interest) do you want them to take?

STEP 2: *Select your content.*

Ask yourself:

- How consistent and coherent is my content? Have I described each project from inspiration to aspiration to designed outcome to production and distribution? If it is important to present yourself as a brand, how well does your selected content support your brand image?
- Does my content clearly show and demonstrate how I think and problem solve when designing jewelry? Have I identified the design challenges for each project, and how I solved them? Some design challenges might be time constraints, selecting materials,

selecting techniques, availability of technologies and tools, consistency with fashion and style expectations.

- Does my text support my images, and vice versa?
- You do not want to settle for a laundry list of projects. You want a set of projects and their related content with which you can create a story.

STEP 3: Organize your content.

Does your organization reaffirm your communication and presentation skills? Have you made clear your style, process and design philosophy? Do the substance, look and feel support an image of you as a professional jewelry designer? Does your organization tell a story, with a beginning, middle, and end, and some takeaways or learnings? Does it have a good narrative flow?

You might organize by theme or color or technique or silhouette. You might organize by price point. You might organize by the context in or types of outfits with which the jewelry might be worn.

NOTE: Cognitively, it is much easier for the reader to digest 3 or 4 pieces of information at a time. So, you might group projects into collections of 3 or 4 pieces. For each piece, you might present 3 or 4 critical pieces of information. And so forth.

STEP 4: Design the cover.

This can be all image, all text, or a mix of image and text. How well does the cover coordinate with your jewelry and brand image?

STEP 5: Evaluation.

Does anything seem too vague or incomplete? Are the words you use strong, active, sufficiently descriptive and powerful? Does the narrative flow make sense, or can it be improved?

Ask yourself and some of your designer friends whether your Portfolio, given your audience and how you want them to act in response, prove that you are the right fit.

Given your audience, what questions can you anticipate that you think they might ask you? Example, what was difficult? What might you do differently if doing the piece again? Why would someone want to buy this piece? What kinds of related designs have you considered?


Some Advice

- Layout doesn't matter nearly as much as the content and how you present your work

- Include some photos which demonstrate the scale of your work and the wearability of your work
- For a gallery, retail venue, or agency, show the retail prices you believe your work should sell for. Don't include dates. A buyer might wonder, given an earlier date, why the piece hadn't sold.
For other audiences, you can decide whether or not to include either prices and/or dates. You might want to show your evolution and history as a jewelry designer.
- Keep images separated from text. Don't interrupt a series of images about a particular piece with text. The viewer will have a visual journey that is a very different experience than a reading journey.
- Keep only 1 – 2 images per page.
- Make it easy for the viewer to know what you are showing them: detail name of piece, materials, size, technique, price.
- You might include several SOLD pieces, clearly marked as sold.
- Back up all your digital files!
- Unless asked to, I would suggest not sending images on 35mm slides.
- A vertical (portrait), rather than a horizontal (landscape), format will work best. If one of your pieces looks best presented horizontally, take that horizontal image and embed it on a vertical formatted page.
- Include a TITLE PAGE after your COVER. Acts as a visual transition to the images of your pieces. The Title Page should have the artist's name and some kind of tag line or catchy informative heading.
- 8 1/2 x 11" is always a good size, but you do not have to limit yourself to these dimensions.
- A white background will work well, but you do not have to limit yourself to white. Be sure your font colors will easily be seen when printed on a color other than white.
- Where using text, always have a HEADING LINE, which usually is a larger font, than the text you use in paragraphs.
- Start each piece on its own page. Usually, consistency in page/text/image formats from piece to piece will be more pleasing to the reader.
- Ideally, showing 20-30 pieces is a good goal. Depending on how you intend to use the Portfolio and who your audience is, you might present more pieces, but not less than 20.
- Create a BACK PAGE or BACK COVER. This might include a photo of yourself, some biographical information, and contact information.

