

The background is a watercolor-style illustration with soft, blended colors of light blue, yellow, and white. The texture is painterly and organic. A white rectangular box is centered on the page, containing the main title and a smaller white box above it containing the website address.

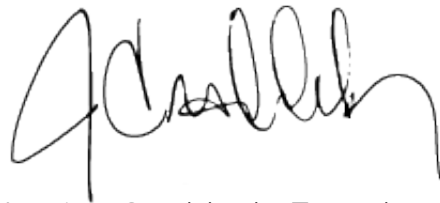
THEARTISTMARKET.CO

**MARKETING 101:
THE BASICS
FOR ARTISTS**

WELCOME!

I am just so thrilled that you are going to join me on this journey. I have made it my mission to help you learn how to sell your art without the steep learning curve I experienced when I got out of school. I knew how to paint, but was clueless on the business of art. It took me ten years of working in marketing, website design and small startups to create these guides. I hope you will implement the lessons it took me so much time to learn and start rocking your art business, pronto!

Do the work & create your luck!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessica Craddock', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jessica Craddock, Founder @ The Artist Market Co.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

1. Print out this PDF and keep it handy so you can take notes when they pop into your head.
2. While you could complete all of the lessons at once, spacing them out give you time to mull over your answers and work out any kinks. For this reason I recommend doing one lesson per week.
3. Pick one day of the week to block 45 minutes on your calendar for the next four weeks. Mondays are my favorite because learning at the beginning of the week keeps my mind fresh with ideas, but you do you.

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IN THIS MARKETING GUIDE:

LESSON 1. A Simple Way to Connect with Your Buyers

LESSON 2. How to Write a Focused Elevator Speech

LESSON 3. The #1 Reason People Aren't Buying Your Art

LESSON 4. How to Price Your Original Artwork

LESSON #1:

Why you need a target market.

One of the most efficient (& effective!) marketing tools you can utilize is choosing a narrow group of clients you wish to create for. I know this sounds completely counterintuitive. You want to sell to anyone who will buy, right?

In theory, yes. But you **will sell more if you target a smaller audience.** Let me explain.

If a customer thinks you are speaking directly to them, you create a more urgent need and desire to buy what you are selling. Catering your writing, pricing and imagery to speak to your dream customer will make them feel like they can relate to you. Think of your favorite brand. Do you feel a connection with them? Why?

Let's use an example. Pretend you need to hire a lawyer to draw up a contract for you to sell artwork that will be used in ads.

Would you rather hire someone who:

- a) offers *all the services* or
- b) works exclusively with artists, is an expert in art licensing and understands exactly what you need?

The choice is simple. Human nature will choose "option b" every time. That lawyer speaks your language. He/she becomes instantly relatable. You understand each other. You have things to talk about. You will almost certainly receive a better product, simply because of their speciality. This is who you want to be to your customers - the obvious choice.

"But, Jessica," you say, "I make art. I don't run a startup. People either like what I make or they don't."

If you want to make a living as an artist, **you must treat your art like a business.** Not everyone in the niche you choose is going to like your art, but the ones that do will be more sold than ever.

LESSON 1. A Simple Way to Connect with Your Buyers

This sounds complicated. How do I do it?

STEP 1: DETERMINE YOUR ARCHETYPE

Think of your favorite high school drama movie. There are cliques, right? The skater, the prep, the intellectual, the hippy, the rebel... you get the idea. Which are you? For the purposes of marketing, embrace your archetype. You are more complicated, of course, but we want others to be able to easily classify you in their mind.

Picture Banksy. What do you remember about him? He is a favorite among activists and those who ignore "what you are supposed to do." Short answer - he is a rebel.

STEP 2: EVALUATE YOUR ART

What kind of art do you make? If you are all over the place - what is your favorite? What do you want to focus on?

Many artists struggle with the idea of being tied down. If this is you, **pick at least one consistent theme**. Maybe you only use pencils. Maybe your theme is feminism. Maybe your canvas is always round. Pick a constant and you will be able to sway within those boundaries.

STEP 3: PUT IT TOGETHER.

You might be an intellectual who creates complicated line drawings. Or, you are a hippy who creates using a love theme. Maybe you are a prep who creates patterned wall paper.

