



June 23, 2014

Dear Reader,

This brief report was completed as a resource for the friends and partners of Liberty Jane Clothing.

The survey was sent to 1,419 participants. 5.7%, (or 82 people) actually finished the full survey. Their answers were candid, insightful, and interesting.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive ebook on how to use Etsy - just the results of a very interesting survey!

We hope looking at the results help you on your entrepreneurial journey.

Finally, please note, we did not try to correct the spelling or grammar of the responses.

All the very best,

Jason & Cinnamon Miles
Liberty Jane Clothing

Question One

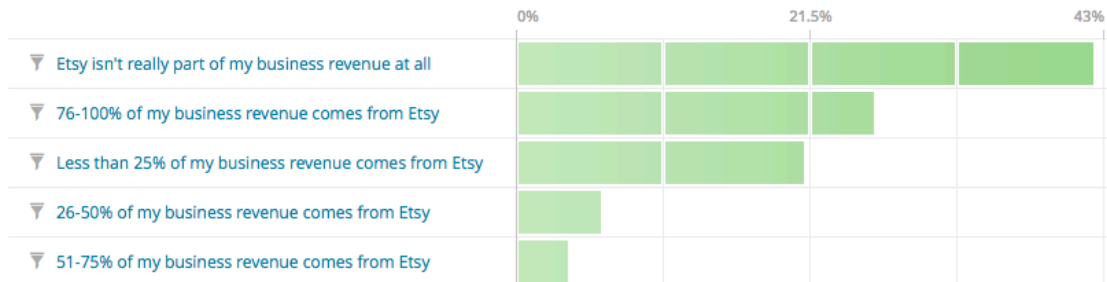
Question
01

Is Etsy A Big Part Of Your Monthly Business Income?

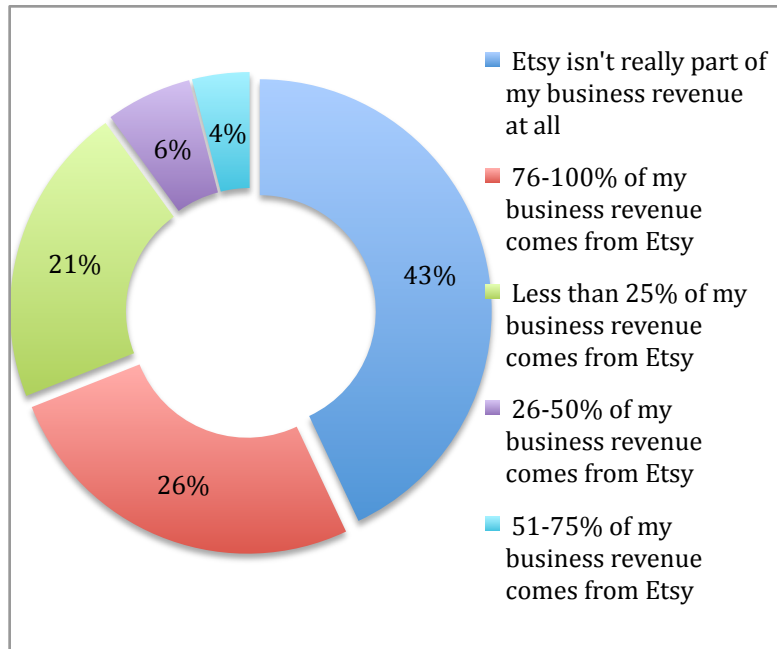
We were interested in this question because for many artisans and crafters, the assumption is that they "have to be on Etsy". But is that really true? We weren't sure. Here is what the respondents told us:

Question
01

Is Etsy A Big Part Of Your Monthly Business Income?



The percentage of respondents for each category were as follows:



Question Two

Question
02

For Those Of You Who Don't Use Etsy, Let Us Know Why Not...(And Skip To Question #9)...

Answers Included:

Did not think I could handle the volume with what I sell in the store.

I haven't taken the time to open an Etsy shop. I just sell locally at craft fairs and via my facebook page.

Since all of my business so far has been off the Internet, I have no experience with internet forms of business. I fear it because of hackers and weird forms of electronic theft. I just don't feel informed enough to go into any form of Internet venture at this point. I would love for that to change.