85.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: *Biographical Sketch and Profile*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do I write a Biographical Sketch or Profile? 2. Does a biographical sketch replace or compliment a person's resume?
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<p>Keywords: biographical sketch profile</p>	<p>resume connection</p>	<p>avatar 1st person vs. 3rd person voice</p>
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[Also see the chapter on 9. YOUR GETTING STARTED STORY.]

The Biographical Sketch or Profile

Your customers, your sales venues, your clients all love stories, and they want to know yours. Your story might be a profile on a social media site. It might be a synopsis on the back of your portfolio or print book on demand. It might be part of a grant or art show application.

You will want to create several versions of varying lengths, but all basically highlighting the same information. I suggest creating versions which are 25 words, 50 words, 100 words, 250 words, 500 words. Your first 25 words should sound fun, intriguing, exciting, enticing, creating wonder and curiosity ... you get the point.

Do not follow a template. You want your bio or profile to feel authentically your own.

Write your bio for a portfolio in the 3rd person. Write your profile for a social media site (think Facebook) targeted at family and friends in the 1st person. Write your profile for a social media site (think LinkedIn) targeted at potential employers in the 3rd person.

Within your Sketch or Profile, you will want to anticipate what people will be curious about. When someone first sees your jewelry, they will try to understand it, categorize it, emotionally connect to it. The greater the connection, the more likely the sale. How well has your bio helped them?

Your bio or profile is not your resume. It is not a listing of things. It will only touch on some things, and not all things, you might include in a resume. It is a story about you and your work. You might highlight a particular product, achievement or contribution as a way of illustrating the points you are making in your bio or profile.

Things to help people make that connection will include,

- Your name
- How you got started
- Where you are from
- How long you have been making jewelry
- Your style preferences
- Where can they find and buy your work
- Your inspirations and aspirations
- Techniques and technologies
- Materials used
- Who taught you; where did you learn your craft?
- Your career development
- Awards won, certifications
- Reviews, testimonials, what others think about your work

An Avatar

An Avatar is a digital image that represents you. Avatars are relatively small and usually are placed at the top left or right corner of web pages which represent your work, such as an article you have written or a video tutorial you offer.

The Avatar may be an image of yourself, typically a head shot. It might be an image of a favorite piece of jewelry. It might be your logo. It might be an animation representative of you and your business.

Remember that the space is limited in size. It may be a circle or an oval, rather than a square or rectangle. This means you will need to center the image to its advantage.

There are avatar generators online. Or you can make your own from scratch.

You can create a free, universally available avatar at GRAVITAR (<https://en.gravatar.com>) . It would appear everywhere you post, comment and interact online.

FOOTNOTES


Patkar, Mihir. The 8 Best Avatar Maker Sites for Profile Pictures. 4/27/22.

As referenced in:

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/make-cool-avatars-profile-pictures-easiest-sites/>

86.

**PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:
Resume or Curriculum Vitae**

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How should a resume for a creative, like a jewelry designer, be structured? 2. What information should be included on my resume?
---	---

<p>Keywords: <i>resume curriculum vitae (CV) formatting key words</i></p>	<p><i>work training and edu- cation skills and tech- niques management abili- ties patrons / where your work is showing contact infor- mation</i></p>	<p><i>instructions articles awards certifications exhibits and show- ings professional memberships</i></p>
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Your Resume or Curriculum Vitae

Your resume or curriculum vitae is a listing of your work and training experiences. Within the descriptions of each job and educational experience, you have the opportunity to convey your strengths as a designer – skills, techniques, insights, management and control abilities. The resume also demonstrates the continuity, consistency, and development of you as a designer. It proves how serious you are and how committed you are to design.

[A longer resume which lists many articles, works sold, gallery showings and the like is often referred to as a Curriculum Vitae (CV).]

As with all other professional documents, you do not want it to appear that you are following a template.

If you are not a full-time jewelry designer, you want to keep your focus only on your jewelry design experiences. The other things you do to pay the bills are immaterial. They are immaterial unless they are critical and influential to your designs.