Create an image of yourself in your mind. You aren't going to share this description directly to

describe yourself, but you will use it to create a character that you will display to the public.

STEP 4: WHO WOULD BUY YOU?

Imagine the character you just created. Who would be attracted to that person? Who would want to be associated with him/her?

Much of the business of art is your fans wanting to show off. Their connection with you, the oh-so-popular artist in their circle, elevates their status. Maybe they have an exclusive original you created or they commissioned you to make something special. They want to tell all their friends about it, which makes their friends want to buy you too.

What does this person look like? Maybe they are a...

- Coffeeshop hipster who is kinda broke but will buy plenty of prints to wallpaper his/her house

- Cool couple who only buys local, reasonably priced art
- High-end collector whose art is a part of his/her investment portfolio

STEP 5: CREATE WITH YOUR DREAM CUSTOMER IN MIND.

When you make anything, create with the person who would buy you in mind. This includes...

- Your website/email/social media copy
- Any online imagery you produce
- Your artwork!

Let's do an example.

Step 1: I am a laid-back, art & vegetable gardening fool who loves computers. This doesn't fit any clique per say, but when people meet me they probably classify me as "granola" (Urban dictionary: Modern hippy woman. May

LESSON 1. A Simple Way to Connect with Your Buyers

eat tofu for breakfast and sweeten food with agave syrup. Is determined to save the world.)

Step 2: I paint abstract, impressionistic landscapes.

Step 3: Hippy girl who paints dreamy landscapes.

Step 4: People who want to go back to more natural ways, tree-huggers, dread-locked cafe owners who sell used books on the side, land owners who work hard to preserve diversity... you get the idea. They aren't all the same but have similar values and priorities.

Step 5: When I am creating copy, I will use words like "far out", "sustainable" and "organic". Imagery will be flowy, colorful and include lots of leaves, flowers and trees.

What is your character and who will you sell to?

What is your archetype?

What do you create?

Put it together.

Who would buy you?

What phrases and imagery can you use to speak to your customer?

LESSON #2:

Why You Need an Elevator Speech

The business of Fine Art can be tough, but it is even tougher if you can't tell people what you do.

Imagine meeting someone in an elevator who asks what you do for a living. "I'm an artist." "Oh, ok. Cool." That's the end of the conversation, right? You give them nothing to follow up on, no intrigue, no specifics. No sales leads.

When salesmen learn their craft, they are taught to simply continue the conversation. If the conversation ends, they lose the sale. If they keep it going, their chances increase dramatically. That is what I want you to learn to do.

Instead of, "I'm an artist", we are going to put together a quick few sentences that will draw in your new acquaintance. Maybe they aren't particularly interested in what you do,

but they know someone you just HAVE to meet. Networking is a powerful thing!

If they do seem interested, handing them a business card with a link to your online portfolio is a great way to stay fresh in their minds. Ask for their email address so you can send them some images if you are feeling confident. **Don't forget... always try to continue the conversation!**

Create Your Unique Elevator Speech

STEP 1: WHAT YOU DO

I am a _____ who creates _____...

Easy, peasy right? If not, it is time to give this some serious thought! You wouldn't open a store-front business without knowing what it is you are going to sell, would you? (If you would,

LESSON 2. How to Write a Focused Elevator Speech

we have a lot of work ahead, but don't give up!)

- I am a painter who creates abstract, impressionistic landscapes...
- I am a printmaker who creates pointillistic patterns...
- I am a photographer who creates art noir photos of couples...

PRO TIP: Not everyone understands art lingo. Have a backup speech prepared for those folks using descriptive language instead of jargon.

- I am a painter who creates images of landscapes that are blurry but hint at the details with lots of curving lines...
- I am a printmaker who creates images of patterns using thousands of microscopic dots...
- I am a photographer who creates dark, black and white images of couples...

STEP 2: WHO YOU DO IT FOR

If you don't know who you are creating for, go back to lesson 1. This step may require some decision making, but will make your elevator speech 100% more effective. **Don't get too stressed about this. You are allowed to change your mind later.**

(I am a _____ who creates _____)... for _____.

- ...for art collectors looking for investment pieces.
- ...for those looking for mid-range priced prints for their home.
- ...for business owners looking to create an out-of-the-box environment.