I don't understand how it works or how to set it up. I find it difficult to navigate when I look at it. It's too big. How could a lone doll clothes maker get picked out of that huge crowd?

Etsy has gotten way too big. When someone enters doll clothes or tote bags many pages come up and people have to wade through all those pages.

"Will they ever find my items?"

I don't know enough about it and haven't taken the time to investigate yet. I also am afraid of my photography skills and that is a the big part of the sale. The shipping also scares me.

Question Three

Question
03

Please finish this sentence, "I like Etsy because..."

Answers Included:

I like Etsy because the community is so helpful and sharing and the marketplace is not overrun with imported high volume factory made items.

It makes the whole process of listing items and processing sales transactions easy. Everything is in one place and I only have to set up and monitor one site to track sales, invoices, posting etc.

I don't have to worry about the technical part of running an online shop. It also has a large fan base which helps me reach more shoppers than I could on my own.

It is still a fair market place for crafters, unlike EBay that feels more like a garage sale. Etsy has low insertion fees, with items staying on for months not just a week and it makes advertising easy since they have so many visitors.

I can usually expect to see people that respect and expect the prices sometimes associated with Handmade custom products. I don't see that with Ebay, where everyone is looking for the cheapest bargain.

It is user friendly. I am in the 60-plus age bracket and not particularly computer savvy. It was easy for me to set up my shop. There is plenty of support when it is needed. I doubt that my product would have been found if it hadn't been for Etsy.

"It is fresh everyday"

I do not feel I am a "computer person" but I am able to handle etsy. No start-up costs.

it's well known and my store front is open 24/7/365.

I like Etsy because it is easy to use I do not have to relist weekly there are no adds for other items.

It's fast and easy and I can put product out there as I complete it. For me that is a must.

their fees are low and I have a broad audience for my products.

Its easy to use. I need to sell all the things I make!

Reaches a large population, I set the prices unlike auction sites.

It focuses on handmade items and not all the other stuff.

it's easy to set up a store-front and list items.

It provides me with a way to share my love of sewing with more than just family and friends. It is easy to list my offerings and a place to direct friends to what I make and sell.

I can find anything. And I like that I'm supporting people like me.

you can find unique and interesting things from REAL people!

It's the only venue I know.

It is easy and pricing seems fair. Like eBay, this is where all the traffic is and you have to be seen to sell. I am not ready to set up my own site.

I've always like to purchase directly from artists. I'm lucky that I live where there are lots of artists around. Etsy gives me the ability to purchase from even more artists.

you have a shop without all the extra time and money need for a physical shop.

It is affordable and reaches a huge client base

Most people on Etsy appreciate handmade items and are willing to pay for items that are not made in China.

It is fun to have your own page like your own store.

I like to SHOP on Etsy because there are some very cool things! I really don't like the Etsy platform to sell on because I think there is WAY too many AG clothing shops. Very hard to get found on Etsy.

people shopping there are not in search of the lowest price option, but rather are looking for quality goods that are manufactured on a small scale.

It is less expensive to sell on Etsy than on Ebay and without all the rules that Ebay has.

Comparison pricing. Gives me a different "sort". See things that are not at EBAY or Pixiefaire.

The store set-up is easy, label shipping is easy, and a lot of people know about Etsy now so it isn't that hard to sell items.

I like Etsy because it doesn't charge as many fees and doesn't have the same restrictive rules (as eBay). Example - I can de-activate a listing from Etsy to sell off line or when I did craft shows - I no longer so so. I ebay if I sell to someone local and end the listing I still have to pay the final value fee and they charge that on shipping as well. When they started that I found it outrageous.

You can shut it down and go on vacation

I can work from home & not have to cart inventory around.

It's easy to use, I can focus on creating my products and have a resource that handles web design, checkout and inventory management.

I feel like I've made friends. I feel that it is friendlier than eBay. I like handmade items and vintage items.

I like Etsy because it's simple.

the staff behind Etsy are always working on great ways to improve the selling experience for us, making everything easier to use, giving us new features that help us make a great shopping experience for our customers!

It is cost efficient and easy to use

it reaches people with higher incomes.

More up market than ebay

Question Four

Question
04

Please finish this sentence, "I get frustrated with Etsy because..."

Answers Included:

I get frustrated with Etsy because I don't understand their "relevancy" searching. I can search for my own items soon after listing and they do not show up in the first few pages of search. I have to take the time to learn all the tricks to show up in their search algorithms.