If you are relatively new to design, without much experience to date, you might put the focus at the top of the resume on your skills (hard and soft) that you can offer. Or you might

write a descriptive paragraph (150 words at most) about yourself, your work, your style, your inspirations and aspirations.

List all educational training.

List work experiences related to design.

List gallery, auction and store showings and events.

If you have sold your pieces, you should list your patrons, or at least the galleries / stores representing your work, and where they are from. If you are early in career, and you have sold pieces to family and friends, don't be afraid to list them. But list their formal names - Mr. and Mrs. So and So (and not Uncle and Aunt).

If you have published articles, list these.

If you have won awards, gotten certifications, other recognition, list these.

If you belong to professional associations, list these.

Include contact information

Formatting

Ideally your resume should be 1 page, but 2 pages are OK.

I would not use graphics or images or fancy borders.

If you want a more visually appealing page, think of breaking the information up into sections. You might use 2 or 3 columns of differing widths. You might vary the font size, and whether the font is regular, bold or italic. I would not, however, use different font types.

Key Words

For many job, sales and grant opportunities, resumes are initially scanned by computer (or you have been asked to input your resume on the computer). The computer will use an algorithm looking for certain key words, and rating and ranking them accordingly.

Given the company to whom you are submitting a resume, first carefully review their website, their advertising, and any announcements they might send out. Look at their profile pages on various social media sites. What words or phrases seem to be emphasized? You will want to use those in your resume.

If the target company represents other artists, go to their websites and social media pages and see what words and phrases seem most important. You will want to use those in your resume.

You do not want to repeat key words/phrases too often within the resume, because this then gets flagged as spam.

Use Active Rather Than Passive Tense

NOT GREAT: I was responsible for creating jewelry.

BETTER: I create jewelry.


NOT GREAT: Skills include metalsmithing.

BETTER: I create jewelry compositions by fabricating metal and wire with solder and flame.

With powerful, expressive, active words, demonstrate how you are in charge of all that you do and accomplish.

87.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: *Certificate of Authenticity*

	<p>Guiding Questions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is a Certificate of Authenticity? How do I write one?2. How does a Certificate of Authenticity help me in my design business?
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<p>Keywords: <i>certificate of authenticity</i></p>	<p><i>timeframe</i> <i>responsibilities</i> <i>repairs / adjustments</i></p>	<p><i>signature bead / tag</i></p>
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Certificate of Authenticity

For custom work, you want to give your customer a signed *Certificate of Authenticity*. This document certifies that you are the designer of your piece (which is named in the certificate). It specifies who is responsible when for repairs or modifications. Wearing is always the test of the design. There typically is some timeframe starting at the date of possession where the designer will be responsible for any repairs or modifications (usually a size adjustment).

The certificate demonstrates to your customer that you value your work. They make higher end jewelry easier to sell. It reinforces your branding.

NOTE: For production work, you will at least want to include some signature bead or tag to show that the work was created by you. I have a small tag with my etched initials on it, and usually hang the tag on the clasp assembly. In fact, I add a tag to all my original pieces. The tag has my initials-logo on it. Some designers include a business sized card as a certificate in with the packaging for each of their pieces.


You might format the Certificate in a very creative way. Think of a graduation diploma. You can find examples by searching images on Google. Be sure whatever creative images, graphics, fonts and colors you add, these coordinate with your brand.

Include,

- The name of the piece
- The date the piece was created
- Type (such as necklace), size, materials, techniques, other physical characteristics
- Might include an image of the piece
- Your name, address, other contact information
- Any terms. (*I allow 6 months where any fixes are mine to do; after that, any fixes are at the expense of the customer*).
- Your signature, printed name, and date [*"This Piece Was Created By..."*]
- If this was an original or duplicate, if this was part of a series or collection, if this had an identification number
- Any indication of copyright, trademark, service mark, if relevant
- Any information about caring for the piece
- Online link to your portfolio and/or website
- If sold through a particular venue (gallery, store, your studio), an indication about this

88.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: *FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions*

	Guiding Questions? 1. What is a FAQ? 2. What information do I include in a FAQ?
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Keywords: <i>FAQ frequently asked questions</i>	<i>policies rules</i>	
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[Also review earlier chapter on 48. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING.]

