

ETSY POWER

12 Proven Principles For Etsy Sellers

By Jason G. Miles

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Etsy POWER
12 Proven Principles For Etsy Sellers

By Jason G. Miles

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Jason G. Miles is the co-founder of Liberty Jane Clothing and manages the marketing, writing, branding, and social strategy.

He teaches online and traditional marketing at Northwest University's School of Business Management. He holds a graduate degree in Business Administration, as well as undergraduate degrees in both Organizational Management and Biblical Studies.

About Liberty Jane Clothing

[Liberty Jane Clothing](#) started as an eBay store, achieving power-seller status within only a few months. Today, Liberty Jane is a fast growing small business focused on delivering exceptional designs for the doll market as well as educational programs and tools for sewing enthusiasts and craft business owners.

In 2009, the company began selling patterns as PDF files. With over 450,000 patterns downloaded from their site, <http://www.pixiefaire.com>, the site has become the #1 online source for doll clothes patterns. Working with over 20 independent designers, the site frequently publishes new patterns in support of many doll types and design traditions.

In 2010, the company started the Liberty Jane Partners program. By creating and publishing resources like this e-book, Liberty Jane encourages and assists sew-from-home entrepreneurs in using the patterns as the basis for their businesses. Now more than 1,400 partners work with Liberty Jane Clothing, taking advantage of this opportunity to earn additional income. Learn more about the Liberty Jane Partners program <http://www.makesellgrow.com>.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	IX
PRINCIPLE #1	2
PRINCIPLE #2	6
PRINCIPLE #3	11
PRINCIPLE #4	17
PRINCIPLE #5	22
PRINCIPLE #6	27
PRINCIPLE #7	33
PRINCIPLE #8	38
PRINCIPLE #9	43
PRINCIPLE #10.....	48
PRINCIPLE #11.....	53
PRINCIPLE #12.....	58
THE ETSY SURVEY.....	65
SURVEY QUESTION ONE - "IS ETSY A BIG PART OF YOUR MONTHLY BUSINESS INCOME?"	66
SURVEY QUESTION TWO - "FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T USE ETSY, WHY NOT?"	68
SURVEY QUESTION THREE - PLEASE FINISH THIS SENTENCE, "I LIKE ETSY BECAUSE..."	70
SURVEY QUESTION FOUR - PLEASE FINISH THIS SENTENCE, "I GET FRUSTRATED WITH ETSY BECAUSE..."	76

SURVEY QUESTION FIVE - PLEASE FINISH THIS SENTENCE, "IF I COULD GET ETSY TO CHANGE ONE THING IT WOULD BE..."	82
SURVEY QUESTION SIX - "MY MONTHLY INCOME FROM ETSY IS ON AVERAGE..."	86
SURVEY QUESTION SEVEN - "MY BEST RECOMMENDATION FOR AN ETSY NEWBIE IS..."	87
SURVEY QUESTION EIGHT - "MY BEST MARKETING STRATEGY FOR ETSY IS..."	94
SURVEY QUESTION NINE - "I REALLY NEED AND WANT HELP IMPROVING ON ETSY"	99
SURVEY QUESTION TEN - "BESIDES ETSY I SELL ON..."	100
ETSY SURVEY CONCLUSION	101
CONCLUSION	103

Introduction

By Jason G. Miles

In November 2012 we started to get serious about selling on Etsy in support of our pattern marketplace business - [Pixie Faire](#). Since then we've learned a lot about the capabilities and limitations of the Etsy platform.

I'll be honest - this book is not intended to give you the "cool aid drinkers" version of the how to use Etsy. I'm not saying I have a love-hate relationship with the site, but it does have limitations that are important for everyone to understand.

I hope you can respect my honesty - If I was a pure cool aid drinking cheerleader for Etsy I'd say so - but sadly, it's more complicated than that.

Why do I have mixed feelings about Etsy?

On the one hand - we've had good results with it. Specifically, since we started our latest shop on November 6, 2012, we've had:

93,624 Shop Views
322,272 Listing Views
1,860 Shop Favorites
21,540 Listing Favorites
3,675 Orders
Sales of over \$30,000

Those are meaningful numbers - so I've got to give it real respect for that reason. You can see what we do here:

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/PixieFairePatterns>

On the other hand - Etsy has got some very serious downsides that cannot be ignored.

What are they?

Let me mention the more challenging parts of Etsy right up front and then weave the solutions into the contents of this book in the upcoming chapters.

If you read this and think the downsides outweigh the benefits - then don't even bother with Etsy. But if you read this (and this entire book) and say,

"Okay, I'm going into Etsy with my eyes wide open - I understand the pros and cons."

Then great!

First Challenge - I'm not in complete control. I am not a huge fan on building my business on someone else's platform. I did that before (on eBay) and it's not a good idea. The reasons are obvious - they change things that you don't want to have changed. As Michael Hyatt says, "Don't build a house on rented property."

The solution of course is to make your Etsy shop part of your business, (technically a sales channel), but don't allow it to become your entire business. Create a brand that stands up on it's own outside of Etsy.

Second Challenge - Etsy has no pricing controls, which allows unwise sellers to create a pricing "race to the bottom".

There is no easy solution to combat this challenge. This site flaw can really do serious damage to any online seller and their brand. The only answer is refusing to compete on price - and then focus on building a reputation (brand) that has real pricing power.

Third Challenge - It is very difficult to stand out in Etsy.

The solution to this challenge is to do everything you can do stand out in Etsy, but realize there are true limitations and that you need to develop alternative marketing methods.

So that's my list of concerns with Etsy. In the following chapters of this book I outline marketing methods and techniques to try to help you succeed in Etsy while avoiding these downsides.

What You'll Find In This Book

This book is a combination of several types of content.

First, I have some original writing, which hasn't been seen before - sharing my thoughts on how to be successful on Etsy.

Second, I've included articles from my weekly newsletter at, (www.makesellgrow.com), that are relevant to selling on Etsy. I've tweaked them to fit this context, but if you're a weekly reader of my newsletter then you'll recognize them.

Third, I've included the results of a recent survey we did about Etsy. I think you'll find the answers very interesting.

What this book is not

This is not a technical, step-by-step, guide to getting set up on Etsy. There are lots of tutorials and guides available for how to do that - most obviously - right on Etsy itself. If I could recommend on "step-by-step" guide it would be [Etsy Empire](#) by Eric Michael. It is a very solid practical technical guide.

I hope this book helps you on your small business journey. If it does - I'd truly appreciate your highest and best review on Amazon. Thanks in advance for that - it's a big deal.

All the very best,

Jason G. Miles

Lake Tapps, WA

Section One:

How Branding Helps Your Etsy Business

*"Your premium brand had better be
delivering something special, or it's
not going to get the business."*

-Warren Buffett

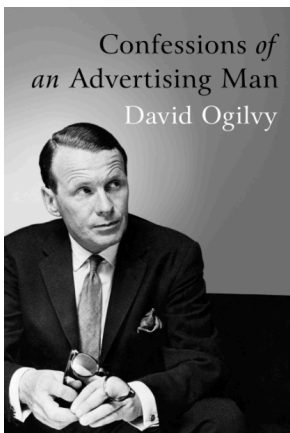
Principle #1

Branding With David O

Our best recommendation is that you build a meaningful brand that will work well on Etsy and also off Etsy.

How do you do that? We can look to the father of modern advertising - a guy named David Ogilvy. He wrote the book on the topic. He was the ad man for Rolls Royce, Dove soap, and many other iconic brands. He created Ogilvy & Mather an enormously successful advertising agency. He was brilliant at getting products launched, sold widely, and

installed as the #1 brand in their category.



Could He Do It For You?

If Ogilvy were hired to be the ad man for your small business (we'll assume you sell on Etsy) what would he say to you?

Here are a few quotes and actionable principles that we

think you might here him say. We've modified his original comments slightly to fit our topic (our words are bolded) but other than that - these are his original sentiments.