It seems I'm competing with a lot of other sellers selling the similar designs at extremely low prices and when I go to Etsy I tend to get carried away looking at what everyone else is posting and favorite and I seem to waste quite a bit of time there when I could be sewing my next garment to list for sale.

Sometimes it's hard to get noticed with all the other sellers competing for the same consumer attention.

They do not follow their own rules. For example pornography, I have had to report this violation many times.

My business is moving slowly on Etsy. The pricing isn't bad, but sales are not moving like I'd like them to. That will come with exposure and getting more stock in my shop. It just takes time.

There are improvements that have been suggested and that it seems could have been made that are not on Etsy's priority list (like improving "vacation mode." However, I generally do not get frustrated with Etsy.

It is very difficult to find my own shop and items. They want you to purchase key locations and promotions which runs up my business costs.

There are people who undercharge for their doll clothes, creating a race for the bottom in prices.

the listing process can be a pain.

I can put in size and weight of the item and have them figure out the cost of shipping based on location of my customer.

as with any website like it, there are so many products in each category that items get lost in the masses.

Buyers won't leave feedback. If asked, they admit they love my handmades. Even after a suggestion, they still won't leave a review. This could be hurting my business.

Lots of people are looking but few are buying and it's hard to make your shop stand out.

it's so saturated that it's extremely difficult to stand out. People also under-price their doll outfits. How can I compete with someone who sells a doll dress for \$15 when it takes 4-5 hours plus materials to make it? I can't.

I have not been frustrated by etsy - yet.

Shipping to Canada can be expensive, and some shops don't ship to Canada.

I pay a lot in advertising and don't get a return from it, plus I have no way of verifying what they charge me, I have to trust they are being honest!

Promotions now cost by a price for a word used as a tag when I promote my shop. Some tags are very pricy if someone decides to look at something I have for sale when promoting.

The search capability isn't as good as it could be.

There are so many inferior doll clothes there. Cheap prices hurt those of us who strive for excellence.

The item descriptions at the top of the page where you create the listing is often not broad enough, or is too narrow. There need to be more choices.

There are so many people selling similar items to mine that the market is flooded.

I don't think their search engines are very effective. I get very few views and very few sales. I also sell on eBay, Facebook and craft shows. Everyone seems to love my items and I sell alot on these other platforms, but Etsy just doesn't seem to bring in buyers for me.

There is a huge learning curve if you want to use it successfully. Just posting items in a shop won't get you where you need to be and it's hard to carve out time to educate yourself when you're also trying to produce goods. It's also daunting trying to find all the information you are looking for.

Won't let me sort by "lowest, including shipping first". Don't like the "sorts" necessarily. You have to click on the item in order to see much about it. Too many listing are duplicates. Too many people list "irrelevant" items under various categories just to get them listed.

Well it's not their fault but I get frustrated because I've been on it over a year and only have 3 sales.

The only thing that frustrates me is their algorithm for search results. You can have our titles and tags perfect and still have items not show up in the first 20 pages of any given search result. Without items showing up in those first 20 pages (preferably the first 5), random Etsy shoppers never see your stuff.

It is so easy to get lost in the huge crowd.

My items don't sell on Etsy. I offer a good product (handmade doll clothes)--well made--photographed well, good descriptions, with fair prices. Very few views, hardly any sales. I've had 2 sales this year & one was from a good friend for her granddaughter.

I am not making the sales. I think there is too much competition for doll clothes now.

It is hard to get noticed in the sea of people making doll clothes.

There are so many others selling what I make.

My pictures and descriptions are never on the first page and I think customers will not have time to go through many pages.

Change comes s-l-o-w-l-y!!!! There are some issues (listing and shipping profiles to name a couple) that are discussed but have not been resolved for me.

To promote your work you have to pay fees. I don't feel like they help us the average crafters to market our work.

I get frustrated with Etsy because there are limits to what it can do. It also seems to be going away from supporting individual shops, where they want to make every storefront to look the exact same way. Also they seem to be going away from handmade, by allowing more mass-produced sellers, supply shops and vintage sellers.

The price wars

Question Five

Question

05

Please finish this sentence, "If I could get Etsy to change one thing it would be..."