FAQ

A FAQ, or frequently asked questions, is a list of your policies and rules, usually presented as a series of questions and answers. These are **your** rules. They would include things about returns, repairs, payments, payment terms, payment schedules, production and delivery time, shipping, various fees and charges, claims about materials, and the like.

You would post this on your website, as well as have it available in print form to hand out to customers, when asked.

You can explore the FAQs on your competitors' websites for ideas about what information to include, and what policies you want to enforce.

Whatever your policies and rules, these always need to be applied equally and fairly to all customers. If you do not, you open yourself up to legal liability.

Given your business, you might need a set of rules for retail customers and a second set for wholesale customers. You might have a set of rules for production pieces and another set for custom pieces.

You use the FAQ to convince customers that it is safe to buy from you, and that you are trustworthy. The FAQ reduces the amount of time you need to interact with customers and repeat and explain your policies over and over again.

In deciding what to include, think about the questions your customers ask you. What

makes customers hesitate before buying from you?

Make your FAQ easy to find and easy to read.

Write your questions from the point of view of your customer. [*“How can I purchase a gift certificate?” rather than “How can you purchase a gift certificate?”*]

Write the complete answer below the question. Do *not* send them on a link-to-link journey.

Example:

WHOLESALE MINIMUM ORDER

Question: Is there a minimum order for wholesale?

Answer: Yes, there is a \$100.00 minimum order for wholesale purchases.

If possible, keep the answers to 100 words or less. If you need more words, then perhaps, you need to create more questions out of the one you are trying to answer.

Avoid jargon.

If the question is a Yes or No, begin each answer by typing YES or NO. Then elaborate with supporting detail.

Types of Policies and Rules You Will Want To Establish:

1. Down payment for custom work
2. Cancellation fee
3. Late charges if payments to you are late
4. Returns and Re-stocking fees (cash back or credit; time frame; packaging; sales slip required)
5. Repairs (what you can repair, turnaround times, required deposits, payment, how long you hold onto a repair without payment until you throw it away)
6. Sizing and Size Adjustments (at what point do you pay, and at what point does customer pay)
7. Stone breakage
8. Third party repairs (if customer took piece elsewhere to fix first, then back to you)
9. All custom orders are final
10. Checks, credit cards, wire transfers
11. Shipping, delivery

12. That your jewelry is not for children under the age of 13 years old. [standard for jewelry sales.]
13. Production requirements, time frames, payment schedules, handing returns, broken merchandise, and unsold merchandise
14. Any claims you want to make about the authenticity of the materials used, availability and condition of merchandise, other claims...
15. Any disclaimers, understandings
16. Your contact information
17. You might have a section on how to measure the size of something you want, such as a bracelet or necklace or ring.
18. About getting a gift certificate
19. Handling backorders
20. Copyrights, trademarks
21. Minimum orders
22. Opening an account
23. Cautions, such as lead content
24. Overseas orders, tariffs, fees. *[I like to include a link to a universal currency calculator online.]*
25. Quantity or other discounts
26. Sales taxes – when applied, amount of taxes
27. Specials, Sales, Rainchecks
28. Pricing information; how prices are calculated
29. Custom work
30. Making any other special arrangements
31. In Tennessee, need to state that animal parts, such as bear claws, are not real, but reproductions.

FOOTNOTES

Jimdo. How To Write an FAQ Page – with Examples.

As referenced in:

<https://www.jimdo.com/blog/how-to-write-an-faq-page-with-examples/>

89.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES: *Self Care*



Guiding Questions?