*"In the modern world of **Etsy selling**, it is useless to be creative unless you can also sell what you create."*

Step #1 - Focus On Sales

David was laser-beam focused on the sales process and believed strongly in the power of advertising to make sales happen. He goes on to say,

"If it doesn't sell - it isn't creative."

Step #2 - Sales Equals Success

Lots of people can make creative products... but if the sales results aren't there, then the product is a dud.

*"There isn't any significant difference between the various brands of ...cake mixes, whiskey, detergents, or **Etsy items**... **The Etsy seller** who dedicates her advertising to building the most sharply defined personality for her brand will get the largest share of the market at the highest profit."*

Step #3 - Stand Out

The strongest brand wins. Spend your time and energy creating a powerful brand concept and constantly do things to reinforce it.

"Advertising is only evil when it advertises evil things."

Step #4 - Don't Despise Advertising

Ogilvy didn't consider advertising as an art or entertainment. He considered it a method of sharing information. If your product is good - people will appreciate hearing about it. You should never be shy or ashamed of boldly proclaiming the truth about your work.

*"The more informative your **Etsy listing**, the more persuasive it will be."*

Step #5 - Include Details

You'd be surprised how many doll clothes sellers fail to list even the most basic facts about their items, let alone the nuances.

Do you include all the relevant facts about your doll clothes in your listing - a money back guarantee, a biography about yourself, an FAQ, details about how to find and follow you on social media, etc?

*"If you ever have the good fortune to design a great **Etsy item**, you will soon see another person steal it."*

This is irritating, but don't let it worry you; nobody has ever built a brand by imitating somebody else's work."

Step #6 - You'll Be Copied

Don't focus on your copiers; focus on the unfinished projects that you know will blow your customer's minds. If you're good people will copy - it's unavoidable.

"You have to decide what 'image' you want for your brand. Image means personality. Products, like people, have personalities, and they can make or break them in the market place."

Step #7 - Build Your Brand

Work to ensure that every sales event you create, every ad, every website, or blog post adds distinct and memorable element to your overall brand.

Action Steps

David Ogilvy joined the ranks of the dearly departed in 1999, so you're on your own when it comes to creating powerful advertising. But if you stick to these seven principles – you'll be well on your way to nailing it. You can do it!

Principle #2

Your Story Well Told

In the last chapter we looked at the work of David Ogilvy, the father of modern advertising methods. Now we'll zero-in on one of his most compelling ideas and figure out how to apply it to an Etsy business. He said,

***"The most sharply defined personality...
will get the largest share of the market at the
highest profit."***

So the question that comes to mind is how exactly do you create a *"sharply defined personality"* for your brand?

One of the simplest ways to infuse your brand with personality is to identify, clarify, and frequently communicate YOUR personal story.

**When people bond with you -
they bond with your brand**

As craft sellers trying to stand out there are two tracks you can create that prospects can follow.

Track one is your personal story. Track two is your businesses story or personality. If you're just starting out - be sure to get your personal story documented properly. Get it well developed and treat it like the cornerstone of your brand.

Crafting your story can be a real struggle. You'll feel unsure of yourself, uneasy about how you word things, question your motives, reconsider your phrases, and rework your drafts over and over. That's okay. Keep at it. Continue to refine and clarify your story. Document it consistently in all the online sites you occupy.

2 Types Of Descriptor Statements

One way to do this is to have a powerful descriptor statement. That's a statement that describes who you are and what you're all about.

You want a short version of the statement, (4 or 5 sentences long) for use in situations that call for a brief statement.

You also want a longer descriptor statement (as long as you'd like) for use on your "About Me" pages and situations that call for a longer amount of content.

A descriptor statement is how people find out who you are, what you're all about, and whether they can relate to you or not. Let's look at our example of Cinnamon's short descriptor statement.

Example: Cinnamon's Short Story

Here is what we say about her on our websites:

Cinnamon Miles is the co-founder of Liberty Jane Clothing and has been called, "The Vera Wang of the 18 inch crowd". She is an official Brand Ambassador for Bernina - the world's premiere sewing machine company.

Her design work started when she was just 8, learning from her mom who worked for a Fashion Designer. After high school she studied in Europe and developed her passion for design as well as photography.

#4 Types Of Credibility Indicators

When you tell your story you want to include your best credibility indicators. A credibility indicator is any type of fact that implies you are a credible expert or recognized seller in your field. There are lots of ways to get and then use credibility indicators. Creatively look for them as you work to build your personal brand.

One caution, saying, "I've sewn for 40 years" doesn't convey credibility - yet lots of online seamstresses like that phrase. Lots of people sew badly their entire lives, so it's not a good phrase to use.

#1 - Who You Learned From

Did you learn from someone special, or did someone special inspire you? Even including a phrase like, *"I was inspired originally by the work of Bob Mackie"* can have a powerful impact.

#2 - Who You Work For

Do you have a customer base made up of credible people? Even saying a phrase like, *"I design for and sell to the doll collector community of Indianapolis"* is a powerful statement because it provides context.

#3 - Who You Associate With

Cinnamon became the brand ambassador for Bernina because we entered her in a contest (that only had three other entrants) and she won. Sometimes good credibility indicators come along in very ordinary ways.

#4 - Who's Featured Your Work

Has your work been featured by a prominent magazine, website, book, or TV Show? These are natural credibility indicators.

Action Step

Take a step back from everything you're doing and truly evaluate your pricing strategy at both the individual product (or service) level, and the overall business level. Are you following a pricing

strategy or are you acting randomly? Begin acting intentionally and create a pricing strategy today.

Principle #3

Branding Mistakes To Avoid

The most common question we get from new craft sellers is *"I'm thinking about using XYZ for my brand name, what do you think?"*

The truth is, people frequently suggest very bad naming ideas. A good name can create instant rapport and credibility. A bad name can permanently damage your opportunity to sell online.

What are the common mistakes people make? There are five we see all the time. Let's review them briefly.

Mistake #1 - Using Taken Terms

Any brand name is drastically hindered if it is forced to compete in the minds of the prospects with other concepts. Unless you've got a billion dollar marketing budget, don't try to "spend" your way into the mind of the prospect - choose unclaimed turf.

For example, why create a brand name like, "Vera's Clothing Co." if "Vera" is a common women's names in America? Instead consider unique terms and phrases.

Words can be wisely strung together to create a unique name. For example, while "Vera's Clothing Co." might not be unique, "Vera Wang" is a unique and memorable name. Michael isn't unique, but "Michael Kors" is. What tricks can you use to plumb the depth of uniqueness?

#1 - Proper Names

#2 - Locations or Places

#3 - Made Up Words (called Neologisms)

The primary test for any brand name is - *is it memorable?* Creating a splinter in the mind of the prospect is your top priority.

Mistake #2 - Deciding Without Input

There are an unlimited number of awesome brand names still available. You simply need to brainstorm naming ideas until you find one worth keeping.

How do you know when you've found a winning name? Unfortunately there is no perfect test. Rather than wing it, or gamble on people's respect for the new name, you can simply test it. Create a survey, put a post on Facebook, or email your friends and

family. Just remember, people will say nice things to your face to avoid conflict, but if you give them an anonymous poll, you'll hear the truth. SurveyMonkey a nice (and free) tool.



Apple Computer's First Brand/Logo

Mistake #3 - No Deep Meaning

The wisest approach to branding is to create a name that is unique and also reinforces a unique or memorable idea.

If your name helps reinforce that unique and original concept it will help turn prospects into customers.

If your name doesn't explicitly suggest a unique or memorable concept, then you'll want to identify one and constantly tie it to your work.

At Liberty Jane clothing, we are attempting to tie the concept of American Made into our brand concept.

Mistake #4 - No Drum Beat

Brands need to be continually reinforced - with a steady drumbeat of demonstration, explanation, interpretation, communication, and success. Refresh them, invest in them, and improve them. It's a mistake to set up a name and then not reinforce it with frequent reimagination.