Answers Included:

If I could get Etsy to change one thing it would be to ask them to provide more search options, especially completed item searching as eBay offers.

Get a GOOD mobile seller's app for smart phones. I'd love to be able to manage my shop and correspondence from my phone when I'm on the go.

Vacation Mode. I would love it if your shop could be left open during vacation with a message and ship date shown at checkout.

Make the search categories more specific. "Handmade" includes too many things that are not related to my business and must be sifted through to get to the good stuff.

Searching for shops.

Develop templates that sellers can customize and use.

Adding more customized shipping

To make stricter, their rules about selling handmades and supplies for handmades. Etsy is too clogged up with irrelevant JUNK and you can't find handmades.

To allow more pictures and tags.

It would be nice to have a detailed e-book that is free once you sign up to sell on etsy, that gives you all the information, does and don'ts and user suggestions, on how to set up and run your shop. Maybe like a owner's manual when you buy a camera or other item that comes with an owners manual. I did get a book from the library, that I

eventually bought for myself off of Amazon that was extremely helpful, but a lot of it is outdated now. Etsy could simply change their ebook and then email or post notifications of changes. If they are there now, I don't know where.

Their advertising rate are outrageous.

I'm not sure - I think they need to beef up their search engines. Maybe feature some new shops to give everyone a chance.

A lower cost to list digital items, which are priced lower than material goods. It's much harder to build in the cost of the posting to a digital item.

Home business even in private home boutiques now have people with home businesses that bring in "made in China" items or purses, pictures, etc. that are obviously not homemade. Etsy needs to get back to their original basis of why they started Etsy. Just too big and frustrating as it seems disorganized to me.

Their ridiculous new review system. You should be able to leave FEEDBACK based on the seller's performance, not a review on, for example, a pattern you may not get to for 6 months. On Etsy I feel like if I don't leave that review right away, the seller will be upset that I didn't leave something. But if I wait till I use the pattern, heck sometimes it takes me a year to use it. Etsy's review system no longer provides any insight as to the seller itself and does little or no good when it comes to wanting to see how a particular pattern performed. Most people do like I do and say "Cute pattern, can't wait to try it!" Yeah real helpful! I don't see why they can't be like Amazon and have both feedback and reviews (which would be optional and when you actually HAVE some constructive comments to make)

To make it easier for the consumer to find what they are looking for.

Their 'webinars' & seminars seem to be for the high volume seller. They seem to be getting away from the small crafter & cater to the high volume seller -- just like eBay.

to create storefronts that can be organized better visually by subject, product or target market. They may already do this and I just haven't found it yet, but it would be nice to have a clean, simple storefront when searching for items by subject.

The way items appear in your store. You can set them up in groups, but unless someone clicks on your group, the last one posted is always on top.

If I could get Etsy to change one thing it would be to pick if they want to be a handmade marketplace or if they just want to be a hodgepodge marketplace.

Question Six

Question

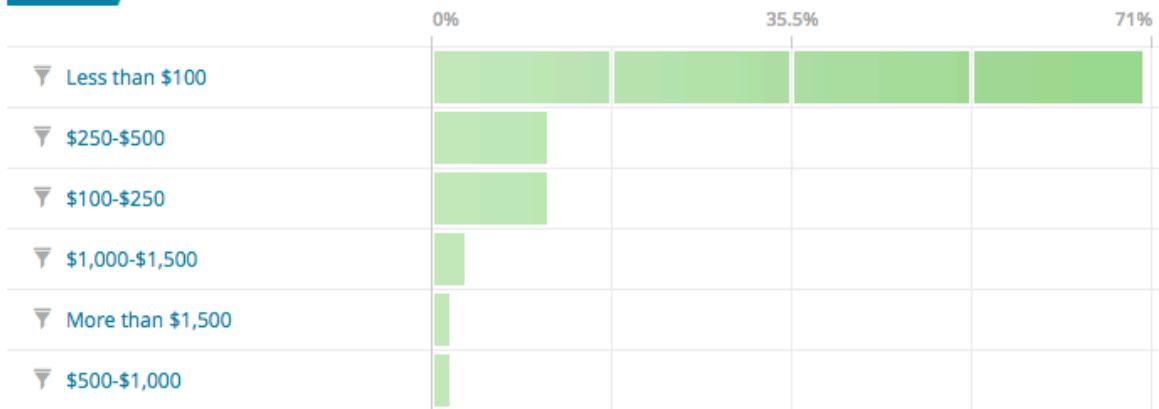
06

My Monthly Income From Etsy is on average...