1. How do you find your work-life balance? How do you set boundaries?
2. How do you keep your business from running you?
3. How do you handle mental and physical stress?
4. How do you overcome doubt, self-doubt, and creativity blocks?
5. How do you feed your soul?
6. How do you overcome feelings of isolation?
7. What kinds of things can you do to become a part of a jewelry design community?

Keywords: <i>self care</i> <i>balance</i> <i>work / life</i>	<i>network / support</i> <i>group</i> <i>collaboration</i>	<i>business work</i> <i>creative work</i> <i>reflection</i>
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Finding Balance – Self Care

Making jewelry and living a creative life can wear and tear on both your physical, as well as mental, health. Creativity doesn't flourish under pressure. You can't force it. It's important that you have a plan of self-care and balance that you have thought about and structured ahead of time. You need time and space to recharge. You always want to be on the lookout for new perspectives and new inspirations.

Don't run on empty. Take breaks. Play. Experiment. Take walks. Don't isolate yourself. Develop a support system.

Exercise. Take good care of your hands, finger nails, wrists, arms, neck, back and eyes. If you need to read with glasses, then you need to make jewelry with glasses. There are lots of different tools specific to different situations – use them all. Elastic wrist bands, thumb-support gloves, elbow bands do great to preserve your fingers, wrists and elbows. There are lots of ergonomic tools and chairs and lighting. With a lot of metalsmithing and lampworking, you'll need goggles, perhaps special lenses to filter out the glare of torch flames. Make these

your friends.

Accept the fact that there will be business and marketing things to do, not just the creative ones you are most attracted to. There will be creative aspects to what you do, and administrative aspects to what you do. Find some balance between your right brain and your left brain. As best as possible, create separate spaces/locations for doing creative work, doing business work, and doing reflection.

Spend a lot of time feeding your creative well with ideas, inspirations, motivations and a deep appreciation for what artists and designers do well.

Take some time to explore new materials, techniques and technologies.

There will be slow times and seasonal ups and downs. Plan ahead of time how you will occupy yourself during slow periods.

There will be times you will have designer's block. You will be stuck, usually a difficulty getting started, or if your piece is getting developed over a long period of time, some difficulty staying motivated. Develop strategies you can refer to on how to stay motivated, and on how to stop yourself from sabotaging your progress. It is important to know what you can and cannot control.

Train yourself with a mindset for rejection. Not everyone will like what you do. Not everyone will want to wear or buy the pieces you've invested your heart and soul in. That's not your problem. It's their problem. Don't make it yours.

Get involved with your profession. Build up a support system. Surround yourself with other creatives.

The Value of Collaboration

It can be so easy for any jewelry designer to get so wrapped up in creating things that they isolate themselves. But this is not the ideal situation.

At a minimum, it is very helpful, and very healthy, to have a support group. People you can talk to and talk things out with. People who can give you good feedback.

It is also very invigorating to collaborate on a project with someone else – *A2A, that is, artist to artist*. You can get an infusion of new ideas, sensibilities and strategies. You can get challenged. You become more self-aware of your own styles and preferences. You come up with new ideas about coordinating your own authentic, creative self with that of someone else.

About Warren Feld, Jewelry Designer



*For **Warren Feld**, Jewelry Designer, (www.warrenfeldjewelry.com), beading and jewelry making have been wonderful adventures for over 35+ years. Warren has developed businesses and taught and guided students and clients in starting and managing their own successful jewelry design businesses as well.*

What excites Warren is finding answers to such questions as:

- What does it mean to be fluent and literate in design?
- What are the implications for defining jewelry as an "object" versus as an "intent"?
- Why does some jewelry draw your attention, and others do not?
- How does jewelry design differ from art or craft?
- How do you judge a piece as finished and successful?
- How do you create and manage a thriving business around your creative works?

In 2000, Warren founded The Center for Beadwork & Jewelry Arts (CBJA) an the educational program for Be Dazzled Beads-Land of Odds in Nashville, Tennessee. The program approaches education from a Design Perspective. There is a strong focus on skills development. There is a major emphasis on teaching how to make better choices when selecting beads, other parts and stringing materials, and how to bring these altogether into a beautiful, yet functional, piece of jewelry. There are requirements for sequencing classes – that is, taking classes in a developmental order.