If you want a great brand, then you need to continually wow and impress people with a shockingly awesome display of success. Every small victory pounds the drum and over time people will dance to your beat like raving fans. How do you beat the drum? Tell people about your successes. I know, it's awkward for humble people, but if you don't do it - who will? No one. Do amazing things and learn to share about it in a way that is humble, gentle, and systematic.

Mistake #5 - Trademark Drama

If you've gone to the trouble to brainstorm a great name, then you need to take the next official step and ensure it's actually available. There are several steps.

#1 Google it to see if there is someone who has it in use. If not - great. However, if there is a name that is

very similar then you'll have to decide if you want to risk using it. There could be legal difficulties.

#2 Check with [Godaddy.com](https://www.godaddy.com) to see if the URL is available. If it is, buy it.

#3 Go through the formal Trademark process to claim the name for your use. It is a legal process that takes some time and money, but if you're serious about growing your business and protecting your brand - it's worth it. Do it cheaply via [LegalZoom](https://www.legalzoom.com).

Repairing Bad Brands

Was your brand name poorly chosen? If so, there's only one solution - change it. If you do it wisely, and include customers in the process, you can gain a lot of momentum and energy. You can make it an opportunity to build interest and respect for your work.

Action Steps

Forget about just selling on Etsy and focus on creating a brand that can stand on it's own. Use it both inside and outside of Etsy.

Section Two:

Launching Lots Of Fantastic Products In Your Etsy Shop

*"The last 10% it takes to launch
something takes as much energy as
the first 90%"*

*-Rob Kalin
Founder, Etsy*

Principle #4

Product Launches That Work

When it comes to the topic of creating and selling products - we get a very common set of questions. For example Candice recently asked us,

"I'd love to make trendy, cutting edge designs-but how do I avoid getting stuck with an inventory that was in style for a while, then gone?"

The answer is outrageously simple - sell everything you make. I know, it sounds too simple, but it's pretty much the only answer.

Some artisans hate the selling process. Others simply don't know what to do, so they do very little to sell their items. Others try for a short time, fail, and then conclude there is no-market for their items. Still others, a rare few, find a way to master the selling process, make it look easy, and find commercial success. One tried and true way to sell items is through a system called the Product

Launch Formula. An online marketer named Jeff Walker pioneered it. If you only have the mental and emotional energy to master one selling strategy - this would be the one to focus on.

Side note - Jeff recently published his book, "[Product Launch](#)" and although we haven't read it - if it's anything like his full course, (which we did go through), then you'll really enjoy it.

If you take the time to master product launch strategies you'll have a much easier time selling everything you make.

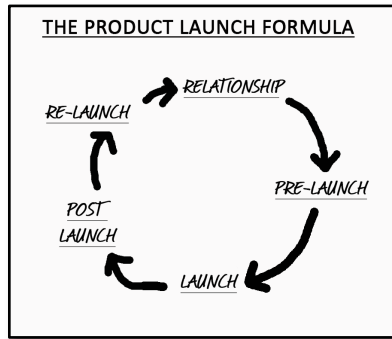
The Product Launch Formula

The product launch formula is a systematic approach to unveiling your new products in a way that engages buyers, over-comes objections, and builds enthusiasm for your work. It works for physical items, digital items, and even services. The process has proven to be successful in many different niches and industries.

Step One: Relationship Building

People buy from people they know, like, and trust. So the first step in the product launch formula is to engage in effective conversations with your prospects and buyers. There are several good ways to accomplish this step in a large-scale way. The first and best way is by having an email newsletter and regularly sharing details about your work.

Another great way is to use a social media tool like Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, or Twitter.



Some artisans design and sell for years without every building a communication system with their customers - which is a massive mistake.

Step Two: The Pre-Launch

In the pre-launch phase your job is to engage your prospects and customers in a dialogue about **WHAT** they'd like to have you make.

You can do this via surveys, polls, or simply having conversations. You also want to learn about their fears, worries, or frustrations with related products.

The key to success in the pre-launch phase is to get as many people mentally and emotionally invested in what you're doing as possible. Of course you have to listen to them and make things they are eager to buy.

A secondary job in the pre-launch phase is to build enthusiasm and intrigue about what you're making by sharing "sneak peeks". Getting people involved is the key. You also want to explain the details (dates, times, locations) of your upcoming launch. If you use email marketing, consider having at least three pre-launch messages go out.

Step Three: The Launch

The launch of your new product should be your "big event". Treat it like a big online party. Use your communication tools to share the details in an exciting way.

The launch phase can last for a few hours, a few days, or even weeks. You are in the launch phase until your items sell, or you make them unavailable.

One way to wisely manage this period is to only create in small batches, or even in a One Of A Kind (OOAK) method. If items are seasonal and haven't sold out, consider taking them down and saving them for a year. Or put them on sale, or find other creative uses for them.

Step Four: The Post-Launch

The post-launch period is vital. In the post-launch phase you want to collect testimonials and feedback about your work. These should be prominently

shared whenever possible. These help strengthen your brand and shape your future work.

Step Five: The Re-Launch

In the re-launch phase you "start over" building relationships, listening, and preparing for your next launch. The cycle repeats. Each time you go through the entire cycle you learn and adapt. You "perfect" the art of selling just like you perfect the art of creating your product.

Action Steps

The Product Launch Formula is designed so that customers get lots of chances to hear about what you're doing and support you. It is the best way to sell everything you make. You can do it.

Principle #5

The D.E.A.L. Method

Do you struggle with time management? Do you have lots of product ideas, but don't ever get them completely finished?

Many seasoned Etsy sellers say that one of the keys to success is frequently listing new items.

To do that you've got to stay organized. But keeping organized, on-track, and productive is a real challenge for many small business owners. Cinnamon and I both struggle with this topic!

In this chapter we'll share our best suggestions for staying organized and avoiding burnout.

Recently one of our partners, Tari, wrote and asked,

"What are some of your most effective time management tips? I am actually terrible at time management and before I know it, most of a day has passed and nothing has been accomplished. I

***have books but hearing it from real people
sometimes helps more!"***

When I told Cinnamon I was writing about this topic she started laughing - because neither of us feel like we're good at it.

Our problem? Well, we have lots of them, but one common one is over-commitment - trying to do too much, and frequent feelings of burnout.

Other people struggle with intense distraction that leaves them unproductive. They are constantly reacting instead of being pro-active.

But whether you're running too hard and ignoring the more important things in life, or distracted and achieving too little, the result is the same - intense frustration!

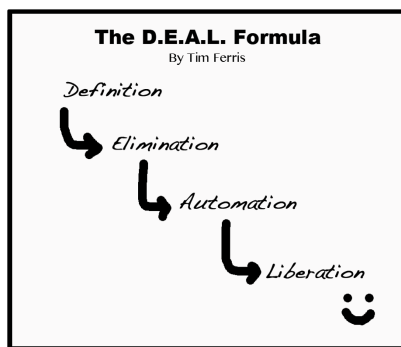
While you might not ever feel like an efficiency guru - everyone can learn to improve.

The Tim Ferris D.E.A.L. Model

Tim Ferris wrote [The 4-Hour Workweek](#) in 2007 and it has remained at the top of the best-seller lists for the last seven years. I have the audio book version and I find myself listening to it several times a year. He advocates a simple approach he calls the D.E.A.L. method.

D Is For Definition

The most critical issue involved in efficiency is defining the outcomes you want to have happen - and the outcomes you don't want to have happen. Goals are the most common way to achieve this. Goals are like a framework for business success - without them work turns into a giant blob of randomness. Do you have a daily goal for what you want to achieve? Do you have a monthly revenue goal? Do you have annual goals? Goals are your first tool to help you stay on-track.



E Is For Elimination

The 80/20 Principle, also known as Pareto's Law says that frequently 80% of the results will come from 20% of the actions. For example, 80% of the sales come from 20% of the customers. 80% of the success comes from 20% of the effort, etc.

Are there things you're doing that you can eliminate and still have a successful business? Are you trying to run two or three businesses within

your business, but not doing any of them well? It's time to get focused and eliminate non-vital activities.

