

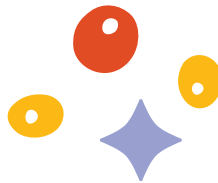


Beading Daily

TODAY'S HOW-TO FOR HANDMADE JEWELRY

How to Sell Jewelry:

**Improve Your Home-Based
Jewelry Business with
Free Tips for Selling
Beaded Jewelry**





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Beading Daily

How to Sell Jewelry:

Improve Your Home-Based Jewelry Business with Free Tips for Selling Beaded Jewelry

Have you ever imagined what it would be like to earn money doing something you love like making beaded jewelry? A home based jewelry business is a great way to bring in extra income, and you don't even need to own a gallery or a shop to sell your handmade jewelry.

I can't speak for everyone, but I know that when I sell my jewelry at craft shows and through galleries, I take great pride in knowing that my jewelry-making skills are appreciated by my customers. I've worked hard to perfect my craft, and so have you!

So you know that you want to start selling your jewelry or you want to start a home based jewelry business, but you don't know where to begin. You'll need jewelry display ideas and information about how to set up and sell at jewelry craft shows. We've assembled a great collection of basic how-to articles and blogs to get you started selling your handmade beaded jewelry!

- The first thing you need to do is pick a name for your business so that customers can identify you and your handmade jewelry. Michelle Mach had some great advice on naming your business, dealing with customers and setting up at craft shows.

- You can also market your work to local galleries and shops with the suggestions and tips from *Beadwork* magazine's Jean Campbell. Seeing your work in-person is a great way to reach customers and make sales! Learn how to approach a gallery or shop owner with your handmade jewelry and how to protect your business interests when you start up a relationship with a local business.

- Of course, when the economy isn't as good as it can be, you might notice a downtick in sales of handmade jewelry. Denise Peck of *Step By Step Wire Jewelry* magazine knows

how to make the best of any situation when it comes to selling handmade jewelry at craft shows in tough times.

- Just the thought of preparing for your first craft show can be enough to send you running for cover. Never fear, we have expert information from Vicki Lareau about what to bring and how to pack for your first craft show from her fabulous book, *How to Market and Sell Your Handmade Jewelry*.

- Also from Vicki's book are some useful ideas for creating a great booth display for your craft show. Presentation is everything when it comes to making sales at a craft show, and if you want to branch out and expand into new shows and markets, you'll need to have professional-looking jewelry displays to do it.

- Last but not least, once you have established yourself in the craft show world, you may want to expand your home based jewelry business into the realm of selling online. Read my article about things to think about when choosing your online marketplace before you sign up with an online marketplace.

Selling your handmade jewelry can earn you a little extra income every month, or, with a little work and perseverance, it can turn into a full-time home based jewelry business. I hope our collection of jewelry business articles inspires you to chase your dreams of earning money doing something you love and start selling your handmade jewelry today!

Bead Happy,

Jennifer VanBenschoten, Beading Daily editor



Beading Daily

How to Sell Jewelry

editor, *beadingdaily* JENNIFER VANBENSCHOTEN

designer OCEANA GARCEAU / photography JOE COCA, ANN SWANSON

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Marketing and Selling Your Handmade Jewelry: Setting Up for Your Craft Show and Booth Design

PREPARING FOR YOUR SHOW

So you found a show, you got accepted—congratulations! Now what? Believe me, putting in the serious time and prep work that I'm about to describe is miles more than most artists do, and it will make a huge difference in your success at the show.

I'll talk about booth design and display at length in the next section, but first let's cover some show basics.

Whoever staffs your booth during a show (preferably you) becomes your company image. Your professionalism tells buyers that your company is reliable and a safe place to do business. There are many different elements to consider and put together in trying to gain your customer's business and trust. I will tell you quite honestly that most craft show vendors never even consider the following points, let alone try to perfect them. Remember, making the jewelry is only half of your job. Selling it is the other half, and it takes a conscious effort on your part to make it happen.

Dressing for your show. Be conscious of your attire during a show. It's more than just looking clean and put together. During every show you must wear your jewelry, and whatever piece you're wearing must be for sale. So think about what attire you have that will complement several of your pieces. You're much more likely to sell the pieces your wearing because every design looks better on. It doesn't matter if the tag is hanging down your back—

that's a good thing. It's like a walking advertisement for your jewelry. When you sell the piece you were wearing, just put on another one. I tend to wear a lot of neutral, monochromatic clothing so that my jewelry is always the focus.

Know your product. Try to find out everything you can about all the materials in your jewelry. The stones you used, where they're from, and especially the metal in the piece, since that's what people are most likely to ask about. Know if it is sterling, 14k gold, gold filled, or plated. If it is plated, what is the metal underneath? How much nickel is in the piece? Nickel often causes a reaction in people with sensitive skin. You can buy base metal and pewter findings that are made without nickel. Ask your supplier for as much information as possible about the materials you use because customers will want to know.