Theory is tightly wedded to applications throughout the program, from beginner to advanced classes. Since jewelry to be successful, unlike painting and sculpture, must interrelate aesthetics, function and context, much attention is paid to how such interrelationships should influence the designer.

Jewelry Design is seen as an authentic performance task. As such, the student explores ideas about artistic intent, shared understandings among all audiences, and developing

evidence in design sufficient for determining whether a piece is finished and successful.

Business and marketing concerns and techniques are woven into the various classes. Students are challenged, when having to make choices of one material or another, or one technique or another, how would they choose? What would they consider? How would that affect the design choices they want to make?

The design educational program is envisioned as preparing the student towards gaining a disciplinary literacy in design -- one that begins with how to decode the expressive attributes associated with Design Elements to a fluency in the management of Principles of Composition, Construction and Manipulation, as well as the systems management of the design process itself.

Warren leads a group of instructors at Be Dazzled Beads (www.bedazzledbeads.com). He teaches many of the bead-weaving, bead-stringing, pearl and hand knotting, wire weaving, jewelry design and business-oriented courses. He works with people just getting started with beading and jewelry making, as well as those with more experience.

His pieces have appeared in beading and jewelry magazines and books, including *Perlen Posie* ("Gwynian Ropes Bracelet", No. 21, 2014), *Showcase 500 Beaded Jewelry* ("Little Tapestries: Ghindia", Lark Publications, 2012). One piece ("Canyon Sunrise"), which won 4th place in Swarovski's *Naturally Inspired Competition* (2008), is in the Swarovski museum in Innsbruck, Austria. His work has been written up in *The Beader's Guide to Jewelry Design* (Margie Deeb, Lark Publications, 2014). He has been a faculty member at CraftArtEdu.com, developing video tutorials.

He has been selected as an instructor for the Bead & Button Show, June, 2019, teaching 3 pieces – Japanese Garden Bracelet, Etruscan Square Stitch Bracelet, and ColorBlock Bracelet. In March 2020, Warren led a travel-enrichment program on Celebrity Cruise Lines, centered on jewelry making, beginning with a cruise from Miami to Cozumel and Key West.

Personal style: multi-method, intricate color play, adaptive of traditions to contemporary design, experimental.

Other books by Warren Feld:

SO YOU WANT TO BE A JEWELRY DESIGNER (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer/dp/B09Y3VNNMW/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1EIMF429I4M1A&keywords=warren+feld+jewelry+designer&qid=1668635666&sprefix=feld+jewelry+designer,aps,172&sr=8-1&ufe=app_do:amzn1.fos.d977788f-1483-4f76-90a3-786e4cdc8f10)

PEARL KNOTTING...WARREN'S WAY (https://www.amazon.com/PEARL-KNOTTING-Warrens-Way-Simple/dp/B0B28D9ZJ6/ref=sr_1_1?crid=281NQ2TGBELK7&keywords=warren+feld+pearl+knotting&qid=1668635716&sprefix=warren+feld+,aps,323&sr=8-1)

SO YOU WANT TO DO CRAFT SHOWS (<https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Craft->

Shows/dp/BoB67JDJDR/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1M47AM1GS49BN&key-words=so+you+want+to+do+craft+shows&qid=1668635806&s=books&spre-fix=so+you+want+,stripbooks,827&sr=1-1).

Owner, Be Dazzled Beads in Nashville, and [Land of Odds](https://www.landofodds.com) (<https://www.landofodds.com>) .

He is probably best known for creating the international The Ugly Necklace Contest, where good jewelry designers attempt to overcome our pre-wired brains' fear response for resisting anything Ugly. He has also sponsored All Dolled Up: Beaded Art Doll Competition and The Illustrative Beader: Beaded Tapestry Competition.