STEP 3: WHY YOU ARE UNIQUE

This is the hardest of the steps, but can easily be the most compelling. Your "why" can be just about anything. Think about it as a random fact you would share about your business in a

“get to know you” game. The more interesting, the better.

If you just can't come up with anything, revisit How to Choose Your Genuine Target Market, and brainstorm what your audience might be interested in. If they are awed by anyone with artistic talent, maybe you can create matching packages. If they are activists, maybe it is a donation to their cause. If they are computer nerds, maybe you integrate social media.

- I sell in sets of three so you can create a cohesive look in a room.
- I donate 25% of sales to homeless artists.
- I choose my subject matter from images submitted from fans on my Facebook page.

Now check out these examples. You'd be interested in learning more, right? You could put together any combination of the above examples, but here are the ones I chose to illustrate my point.

- I am a painter who creates abstract, impressionistic landscapes for those looking for mid-range priced prints for their home. I choose my subject matter from images submitted from fans on my Facebook page.
- I am a photographer who creates art noir photos of couples for art collectors looking for investment pieces. I donate 25% of sales to homeless artists.
- I am a printmaker who creates images of patterns using thousands of microscopic dots for business owners looking to create an out-of-the-box environment. I sell in sets of three so they can create a cohesive look in a room.

LESSON 2. How to Write a Focused Elevator Speech

Now, create your speech!

What do you do? I am a _____ who creates
_____.

Now say it without any art lingo so any
average joe will understand you.

Who are you creating for?

What makes you and your art business unique?

Now, put it all together.

Bonus homework: call two friends, one artsy
and one not, and give them your speech. Ask
for feedback!

LESSON #3:

What am I missing?

Most people think money is the #1 reason someone decides not to buy from you. That is simply incorrect.

The #1 reason people aren't buying your art is a lack of trust.

If I told you this lesson cost \$20,000 to read, you would leave faster than a mouse being chased by a hungry cat - unless you were 110% convinced reading it would make you \$40,000 - then you would pay immediately even if you had to borrow the money from your mean uncle.

Not having established trust is almost always the reason a person won't buy from you. It isn't that you are too expensive - its that you haven't convinced them of your value.

As an artist, this means something a little bit different than being a service or necessary product provider.

Build trust by convincing the buyer that you & your art holds significant value to their quality of life and/or as an investment.

How do I build trust as an artist?

SPEAK DIRECTLY TO YOUR NICHE

Choose a select group of people you want to sell to, then speak their language. The more interactions you have with them, the more they will relate and want to get to know you. Make your audience feel like a friend and they will be much more likely to buy. Friends buy from friends, first!

TESTIMONIALS

Capture what people say about you, whether it is on social media, on a postcard or in person. Use these phrases on your website & emails. Nothing sells better than another person recommending you.

LESSON 3. The #1 Reason People Aren't Buying Your Art

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Find a prominent business or individual in your niche and offer to give them a sample of some of your best work. This will act as free advertising and add value to you and your art. If a trendsetter has your art, others will follow.

PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS

Every interaction you have with a potential customer should exude professionalism. Have an email signature. Know your prices. Be able to tell them what you do. Have a system for collecting their money. Follow up with a “thank you” note.

Having a system in place for all your interactions will make your business legit and build trust in you as an artist. It won't hurt your testimonials, either!

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

“If you've got 50 unsold paintings, I'd avoid putting them all on your website at one time. Post only your best, since viewers will judge the entire body of your work by your least successful piece.” - Lori Woodward, artist.

Having too many unsold pieces on display can give the appearance that you are not in high demand. If it seems that no one wants to buy, how will you ever make a sale? Intermix artwork marked SOLD with your available works to create an eagerness to purchase before their favorite is snapped up.

CONSISTENCY

Choose 2-3 fonts and not more than 5 colors you will use for your website and all online and print communication. Keeping a consistent look throughout your communication will keep you from looking like a wishy-washy newbie!

How will you build trust & value with your audience?

Do you currently have any fans you can start proving your value to? If not, where will you start creating an audience?

Name three ways you will start building trust with your current (or future!) email list, social media fans, postcard receivers or any other followers you have.

1.

2.

3.

List any baby steps you need to implement your ideas.