Question

06

My Monthly Income From Etsy is on average...



Question Seven

Question 07

My Best Recommendation For An Etsy Newbie is...

Answers Included:

Learn how to take top quality photos and fill your store! I haven't had more than 10 items in my store at any one time, and the buzz in the community forums is that you should have 50 or more items to make steady sales. It makes sense, because the more items you have listed, the more possibilities YOUR item will be found in search. Once someone finds even one of your items, hopefully they will be enticed to take a look around your store!

If you're not computer savvy and you want to start selling online Etsy is probably one of the easiest online shop fronts you can set up. Remember though just because you have an Etsy shop doesn't mean you'll get sales... you still need to market your shop and let people know you exist.

Get your act together (photos, descriptions, policies) before you open. Study other sellers you like who are successful to get inspired. Don't be afraid to ask questions!

Make your shop look professional.

Patience, join lots of teams, and promote, promote, promote.

Read, Read, Read. Read all of Etsy's information on setting up shop and rules and regs. Then, participate in forums. You can learn a lot from the forums and teams.

Be specific. Do not try to sell everything you make at once. Refresh your shop regularly. Learn how to coordinate Pinterest and Facebook with Etsy.

Study the competition.

Research shipping prices to make sure you are not under charging. Shipping prices can be shocking.

Do your homework and research before listing items. Develop a template to record your information. Take your pictures and determine pricing before you actually sit down to upload your listings. Cut and paste from Word is your friend.

Do not try to do everything at once. Take your time to learn what etsy offers.

Be patient! Make your product stand out from the rest and above all market yourself. It is like starting a store in a building. If you do not put up a sign, no one will find you.

To add items daily. I believe this is the trick to keeping your items toward the top of the search results. I have found that it works better to add 100 items over a month than to add all 100 items in one day. Also, take great pictures and have very specific descriptions. Be patient.

Find a niche and don't give up!!

Keep working on your shop, check your stats and make changes to your shop accordingly. Also, look at the shops that come up most frequently in searches and try to figure out how they are doing it then make changes so your shop comes up more often, more views give you a better chance someone will buy from you.

Learn some marketing skills. Copy-writing skills and some basic picture-taking skills are key.

Make sure your work is as close to perfect as possible; learn to take great photos; write great descriptions.

Ask lots of questions! There is a lot of help if you go to a facebook group, where members sell online....people seem willing to help you get started.

Shop around and take your time looking.

Make your photographs pop!

Etsy has lots of info to help you market your stuff, subscribe to seller newsletter.

Gut it up and try. Who knows what will sell. Price to earn what it cost you to make the and price to make a profit.

Follow some people that have interesting items and watch your activity feed. That's how I frequently find new artists.

Try to find a narrow market and sell to that one market.

Find a mentor who can show you how to use it.

Keep posting and don't give up

Look at your competitors' listings to compare pricing, how they are listed, etc. You really need to know what else is out there before you set your listing in stone.

Be sure you are ready before you open your shop to the public. Learn to take good pictures and know what other people are selling similar items for.

I would recommend a newbie to avoid Etsy and try somewhere else.

Take good pictures. Nothing turns a buyer off faster than unappealing product shots.

It takes a while to get a following. Hang in there.

Originally I was making over \$500 close to \$1,000 a month. I discontinued because I could do more on my own just by putting on Facebook or blogging what I was making. Trying to think positive that the items making will even be found with the tons of others that are doing the same thing with LJ.

be prepared for very low sales.

#1, take excellent pictures and write a good description of the product. #2. Research the product on etsy to see how other vendors price their product. #3. Be sure to ship quickly and send a thank you for the order and then follow up with shipping notice with tracking. # 4. If vendor accepts custom orders then give a realistic time to be made and shipped.

AG clothes are definitely saturated! Do something different to stand out from the crowd. I should listen to my own advice.

Learn how to title and tag your items. There is even a team that explains everything in great detail! Again, if you don't do this correctly and your items don't show up in a given search query you will never be found. If you can't be found, you can't make a sale, no matter how amazing your product is.