A Is For Automation

Once you've identified the duties you need to personally do, it's time to "*sharpen the saw*" as Dr. Steven Covey calls it. That means take the time to get hyper-efficient at what you do. The height of efficiency is automation. Can you have someone else, or even a software system do your work for you?

A terrific example is typing up emails to new email list subscribers. Using Mail-Chimp's autoresponder system - you can have those messages sent out automatically when people sign up for your email list, rather than personally emailing every new subscriber. Do you have an autoresponder system set up? We'll talk more about email in the next chapter.

L Is For Liberation

In Tim Ferris' book he describes being totally burned out and wanting to go on an extended vacation to Europe. But his business required his constant attention - 24/7. So he started working on ways to get the work done without being personally involved.

Can you take a vacation and still continue to make money through your business? If not, you have a job, not a true small business. Begin working toward the goal of liberation.

3 Lists To Freedom

Author Chris Ducker has another great idea for creating efficiency. He encourages people to make "Three Lists To Freedom".

The first list includes things you hate doing.

The second list includes things you can't do well, but are important.

The third list includes things you shouldn't be doing and need to delegate.

Take your three lists and begin applying the D.E.A.L. method to them. It might change your life!

Action Steps

Efficiency is like exercise - some people don't seem to need it as much as others do, but everyone can benefit from focusing on it. Work your D.E.A.L!

Principle #6

The Secret Weapon

[An excerpt from Email Marketing Power]

In September of 2009, we had 125 names on our email list and we were desperate to grow sales for our small home-based business. We had started on eBay and didn't know how to sell anywhere beyond that site.

We weren't exactly sure how to make that happen. We started to look into email marketing as a way to grow sales and tried to learn everything we could.

From 125 to 25,000 Email Addresses

Fast forward three and a half years later, and we have over 25,000 names on our primary email list and several thousand more on secondary lists. We add between 500 and 1,000 new prospects each month with no sign of slowing down.

This change from 125 to over 25,000 has revolutionized our business results. In January of 2013, we added 2,395 new subscribers to our email

list alone. Needless to say, we are huge fans of email marketing.

Update - as of the summer of 2014 we now have over 45,000 names on our email lists.

Email Marketing Power is an explanation of the specific strategies and approaches we've used to accomplish these results, as well as lessons and insights we've collected over the last few years.

We certainly don't consider ourselves experts at email marketing, but we've learned a lot and want to share it with you.

The person we learned this lesson from is named Jim Cockrum. He is our mentor and friend. You can get his entire email marketing course for just \$7. Here is the link: <http://www.listbuildingclass.com>

You may wonder whether our revenue results have really been impacted by this successful email marketing work. Here are our recent results: Three years ago our total sales tripled, meaning they grew by over 300% in that year. The next year, they doubled, meaning they grew by over 200%. Last year, they doubled again.

And as I write this, total sales are on track to more than double, and possibly even triple this year. We've gone from a small home-based business to a thriving six-figure business, stretching to achieve a

million dollars in annual sales, which we think will happen next year or possibly the year after.

So we're a tiny little business, but we've figured out how to get the momentum going — the kind of momentum that many small home-based businesses don't ever achieve. Email marketing has played a huge part in that success.

But you don't have to take our word for it. In the spring of 2013, we were honored to receive an award and special recognition from Constant Contact, one of the largest email service providers online. Constant Contact's "All-Star" award is for successful email marketing work and is given to a few companies each year. These are generally small businesses that demonstrate exceptional skill in their email marketing efforts.

I share all of this about our company for one reason — to reassure you we are practitioners of email marketing and students of the topic. Our business results hang in the balance.

Can You Make \$2,000 in Ten Minutes?

Let me ask you a question: If you had to make \$2,000 in the next ten minutes because your life depended on it, could you do it? Most email marketers would answer, "Yes." Some with very large email lists would say, "I could make \$20,000 in ten minutes." A very few elite email marketers would say, "I could make \$200,000 in ten minutes."

How would they do it? They'd email their customers and offer a special promotion, incentive, contest, or give-away. They'd promote one of their products in a special way.

There are very few marketing methods in existence that can provide you with that type of marketing power.

Can You Become a Bestselling Author Today?

Let me ask you another question: If you published a book today, are you 100% sure that you could make it a bestseller?

If you have a reasonably good email list, then the answer is "yes."

As I mentioned previously, there are very few marketing methods that will allow you this much power.

If you grow an email list and learn to become an effective email marketer, you'll add a ton of marketing power to your current business efforts.

The tools are free, the process is simple to learn, and the results are undeniable. For the remaining chapters in this book, we'll document the "secrets" and explain the process by which you can become an all-star email marketer.

The Top Priority For Email Marketing

Effective email marketing is the result of learning two basic skills - if you master them, you'll achieve Internet riches.

If you're like me — and you read that sentence again carefully — it begs a whole set of questions, such as:

What are the two skills?

How do you master them?

Who do you learn them from?

Let's look at each question to see if we can nail down the exact ways email marketing can help you grow your small business.

What Are Those Two Skills?

The two skills needed for successful email marketing are name acquisition and content management.

Name acquisition simply refers to strategies for acquiring more email addresses.

Content management means producing emails that get opened, get read, and get your prospects and customers to take action.

Action Steps

If there is one marketing activity you begin to learn about and focus on - it should be email marketing.

Bonus info - you can open a MailChimp account, <http://www.mailchimp.com>, for free. Your account remains free until you get to 2,000 email addresses. So start there and begin to discover the power of this important marketing tactic. They even have a guide for online sellers. Get it here: <http://mailchimp.com/resources/guides/mailchimp-for-online-sellers/>

Principle #7

Mensa Members On Etsy

Ever wonder how a super genius would approach Etsy selling? If you've ever felt frustrated with your own limitations - you may have asked yourself - ***how would a super genius do all this stuff?***

Turns out the smart folks at MENSA, the society for geniuses, wrote a book outlining what it takes to do super genius level work. Who knew?

Trust me, I'm not a member - I don't even know what MENSA stands for, but I saw the book at Barnes & Noble, noticed the front section that had all the "genius traits" and thought -wow- and it had a pretty cover, so I picked up a copy.

The first part of the book is an easy to read guide and it explains the top traits of super geniuses. Not just the garden-variety smart folks, we're talking the best of the best - Mozart, Shakespeare, Edison, Tesla, Einstein, and other world-changers.

The second half of the book is filled with tests and puzzles that I didn't understand - so ignored that stuff. Anyway...

As it turns out genius is not just about having a high IQ. There are apparently lots of high IQ people that don't do anything amazing. Let's ignore them.

My theory is that maybe if we ordinary people adapt some of this stuff to our own work - we can "take it up a notch" and move into the realm of the gifted. Okay, probably not genius level, but it's worth thinking about!

So, if the world changing super geniuses were focused on sales and marketing, here is how they would approach it...

Trait #1 - Obsession

The one trait the MENSA people say all world changing super geniuses had was obsession for their work.

Their conclusion is that there are no 9-5 geniuses. No part-timers. No "mid-career" executives that people started to label as genius. Geniuses don't sleep in late and go to bed early. You don't half-heartedly get there.

The super geniuses sacrificed everything, including a massive amount of their time and energy so they could perfect their art, formula, business, craft, or

trade. They were obsessed with overcoming their own limitations related to their subject and did anything and everything to figure out how to improve, learn, grow, redefine, re-shape, and re-creating their topic.

This wasn't about money for them, in fact, many of them were never financially successful. They were unique and special because of their ability to get obsessed, and stay obsessed, with their topic. They could spend hours, days, weeks, years, and even decades perfecting their craft.

Trait #2 - Vision

Arthur Schopenhauer once said,

"Talent hits a target no one else can hit; genius hits a target no one else can see."

The second trait they discovered was that super geniuses had a unique vision for their topic and an inspired "perspective" that they developed for their work.

The world changing super geniuses studied the "best" teaches in their field, learned to master the established techniques and methods, and then they added their own insight to it. They worked until they had developed a signature approach or method.