At my store, we carry a line called Miracle Beads. When we started taking them to shows, I made a sign listing the sizes and prices. Everyone would come up to the booth and ask, "What is a miracle bead?" I would enthusiastically explain, and then the next person would ask the same question, and it happened all day long until not only was my enthusiasm gone, I was downright grouchy. I solved the problem by creating a sign that said "What is a Miracle Bead?" with the entire explanation in a lovely frame.

Now not only did people not ask anymore, but people who probably wouldn't have asked anyway or didn't care found themselves reading the sign out of curiosity. That simple sign also helped sell the product for me when I was busy helping someone else. (By the way, a Miracle Bead is a lucite bead with mirror coating and then a layer of color and then several layers of clear coating so the color reflects off the mirror, giving the bead a miraculous illusion of depth.)

Bottom line, the more you know about your product the better you'll be able to sell it.

Set a sales goal. I just love a goal, especially a sales goal. Many studies have been done about successful businesses, and one thing they all have in common is that the owners were goal setters, both verbally and in writing. I keep a journal for each show (since they all differ) about what worked, what didn't, and how much I sold. I refer to it before doing that show again, and based on the information I've recorded, I set a new goal. I typically look for an increase of at least 15 percent over the last time.

When it's a show I haven't done before, I'll either base my goal on a previous similar show, or I'll figure out how much it's worth for me to be there, taking into consideration the show fee, if I'm paying someone to help me, or if I had to rent tables. One easy rule of thumb is that your show fee should be

only 10 percent of your sales. So if your table cost \$100, you should plan to do at least \$1,000 in sales at that show.

Show manners. Do not sit, eat, smoke, chew gum, or read while working in your booth. You are there to work and to sell. You are paying to be there all day, and the only way you're going to make any money is if you work for it. No matter how good your stuff is, it does not sell itself. Please treat a show experience as if you were behind the counter of your own store, where you surely would not do any of these things. Maybe the smoking, chewing gum, and reading are obvious (though not to all), but let's go over the sitting and eating.

Working at a show is tiring. Standing all day is hard, and maybe you have a bad back. I understand. What I also know is that you're not going to sell as much if you are not making eye contact with the buyer. I promise you if you ever come by my booth at a show my helpers and I are not sitting—ever.

But if you must, there are some solutions. You can raise your table by getting PVC piping cut in 1-foot pieces at the hardware store and sliding them onto the legs of the table. This will raise the table to a comfortable height for your customers. They will notice that they are more comfortable at your booth, though they may not even understand why. The added height allows you to put a stool behind your table. Now you're at eye level with your customer, you are comfortable, and they are comfortable.

The elevated table and seating is especially nice if you plan on working on your jewelry at your booth. "Demoing" is very smart because it creates a crowd of people who just stand and watch you. This gives you a chance to chat with them and make that connection. When people have invested

so much time, they are more likely to make a purchase, which just attracts more people.

Now back to manners and eating in the booth. You have to eat! If you are lucky enough to get a friend or relative to help out, take advantage and get out of the booth for a quick bite. This will help refresh your body and soul so you're better able to finish the day. However, if you do many shows, the time will come when you'll do one by yourself. (After people have helped you a couple times, the glamour of the whole thing kind of wears off. Turns out shows are actually hard work!) So just bring small protein-rich nutritious snacks to keep under your table and munch throughout the day.

Do not spread a big lunch over your back table and sit down to it as soon as you don't have any customers. Again, this is your store front. You don't see the girls behind the counter at Nordstrom chowing down on some big burrito. It's not professional and it's messy. When I'm hungry I just do a quick duck under the table and pop something in my mouth. Not ideal, but it works. Not being able to have a sit-down lunch is an occupational hazard of the self-employed.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

If you are not used to working with the public or are uncomfortable with it, you don't have too many choices—you have to get over it. Maybe someone who has more experience can help you at shows in the beginning until you get the hang of it. Being able to deliver outstanding customer service is not something most of us are born with.

When someone walks up to your table, make eye contact and say hello to let them know you are available to them. Then step back and let them

shop. Don't hover—read their body language. You know how annoying it is to be bothered by sales people when you don't want any help. However, as soon as they pick up or touch something, a pair of earrings or some other piece on the table, that is your cue to talk. Say something about that piece, such as, "Oh, I love that pair. I just made them yesterday, that's one of my favorite color combinations . . . , etc." Then they will say something back and you will respond to that and now we are having a conversation—you are making a connection.

It becomes easier over time to talk about your work and yourself as the artist. You will forever be asked questions like, "How did you get started?" "What made you want to make jewelry?" "How long have you been doing this?" and on and on. Eventually the answers will just roll off your tongue.