Articles on Medium.com (<https://warren-29626.medium.com/>)

Jewelry Making Kits For Sale (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/wfjkits.htm>)

Artist Statement (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/wfjartiststatement.html>)

Teaching Statement (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/pdf/TEACHING STATEMENT.pdf>)

Portfolio (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/pdf/PORTFOLIO.pdf>)

Testimonials (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/pdf/TESTIMONIALS.pdf>)

Video Tutorials (<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/>)

Design Philosophy (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/wfjdesignapproach.htm>)

warren@warrenfeldjewelry.com www.warrenfeldjewelry.com

Thank You and Request For Reviews

A Note from Warren Feld

Thank you so much for reading *Conquering The Creative Marketplace*.
If you enjoyed it, please take a moment to leave a review at your favorite online retailer such as Amazon USA or Amazon UK, Barnes and Noble, or social media site.
I welcome contact from readers. At my website, you can contact me, sign up for my intermittent emails, purchase my jewelry and my kits, register for my online courses, read my articles and blog and find me on social networking.
<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com>

-- Warren Feld

Other Articles and Tutorials

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**Thank you. I hope you found this book helpful.**

Also, check out my website (<http://www.warrenfeldjewelry.com/>).

Enroll in my jewelry design and business of craft Video Tutorials online.

<https://so-you-want-to-be-a-jewelry-designer.teachable.com/>

- Orientation To Beads & Jewelry Findings
- Basics of Bead Stringing and Attaching Clasps
- Pearl Knotting... Warren's Way
- The Jewelry Designer's Approach To Color
- So You Want To Do Craft Shows...
- Naming Your Business
- Pricing And Selling Your Jewelry

Articles on Medium.com (<https://warren-29626.medium.com/>)

Articles on Art Jewelry Forum (<https://artjewelryforum.org/library/author/warren-feld/>)

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Other Books by Warren Feld:

Conquering The Creative Marketplace

[So You Want To Be A Jewelry Designer](https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer/dp/B09Y3VNNMW/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3N6RHB56IKLFT&keywords=warren+feld+jewelry+designer&qid=1668636178&sprefix=warren+feld+pearl+knotting,aps,97&sr=8-1&ufe=app_do:amzn1.fos.d977788f-1483-4f76-90a3-786e4cdc8f10) (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Jewelry-Designer/dp/B09Y3VNNMW/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3N6RHB56IKLFT&keywords=warren+feld+jewelry+designer&qid=1668636178&sprefix=warren+feld+pearl+knotting,aps,97&sr=8-1&ufe=app_do:amzn1.fos.d977788f-1483-4f76-90a3-786e4cdc8f10)

[Pearl Knotting...Warren's Way](https://www.amazon.com/PEARL-KNOTTING-Warrens-Way-Simple/dp/B0B28D9ZJ6/ref=sr_1_4?crid=TES6RJDFIPGQ&keywords=warren+feld+pearl+knotting&qid=1668636128&sprefix=wa,aps,2132&sr=8-4) (https://www.amazon.com/PEARL-KNOTTING-Warrens-Way-Simple/dp/B0B28D9ZJ6/ref=sr_1_4?crid=TES6RJDFIPGQ&keywords=warren+feld+pearl+knotting&qid=1668636128&sprefix=wa,aps,2132&sr=8-4)

[So You Want To Do Craft Shows](https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Craft-Shows/dp/B0B67JDJDR/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1B9VOVU03M6FK&keywords=so+you+want+to+do+craft+shows&qid=1668636089&sprefix=so+you+want+to+do+craft+sho,aps,273&sr=8-1) (https://www.amazon.com/So-You-Want-Craft-Shows/dp/B0B67JDJDR/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1B9VOVU03M6FK&keywords=so+you+want+to+do+craft+shows&qid=1668636089&sprefix=so+you+want+to+do+craft+sho,aps,273&sr=8-1)

Basics of Bead Stringing and Attaching Clasps (expected January 2024)