It turns out the super geniuses all had a period of seeing their topic in a way that no one else saw it. Their vision for the subject changed the world. Their job at that point was to explain and teach their *"new way of seeing it"* to the world.

Trait #3 - Passing The Test Of Time

The MENSA folks also discovered that another test of true super genius is - the test of time. What they discovered was that there are lots of innovations and smart ideas but within a few years they are considered "out of date" "uninspired" or "antique notions".

The true test of genius is whether 100 years later people are still saying, "that person changed the history of this topic or field of study". This is a hard one of course, but it helps to step back and ask, *"Is my work going to be remembered in 100 years?"*

Trait #4 - Inspirational

As it turns out, super geniuses aren't considered super geniuses unless their work inspires the masses. Super geniuses have to capture the imagination of the general public - and get people inspired, motivated, and interested in their topic. As it turns out even super geniuses need a good marketing plan and the ability to be self-promotional in a good way!

Finding Your Super Genius

Let's be honest - none of us are going to be labeled a super genius marketer by the popular press or national media. But we can still apply these lessons. How?

Obsession is just another word for stubborn.

Vision is just another word for opinionated.

Passing The Test Of Time is just another word for old.

Inspirational is just another word for - gracious enough to share lessons with others.

Action Item

These are things we can do and as we do them we build our online sales and marketing muscles.

Go ahead and become obsessed.

Try out everyone else's approach and then create your own.

Find comfort in knowing you've been around the block a few times.

Find the time to help others. If you do these things - you'll be on your way to being a genius at your craft!

Principle #8

The 5 Threads Of Love

[Let's mix things up with a little story...]

Once upon a time there was a poor doll clothes seller that struggled to make a living at her trade. Then one day she discovered a magical thread hidden in a very old box.

The box, given to her by her wise old grandmother, wasn't very big or beautiful. When she used the thread in the box to make her doll clothes people were magically drawn toward her work.

To her astonishment the thread never ran out. Wisely, she decided to search the kingdom and see if there were any other old boxes like the one she had gotten from her grandmother.

She found four more boxes and quickly bought them. She now had five boxes with five threads. Each one created a powerful bond of love with people. She couldn't wait to use them all at the same time. On the exciting day when she created her first item with the thread from the five boxes

people came from miles away to look at her work. Her items became incredibly well loved by everyone who saw them and people began paying incredible prices just to own one of the items.

Then one day, as she was cleaning up her home office, she decided to polish the five wood boxes. To her astonishment, under a layer of dust and grim, each box had a word inscribed on the top written in an ancient text.

She searched the kingdom to find someone who could interpret the words and finally found a wise scholar who knew the language. Here is what each box said:

Box One: Your Story

Your story is the most powerful answer to the question, "*why should I buy from you?*" People don't bond with products they bond with people. When you tell your story - you bond with people and they bond with you. Their appreciation for your work immediately increases.

Do you have an "About Us" section wherever your items are sold? If so you will create a thread of love with your prospects and customers.

Box Two: Interesting Product Names

Doll clothes are an extension of a fantasy experience. So when you name your product

"Lightning Ridge", for example, you fan the flames of fantasy and emotional involvement. When you name your product *"White Top/brown Pants"* - your product crashes back to reality in the mind of the prospect. When you use interesting product names people will fall in love with your item.

How do you come up with interesting product names? Consider using locations, people, eras, or events. Search online to make sure it is not used anywhere else - and never use something that is Trade Marked by someone else.

Box Three: Product Stories

Your product story must follow directly from the product name. If you name your outfit "Treasure Island" then your story needs to explain why your outfit is named "Treasure Island".

A simple story, just two or three sentences long, which places a doll on an island with coconuts, palm trees, and pirates is all you need. People will fall in love with the story of your item.

Box Four: Detailed Product Description

You should describe each component of your outfit with detailed descriptions. Tell people what it was made out-of, how it was made, and the details involved in construction. Use the names of the fabric, where you purchased them, and what

sewing techniques you used. People will fall in love with your thoroughness and attention to detail.

Box Five: Unconditional Guarantees

People fear getting ripped off, misled, and taken-advantage of. When you include an ironclad money back guarantee you re-assure people that you are a good person. When people ask for a refund, and you give it to them without any hassle they are drawn toward you.

Action Steps

If you improve your copywriting, particularly with these five elements, you'll improve your sales. Make a simple checklist and include these five boxes, and be sure to always complete them every time you create a new outfit.

Section Three:

Pricing Your Etsy Products

"The moment you make a mistake in pricing you're eating into your reputation or your profits."

-Katherine Paine

Principle #9

Your Price Can Vary Depending On How Presold Your Prospect Is

[An excerpt from [*Craft Pricing Power*](#)]

If your prospects are eagerly awaiting your new product, then you can charge a lot more than if they aren't familiar with you or your product.

Pre-selling creates pricing power

Imagine a family preparing to go to Disneyland - are they going to stop the trip because Disneyland raised the price of the parking? No. They are so pre-sold that it doesn't matter.

Imagine if a customer has been waiting for two years for your new product to hit the market. Are they going to care if it's priced at \$19 rather than \$9.99? Probably not.

The price is not their primary focus.

Charlie Munger, the famous billionaire sidekick of Warren Buffett noted,

"There are actually businesses, that you will find a few times in a lifetime, where any manager could raise the return enormously just by raising prices—and yet they haven't done it. So they have huge untapped pricing power that they're not using. That is the ultimate no-brainer. ... Disney found that it could raise those prices a lot and the attendance stayed right up."

Ways To Pre-sell

There are lots of ways to pre-sell. Smart marketers know that the success of their product frequently depends on the amount of pre-selling that can be done before the product "hits the shelves". Here are six great ways to do pre-selling:

#1. Create complete products lines. A complete product line is a powerful pre-selling tool for your new product. Sure, Apple could have stopped after making the first iPod, but why not make them in all the fruit flavors? Why not make them in all the possible range of sizes, and with various amounts of storage? And once you've made the iPod, why not the iPhone? Most businesses aren't the most complete provider in their marketplace. That's usually a mistake. Customers seem to appreciate product lines that are complete and reward businesses by buying new items as they come out.

#2. Create product launches. A product launch is a pre-selling story that you begin telling months before your product hits the market. You explain what you're going to make, then you explain how it's going, then you explain all the details, benefits, and unique attributes. Then you finally launch the product. The master of this strategy was, of course, Steve Jobs. His new product demo presentations were a master class in pre-selling.

#3. Ask customers what they want. If you include the customer in the creation process - by surveying them - then tell them what the survey results indicated - then tell them about the new product - people are more apt to come along for the ride.

#4. People want to buy from people they know, like & trust. The very best way to pre-sell a person is to have already established credibility in their eyes. You do that over time. You do it by sharing your story. You do it by having a track record of really good products.

#5. Allow pre-orders and gift cards. If you can literally take pre-orders, or sell gift cards, (which are a form of pre-order), then your pre-selling isn't just theoretical touchy feely - it's cold hard cash. If you can take literal pre-orders, try it. The incredible rise of Kick-starter has proven that crowd funded projects have lots of appeal.

#6. Email people. Sadly, Etsy doesn't allow you the

tools to collect email addresses in your shop. So, you've got to get people to visit your Facebook page, or website, so you can get their email address. For example, on your Etsy "about" page, or in your greeting you could say, "visit my website and receive a generous 25% off coupon for your next Etsy order."

If you can collect email addresses from the people who purchase from you today, you have a zero cost marketing option as your next product comes out - simply email them with details about your product launch. If there is one pre-selling tool that is most critical - email marketing is it. If you'd like [49 Email Marketing Secrets, get them here.](#)

Fueling The Feeling

There are a few key emotions involved in being pre-sold. As a marketer, you want to evaluate your images, copywriting, and promotional activities to ensure that you are connecting on an emotional level. You want to do work that will fuel:

#1. Anticipation. According to Wikipedia, anticipation is, *"The process of imaginative speculation about the future"*.

#2. Trust. Trust in a retail context is earned as people begin to believe they will like and approve your "future actions".