LESSON #4:

There are several popular methods for pricing art, but none of them work for everyone. While you are gaining popularity prices should be lower to start making sales & creating a following. Established artists will be able to charge enough to make a comfortable living if they have set up their business properly.

Quite possibly the most important part of the modern day art business is growing your email list. Having a list of fans that want to hear about an event you are involved in or new artwork for sale is invaluable.

Imagine being a girl scout who wants to sell the most cookies. You could knock on every door in the neighborhood hoping whoever opens the door is hungry for cookies, or you could make a list of homes that buy every year and make sure to catch them while they are home. If you expanded neighborhoods every year while adding names to your list of probable buyers, soon you would be the best cookie salesgirl in the area.

For this reason, I added the number of email subscribers you need to have to when your prices should increase. (Next month's guide will teach you exactly how to get up and running with an email list!)

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER

While you are here:

0 paintings sold + 0 email subscribers

Charge this:

Look at other artists in your area that are approximately at the same skill level as you who are making sales. What are they charging? There is a good possibility you will not be getting paid what you are worth, but at this point we are focusing on gaining a following + fan base.

Estimate: \$75 - \$250/each

LEVEL 2: GAINING A FOLLOWING

Until you are here:

Sold 20 Paintings + 100 email subscribers

Charge this:

(A fair hourly wage x number of hours to create the piece) + material costs

Example: ($\$20 \times 20$ hours) + \$100 in materials = \$500/each

Estimate: \$400 - \$600/each

LEVEL 3: MADE A NAME

When you get here:

Sell 50 paintings + 500 email subscribers

Charge this:

(Cost of living + cost of business) / Number of paintings you expect to sell that year = cost per painting

Example: ($\$45,000 + \$10,000$) / 20 = \$2750/each

Estimate: \$1800 - \$3600/each

HOW TO CHARGE BY SIZE

(USE WITH ANY LEVEL)

If you wish to charge by size, you can take a median cost. This works better than an average in case you have any extreme highs or lows.

Do this:

- 1.** Pick 11 paintings. If you don't have 11, choose a smaller odd number.
- 2.** Find the square inches of each painting by measuring the top in inches and one side in inches. Multiply those numbers together. Length (inches) x Width (inches) = square inches.
- 3.** Determine the base price of each painting according to your level.
- 4.** Cost of painting #1 / square inches = cost per square inch.

Cost of painting #2 / square inches = cost per square inch.

Cost of painting #3 / square inches = cost per square inch.

...Continue for all 11 paintings.

- 5.** Line up the cost per square inch in order from smallest to greatest:

\$0.21, \$1.22, \$3.43, \$3.46, \$4.12, \$4.48,
\$5.55, \$8.97, \$10.67, \$12.45, \$18.93

- 6.** Count to the sixth number in the row and use that as your price per square inch.

\$0.21, \$1.22, \$3.43, \$3.46, \$4.12, \$4.48,
\$5.55, \$8.97, \$10.67, \$12.45, \$18.93

- 7.** If a painting is 24x24" (or 576" squared), using the numbers above, your median cost per square inch is \$4.48.

576" x \$4.48 = \$2580.48

GALLERY COMMISSION FORMULA

If you are selling in a gallery or other place that takes a commission, you will need to increase your price. If you want to sell a piece for \$300, but the gallery takes 40%, you will have to charge more to get that same \$300.

Ex: The gallery will take 40% (so you will get 60%). You want \$300 to be your cut.

- 1.** Divide 100 by your percentage number.
($100/60=1.6667$)
- 2.** Multiply what you want your cut to be by the answer from the above equation.
($\$300 \times 1.6667 = \500)
- 3.** You need the gallery (who takes a 40% commission) to charge \$500 if you want to take home \$300.

How many paintings have you sold?

How many email followers do you have?

Which level are you?

What range do you plan on pricing your art?

Will you charge by size? If so, calculate your square inch rate:

Cost of 11 artworks:

Size in square inches of 11 artworks:

Cost per square inch of 11 artworks:

Line up cost per square inch from smallest to largest. Count to sixth number and circle.

What is your price per square inch?

Multiply by the square inch of any artwork to determine its price.

Does this seem like a fair price? (If not, adjust!)