Look around Etsy for items similar to what you have to sell. Get an idea of the market for your item.

What has been told to me is HANG ON!

A tutorial on how to use it explained in plain English. Maybe a book called "Social Networks for Dummies"

Keep the quality top notch and don't under price. Include your company label inside all clothing and on the packaging. If the customer is not satisfied, do whatever is necessary to make them happy, even if it means replacing an item at your expense.

Make sure you know your competition.

Make new American Girl doll designer clothes that are one of a kind.

Make sure you have lots of items made so you can list something almost everyday or more than once a day to get exposure.

List constantly. Keep large inventory. Do custom work.

Be patient. It takes a while for people to find you!

It is better to go overboard on your descriptions than to not have enough said about your item(s).

Choose your market carefully.

To be patient for your sales.

Start slowly, ask lots of questions, join teams and participate in forums!

You have to market your work other places as well as etsy. Etsy alone doesn't work.

Take it slow and be careful of your pricing structure, otherwise you'll be giving away your creations.

My best recommendation for an Etsy newbie is to have loads of patience! There are many other people selling the same as you, so sometimes it takes a lot of work to get noticed. Also, join a team to help with your networking!

Read a lot... promote... find a seasoned Esty mentor.

Keep studying and tweaking! The Etsy Seller Handbook and forums are so full of great information to boost your shop!

Space out your listings so you can get in recent listings more often

Email marketing!

Question Eight

Question
08

My Best Marketing Strategy For Etsy Is...

Answers Included:

I don't have a marketing strategy at this time, which is one of my problems!!

So far Facebook has been my best strategy as this is where most of my traffic is coming from. I probably could be using Facebook to drive traffic more to my own website if I had my store set up there instead of driving my potential customers to Etsy where a lot of my competitors are.

Be unique, GREAT quality, and offer more than is expected.

Add new items regularly.

Pay attention to what products in your store are moving and getting attention. Those are the products you don't want to run out of.

Post on Pinterest.

Facebook has been helpful, and checking my Shop Stats to see what keywords people are putting in their searches.

Take good pictures. List a few items every couple of days. Lots of inventory in your store is a good thing (10+ items - you don't need 473 patterns).

List often (which I do not do) and use social media (again something I do not do as often as I should).

Carry your business cards everywhere. These days just about everyone is connected to someone who has a need for doll clothing. Make sure that your email, Facebook, etsy and permanent store address are listed.

I love to market in Joann's when I go fabric shopping. People always ask me what I am going to do with the cute fabric. There is my in for a new customer. So I do the reverse and open a conversation and ask them first. This works anywhere. Even in the dollar store!

Kinda like a bump? Just keep listing new items so you are out there getting noticed. Also, quality is more important than quantity.

Get your product out there, get it seen every where you can, I am getting lots of traffic from instagram and still need to incorporate pinterest and facebook more! All these media outlets can drive people to your shop!

Take pictures that stand out and always use an American Girl Doll as a model. Knock-off dolls send a subliminal message to people that you're making a knock-of product, regardless of how well-made the product may be. Invest in a good model.

Create an online presence and support it regularly.

I take the best photos I can write the best story and try to price it to come close to minimum wage for my labor. Usually it's less.

Keeping store inventory fresh, great pics, writing good descriptions, keywords.

Pictures. Descriptions. Promote for seasons.

Use other venues. I've done give aways on other blogs, which gets me pretty good traffic.

I have paid for Etsy promotions and I promote my Etsy shop on Pinterest and Facebook.

Trying to build up a loyal customer base and getting involved with groups that help members get more exposure.

Quality products at reasonable prices.

Tweeting the outfits as I add them, showing them off on my Facebook page, being in doll groups on Facebook because some of the people, even if they sew, will be interested and buy an item. I made 2 of my 3 sales that way.

Proper titles and tags along with an Instagram account.

Good pictures. Good descriptions, good policies. Be transparent so no one is disappointed.

Integrating it with other social media.

Excellent quality leads to great feedback which leads to more sales.

Sell lots of American Girl Doll designer doll clothes that are new and one of a kind,

List constantly. Use flashy fabrics

Connecting it with Facebook and advertising through kijiji

Still learning a lot! My daughter has done some Instagram posting, I began a facebook account, but I think our partnership with Liberty Jane has probably been our best marketing strategy for our Etsy shop.