#3. Hope. They say that in business *"hope is not a*

strategy", but when it comes to marketing, instilling hope in your customer's hearts is a great strategy. According to Wikipedia, *"hope is a feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best"*.

#4. Surprise. When you conduct an unexpected event you create a sense of surprise. Or, when people know you're event is coming up, but don't know what you're going to reveal, then you've set the stage for a fun surprise.

#5. Joy. In a retail context, joy is about happiness with the product, the buying experience, and the overall interaction with the company. Some products can deliver a deep level of emotional joy. But even with less emotionally charged product offerings, you can still create joy by your actions and the overall experience the buyer has with you.

Action Steps

Brainstorm ways you can develop complete products lines that make pre-selling easy. For example, consider how your products can "fit together" to make pre-selling feel natural and easy. Learn to create "launch stories" that generate interest and enthusiasm before your product is on the shelf, and if you don't already collect email addresses, start today.

Principle #10

Timing Creates Pricing Power

[An excerpt from [*Craft Pricing Power*](#)]

People are funny about when they'll pay a premium for an item they want. As a smart price-ologist you want to find these wrinkles in the Universe and set up shop there. Let's look at both the timing & the placement of your goods.

Timing Creates Pricing Power

In Principle #5 we talked about a family planning a trip to Disneyland and how the prices at Disneyland weren't going to deter them from going. That's because your price can vary depending on how pre-sold your prospect is.

But your price can also vary by when your customer encounters your product. Disneyland can charge premium prices for their gift shop items because people say in their head, *"We aren't going to be here again for a very long time - we better buy*

this t-shirt as a memento."

The Holiday Shopping season is the most top-of-mind example of how timing impacts pricing. But there are many other examples, such as:

- Back To School Shopping
- Mother & Father's Day Shopping
- Wedding & Funeral Shopping
- Hobbyists Preparing For A Project Shopping

All of these are times when people are going to be in a "buying mood" and even the most frugal of shoppers is going to be willing to splurge for what they want - and pay a little bit more.

Does your product have this type of seasonality?

The Easiest Time (EVER) To Make A Sale Online

Of course, the easiest time to make a sale, and get a premium price, is when your customer is actively searching for a solution to their problem, (or a tool to help them meet a felt need or accomplish a project). That is why search engine advertising, (Google, Bing, Yahoo), makes so much sense. You are responding to people who are typing in phrases that indicate they want to buy something. That's a good **time** to have an encounter with a prospective customer.

Here is an example from our business,

At [Pixie Faire](#) we are truly blessed to be the #1 online destination for digital doll clothes patterns. We started in September 2009 with just 11 sales, but since then we've had over 350,000 patterns downloaded. 124,000 of them were in 2013 alone.

Can you guess which month is our highest volume of sales each year? Why did you guess that month? (I'll reveal the answer at the bottom of this chapter - sneaky I know, right?!)

Having Time On Your Side Creates Pricing Power

Pricing Power exists when you can get time on your side. How do you do that? Here are a few ways:

Run an auction. The countdown timer is incredibly powerful. It's like a drum beat that people (who are in a buying mood) hear more and more loudly as the auction comes to a close. Price is NOT what they are primarily focused on - it's the clock.

Hold Selling Events. If you set things up so that there is the real (and genuine) possibility of items being "sold out" - and that is clear to everyone involved - you'll have pricing power. People stampede (sometimes literally) when they think

items are going to be unavailable to them in the future.

Use Scarcity. Scarcity is one of the most effective psychological triggers when it comes to buying. If people believe that an item will no longer be available to them - then price is not the issue - the issue will be their long-term desire to own the item. One common way online retailers frequently use scarcity is by selling things in small batches. We use that technique to help sell our physical items. You can see it at <http://www.shoplibertyjane.com>.

If You've Got Time On Your Side - Sell More

When customers are in a buying mood, you also want to ensure they get a complete set of options so that anything they might want to add-to-their-cart is easily available to them. You can do this by adding:

Up-Sells. The up-sell is simply offering your customer a larger, or bigger version of the product they're about to buy. One of the most famous up-sell phrases is "*do you want the big one?*" Of course McDonalds got into PR trouble for their famous slogan, "*Super Sized?*" They stopped using that phrase for PR reasons, not sales reasons.

Cross-Sells. The cross-sell is simply offering the

customer a related product before they finish their transaction. The most famous phrase associated with cr0ss-selling is, "*combo?*" Meaning "*would you like to add fries and a drink to your order?*"

Recurring Payments. Getting buyers set up on a recurring purchase arrangement is probably the most powerful selling technique of all time. Instead of asking the customer to simply buy the item one time, then having to ask them again, you simply ask them if they'd like to be set up as a recurring purchaser automatically. Product of the month clubs, membership sites, and related programs help accomplish this task.

Action Steps

Consider when you sell your items and brainstorm ways to you can sell more during peak buying seasons. Then brainstorm your up-sells, cross-sells and recurring purchase options to determine ways to maximize the buying experience.

Principle #11

Location Creates Pricing Power

[An excerpt from [*Craft Pricing Power*](#)]

It's not just the **time** of the encounter with your product that matters. The **place** creates pricing power too, (or destroys it).

You want the process to be like this:

Prospect has a need, problem, or project.
Prospect gets all hyped up and into a buying mood.
Prospect goes looking for an item or solution.
Prospect encounters your item.
Prospect likes and trusts you & your brand.
Prospect buys.
Prospect comes back to you again and again.

If you can engineer these steps so that you are the easy, natural, and most obvious answer to the buyer's problem - then you win.

Pricing frequently isn't the primary factor in these

situations. Usually it's convenience, trust, brand loyalty, relationship, and other factors that are more about bonding than they are pricing.

This is one of the reasons we like auctions for selling our doll clothes so much - because we control the time & place of the selling event. Interestingly, in an auction we don't actually control the final price - the bidders do - and over time - they've proven to be very generous to us. They price the items more highly than we ever would.

We also like our own website for selling our small batches of clothing - rather than being on Etsy, Amazon, or other online selling sites. We like our website because we can control the encounter and our customers are not comparing our items to a vast array of similar choices - they are simply looking at the beautiful item and being asked a simple question - "*would you like to buy this before we sell out and it becomes unavailable?*" Frequently the answer is "yes". And that intimacy and absence of distractions creates pricing power.

The Hardest Place To Maintain Pricing Power

As we discussed in the last chapter, if you know a prospect is in a buying mood - then you want to be the first, and ideally, ONLY seller that they encounter in that moment. If you are - they only

compare your product to vague recollections of similar items from their past experiences. And they decide to buy from you, or not buy at all, (for the time being).

If your prospect is in a buying mood - and they go looking for a solution - and they find your item as just one option amongst many similar options - then you've lost your pricing power.

So the hardest place (EVER) to maintain pricing power is in a crowded & undifferentiated marketplace. In that location your item has become a commodity - and commodities don't maintain pricing power. Especially if you don't have control over how your items are presented to the prospect. This situation can occur both online or offline and you need to avoid it.

Going head-to-head against your competition right in front of the customer is a crapshoot. You probably won't win - and if you do win - you probably won't have done it with a premium price point. You'll probably have been strongly tempted to compete on price.

Department Store Pricing Strategies

If you've tried to sell on Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing platform you'll notice that they allow

you to set the price of a Kindle ebook within a range of prices, but you don't have complete control. They give you guide rails that you must stay within. This marketplace pricing strategy helps prevent a "race to the bottom".

The Challenge With eBay & Etsy

eBay and Etsy can both be problematic if you're selling popular items because there is no "safe harbor" in terms of pricing power.

I'm not saying you can't do well on Etsy and eBay, but a lack of stable pricing is the downside of selling on those sites. The benefit of being on those sites is that they have tons of customers that show up in a buying mood. The trick is to turn those customers into **YOUR** loyal customers and to find ways NOT to compete on price.

Getting customers to say, "*I bought it from XYZ brand*" rather than, "*I bought it on Etsy*" is the trick.

There are only three ways to maintain sales volume and pricing power in a crowded marketplace where pricing isn't managed.

1. You win by being unique, memorable, and different.
2. Or you win by having the most complete set of

- options, (that's our strategy in our Etsy shop).
3. Or you win by bonding with the prospect in a really powerful way - so they truly know, like and trust you more than the competition.

So if you're going to sell in a marketplace online, try to find options that include a "department store" pricing strategy, rather than an un-managed marketplace strategy. A department store strategy gives you protection from brutal price wars.

Your most important task in a crowded and unmanaged marketplace is to find ways to get the customer to connect directly with you and your brand - eventually (maybe) even on your own site instead of the marketplace. That's the best way to ensure you maintain your ability to set prices.

Action Steps

Make a list of the places that your prospects encounter your products. Are you controlling those encounters and ensuring that your brand and product is presented in an effective way? Consider eliminating sales channels that have too many downsides. If you sell in a marketplace online, look for one that has a department store pricing strategy rather than a "free-for-all" pricing strategy.

Principle #12

Price Is Maximized Through Differentiation

[An excerpt from [*Craft Pricing Power*](#)]

Differentiation, (or uniqueness), is the most critical issue when it comes to brand building - and pricing power. You maximize your pricing power through differentiation.

You know you're different when people tell you that you are. If people never tell you you're different, then you're not different enough.

Your brand is the embodiment of your unique ideals. Marketers call that a Unique Selling Proposition, or a USP. You need one.

Having a USP that customers understand and respect gives you a powerful brand in the minds of customers, and that creates their willingness to pay a premium price. Did I mention - you need a USP?

Our unique USP at Liberty Jane, since 2008, has been,

Doll Couture – custom patterned outfits, rare & beautiful

For years now we've tried to underscore and expand on that message simple message. Read the way we do that here.

Let me quote Wikipedia. I'll substitute in the doll clothing phrases; you can use whatever phrases make sense for your niche or industry, (bold words are mine).

A commodity is defined as:

*A class of **Etsy items** for which there is demand, but which is supplied without differentiation, (or uniqueness).*

So un-branded Etsy items are a commodity. And the #1 attribute of a commodity is that it is not unique. The 2nd attribute of a commodity is that the only thing that CAN be unique is the purchase price. Therefore, the lowest priced producer gets the sale.

You don't want to be in that space – not in the doll-

clothing marketplace – or any other type of product or service. Yes - you need a USP.

Wikipedia goes on to say,

*The market treats commodity **Etsy Items** as equivalent, with no regard for who produced them.*

That means prospective customers don't care whom they buy from in a commodity market. When that happens – pricing power vanishes.

But something else happens too – customers begin to bond with the most unique brands – the brands that meet their ideals and define what it is they are trying to accomplish. The brand gives people a reason to pay a higher price.

People are willing to pay a higher price if you give them a good enough reason. That reason is generally tied to how your product is unique.

We do regularly hear people tell us that in Etsy & eBay our work has “changed the market”. That's another indicator, (expressed by our customers), that we're meeting our USP.

How do you become more unique?

Step One: focus on how you are different - not how you are the same as your competition. Identify the differentiators.

Want to hear the most over-used phrase in the history of doll clothes selling?

"I've been sewing for 40 years"

The problem is - that phrase is not original, unique, or memorable. It's an attempt at creating credibility, but it doesn't work too well for that purpose. Mainly because doing anything for a long time and doing it well are two different things.

You'd be much better off saying,

"I've been sewing for forty years - in Leavenworth Prison - yes - I was convicted of Murder"

Now that's memorable! Or how about,

"I've been sewing for forty years - with one hand - the other hand I lost in a bad accident involving a Grizzly Bear "

Okay, I'm totally joking of course. But you could use some phrases like this,

*"I make my items in a small cabin in the deep woods
of Eastern Oregon - without electricity"*

You see - sometimes people think that a USP starts with a big accomplishment that you brag about. But it doesn't.

It starts with something that is unique and memorable. Something that sets you apart. It could be seemingly trivial to you, but interesting to others.

Sure, as The Donald, (Trump), wisely said, "*great brands are built by great deeds*" and that is certainly true.

But great brands are frequently remembered and talked about because of unique or memorable attributes.

Keep searching until you find your unique attribute.

Step Two: A USP is developed and reinforced through powerful storytelling, and ongoing actions.

As noted theologian Eugene Peterson said,

"It's a long obedience in the same direction"

You should use your "about me" type pages to fully craft your USP and you should frequently refer people to it.

You should constantly be doing things that align with and strengthen your USP.

The Beauty Of A USP

Some small business owners live in a world of scarcity thinking - where for example - if there is a unique seller of historical doll clothes doing well - they think - "*well, that hole in the Universe is filled*" I better give up.

Other people realize the truth - there are as many opportunities to be unique as there are stars in the sky. Not only are there a million ways to be unique - the marketplace is begging for unique and memorable brands.

Buyers are hunting for unique-ified sellers. They clearly reject the commodity type sellers and seek out the unique brands. That's one of the powerful aspects of the Etsy marketplace.

If you have a USP clearly crafted let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

If you don't have a clear USP, then you are selling a commodity, and you will only get commodity pricing.

If you have a USP in your mind, but the marketplace isn't reflecting back to you that they understand it - you have work to do on your branding. Work to clarify and reinforce it.

When your customers start to express to you that they understand and appreciate your unique selling proposition, then you'll know you're doing well standing out and being unique. Pricing power quickly follows.

Action Steps:

Create and polish your USP. Your USP is your secret weapon for pricing power. If you have it clearly explained and the market respects it - you will have pricing power.

The Etsy Survey

Recently we conducted an Etsy focused survey of our partners. It was sent to 1,419 participants. 5.7%, (or 82 people) actually finished the full survey.

Their answers were candid, insightful, and interesting. I've included the entire survey results document in the following pages.

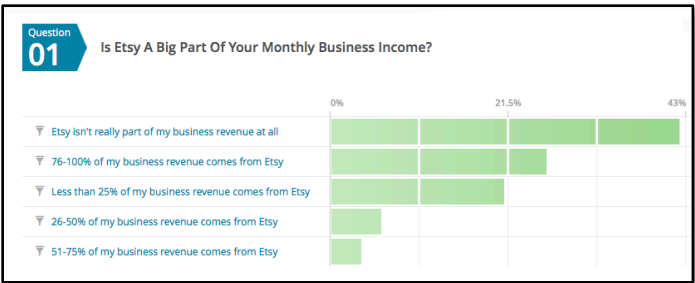
We hope looking at the results help you on your entrepreneurial journey.

Finally, please note, we did not try to correct the spelling or grammar of the responses. We are simply reporting to you what we received.

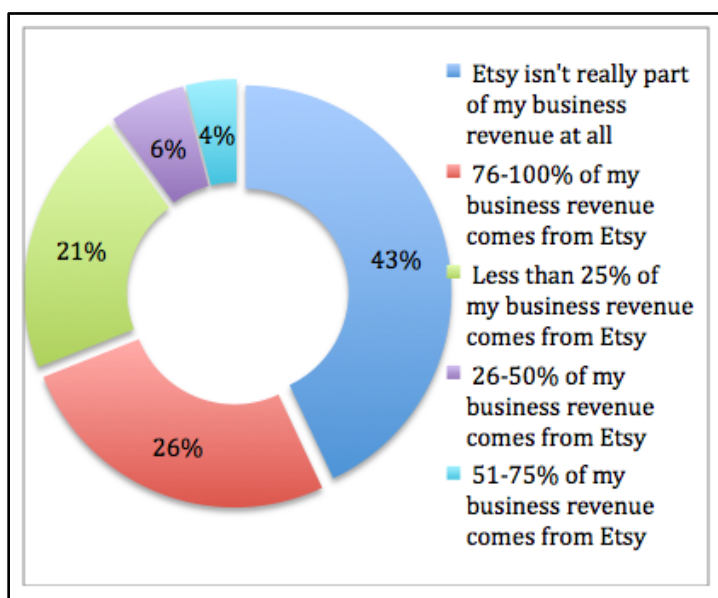
All the very best,

Jason & Cinnamon Miles
Liberty Jane Clothing

Survey Question One - "Is Etsy A Big Part Of Your Monthly Business Income?"