To make sure I have really great photos and descriptions. One of a kind items seem to sell the best for me.

Staying current with trends and marketing "language".

To put new items on regularly. That way those friends who have favorite your shop will see you regularly. It won't get stale.

My best marketing strategy for Etsy is to be diligent in social media networking. And join a team, like previously stated. Having people who share your need to promote their businesses helps tremendously!

to keep listing new items. I try to list, or at least renew 1-2 items per day, and that keeps my shop looking fresh, and my listings up at the top of searches. I also keep on top of my photos, rotating main listing photos out with new ones to keep things looking fresh, and am constantly tweaking my titles and keywords based on popular searches I see coming into my shop. Etsy's stats are great for that!

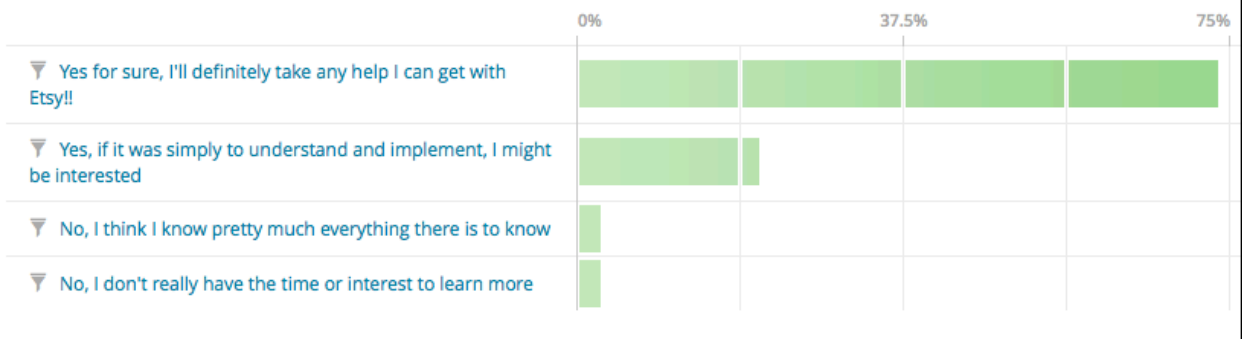
Question Nine

Question
09

I Really Need and Want Help Improving On Etsy

Question
09

I Really Need and Want Help Improving On Etsy



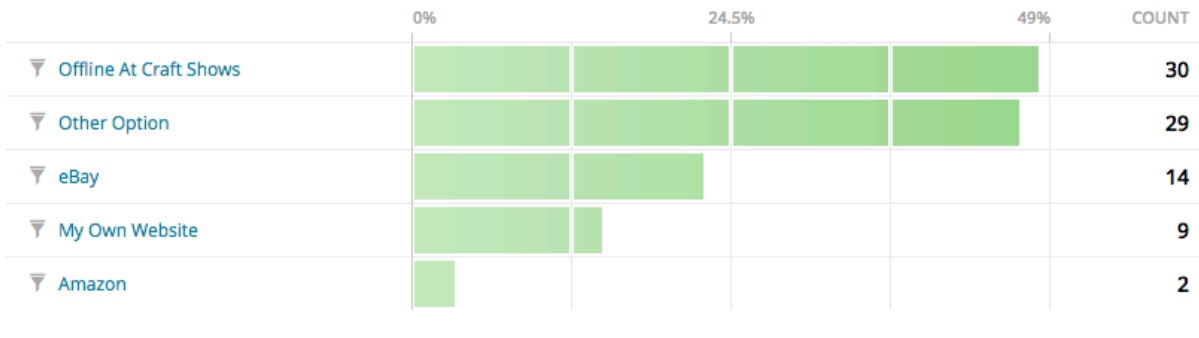
Question Ten

Question
10

Besides Etsy, I Also Sell On...

Question
10

Besides Etsy, I Also Sell On...



Conclusion

Etsy is a reasonably good platform for listing items. However, as many people have indicated in this report, our best advice is to begin learning how to build your own following via email marketing and social media. Find related tips and strategies at <http://www.makesellgrow.com>

We hope this report has encouraged you to keep trying new things - and to continue learning!

All the very best,

Jason & Cinnamon Miles
Liberty Jane Clothing