The percentage of respondents for each category were as follows:



Survey Question Two - "For Those Of You Who Don't Use Etsy, Why Not?"



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.

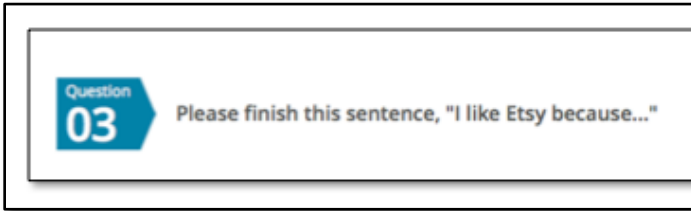
I don't understand how it works or how to set it up. I find it difficult to navigate when I look at it. It's too big. How could a lone doll clothes maker get picked out of that huge crowd?

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.

Survey Question Three - Please Finish This Sentence, "I Like Etsy Because..."

A graphic for a survey question. It features a blue arrow pointing right with the word "Question" in small white text above the number "03". To the right of the arrow, the text "Please finish this sentence, 'I like Etsy because...'" is displayed in a black sans-serif font. The entire graphic is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

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.

It's 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.

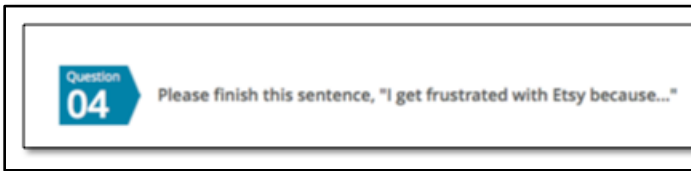
the staff behind Etsy are always working on great ways to improve the selling experience for us, making everything easier to use, giving us new features that help us make a great shopping experience for our customers!

It is cost efficient and easy to use

it reaches people with higher incomes.

More up market than ebay

Survey Question Four - 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.

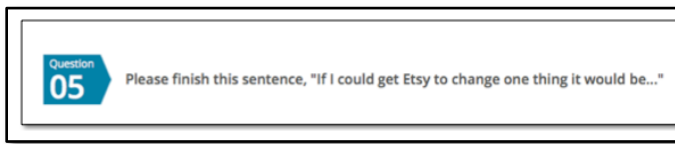
Change comes s-l-o-w-l-y!!!! There are some issues (listing and shipping profiles to name a couple) that are discussed but have not been resolved for me.

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

Survey Question Five - 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.

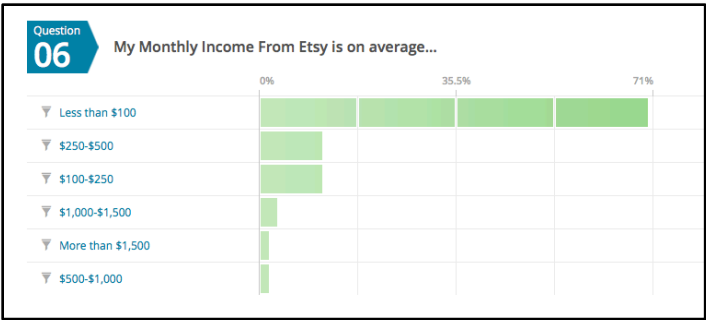
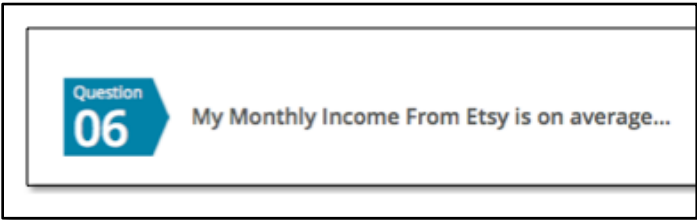
Their 'webinars' & seminars seem to be for the high volume seller. They seem to be getting away from the small crafter & cater to the high volume seller -- just like eBay.

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.

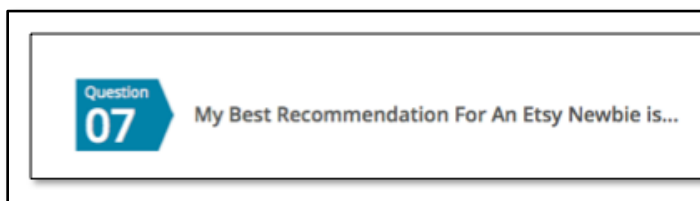
The way items appear in your store. You can set them up in groups, but unless someone clicks on your group, the last one posted is always on top.

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.

Survey Question Six - "My Monthly Income From Etsy Is On Average..."



Survey Question Seven - "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 thought 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.

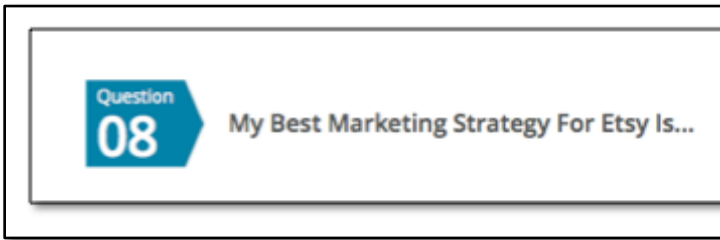
My best recommendation for an Etsy newbie is to have loads of patience! There are many other people selling the same as you, so sometimes it takes a lot of work to get noticed. Also, join a team to help with your networking!

Read a lot... promote... find a seasoned Etsy 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

Survey Question Eight - "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.

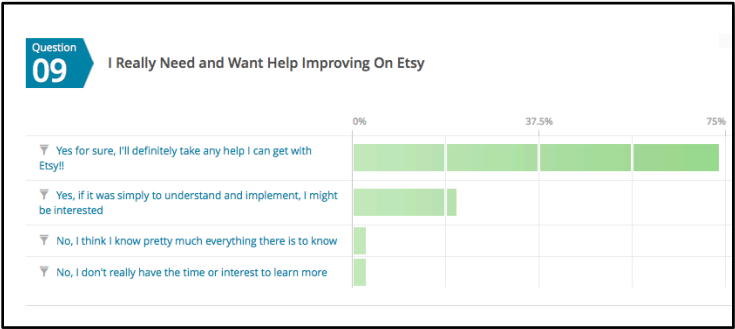
Staying current with trends and marketing "language".

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

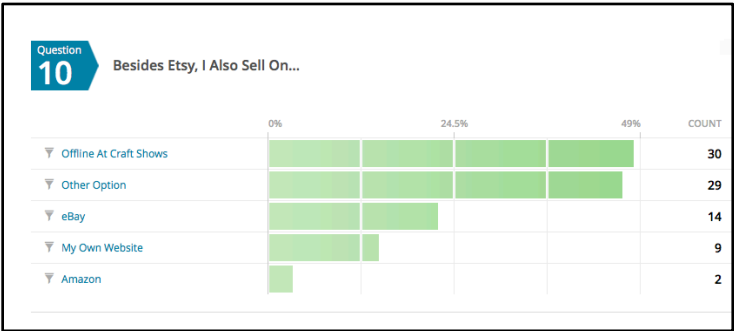
My best marketing strategy for Etsy is to be diligent in social media networking. And join a team, like previously stated. Having people who share your need to promote their businesses helps tremendously!

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!

Survey Question Nine - "I Really Need And Want Help Improving On Etsy"



Survey Question Ten - "Besides Etsy I Sell On..."



Etsy Survey 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

Conclusion

We hope you've found some tips, tricks, and tactics in this book that will help you on your Etsy journey.

If you did - I'd truly appreciate your highest and best review on Amazon. Thanks in advance!

May your business prosper and thrive in incredible ways.

We wish you all the best in your business endeavors,

Jason and Cinnamon Miles

P.S. Visit us at <http://www.makesellgrow.com>.