Working with public has its share of challenges. There will always be people who have had a bad day and decide to take it out on you. Or people who for some reason need to feel more power in their lives by being condescending.

So here's the Oprah part of the book: their problems are not your problems, and no one can make you feel bad unless you let them. Make it your personal challenge to rise above the situation. If someone says "Oh, I can make that," just say back, "That's great. How long have you been making jewelry?" and have a conversation with them. Be as nice as you can. You never want to get a reputation as rude—that will follow you everywhere.

Think of it this way: Your customers are responsible for everything you have—your car, your shoes, your latte—every material thing you own is paid for by your customers, and they pay in

exact proportion to how you have treated them—always.

Your customers give you the privilege of pursuing your dreams; they allow you to do what you love by buying your designs. So when you're at a show, remember you are only there because there is a customer on the other side of the table willing to pay you. Without them, you're out of business. It's as simple as that.

BOOTH DISPLAY

Because jewelry is so small, you need an enticing and distinctive booth display to show it off. The amount of space you'll have at each show may differ—a six- or eight-foot table? A ten- by ten-foot booth? Or are you sharing with someone so you only have half the space? Whatever it is, you'll need to measure it out for a practice set-up at home. This will give you the opportunity to trouble-shoot and improve your design before the big day.

You'll need to find display props that match the look or style of your jewelry. Art deco? Vintage? Ethnic? Glitzy? Whatever style that you've kept consistent through your business cards and promotional material will play out in your booth display. Think of your allotted area as your own little store front. It doesn't matter that there are a hundred other vendors; your customers should feel as if they are in your own special place of business by the atmosphere you've created.

Table coverings. If you have an entire booth, you'll have to think about fabric or some other material for the back wall and possibly the floor, but whatever your situation, table covers are a given. My approach is to use large covers that conceal table legs and items stored under the table in a color or pattern that coordinates with the colors of my promotional literature. Then I use

a smaller, more neutral cloth on the tabletop where my merchandise will be. You can layer as many colors and patterns as you like at different angles for a striking effect.

My friend Laura Liska does beautifully color-coordinated fiber bundles with matching bead kits. All her colors are very earthy and rich. She uses lovely fabric to drape the tables and back wall. She then layers bamboo table runners on top of the fabric. Baskets, dark iron display stands, and wooden frames for signs carry out the rich, earthy look. When you walk up to her table, you really feel as though you've stepped into the loveliest boutique. All this effort equals big sales, since people who seek out one-of-a-kind handcrafts tend to be very visual. They are purchasing based on emotion and connection, so the goal of your booth is to spark that emotion that creates the need to buy.

The props you use don't have to be expensive or fancy, but it is important to add height to the table. If you lay the jewelry out flat, it will easily be missed by people walking by. You only get about ten seconds to catch their attention. Using some props to add height to your display will make it more interesting and will get some of your pieces up at eye level. This can be as simple as covering cardboard boxes with fabric to give height to your table. Be careful not to go too high, though—the average woman is only 5'4", so anything above her eye level is wasted.

You can use professional-type jewelry stands (there are references listed in the back), or you can drape your work over just about anything. Use hardware grids or branches to hang earrings, for instance. I often hang my necklaces around lampshades. Cost Plus or Target stores are full of potential display props. Velvet display boards or necklace stands from a display com-

pany are not very expensive, but they usually come only in black or white—not the most flattering for a lot of jewelry. You can cover them in different fabrics coordinated to your pieces. Whatever your look, set up your display at home first and make sure it looks great and is easily portable.

Lighting. If your show contract offers an option to purchase electricity, do so. Jewelry is small and you might find yourself in a dark location—the electrical hookup will probably cost only another ten dollars, and it will give you not only lights but possibly a credit card machine (which we'll talk about on page 67).

If you can afford to, I recommend getting Daylights or Ott-Lite brands of flip lamps or clip-on lights. These are full-spectrum lighting, which will show true colors. They are ideal lights for you to design by, but they are also great for your booth. They run anywhere from \$40 to \$100 apiece and you will need at least two. If that doesn't fit your budget in the beginning, any lights are better than none—regular \$10 office clip-on lamps will work.

Show Stopper. A good display has the elements of showmanship: the merchandise is the star, the customer is the audience. Think about featuring one larger piece that I call a "star attraction" or a "show stopper." It may be larger or more expensive than your typical work, though it should be in a kindred style. Display it prominently, make it your centerpiece. The purpose is to catch attention and get folks talking to you, to make that connection. Maybe they aren't in the market for that piece, or maybe they can't afford it, but now they are interested in your work and want a little piece of you, so they buy some earrings or a bracelet.

Signage and labeling. Think outside the box when it comes to creating

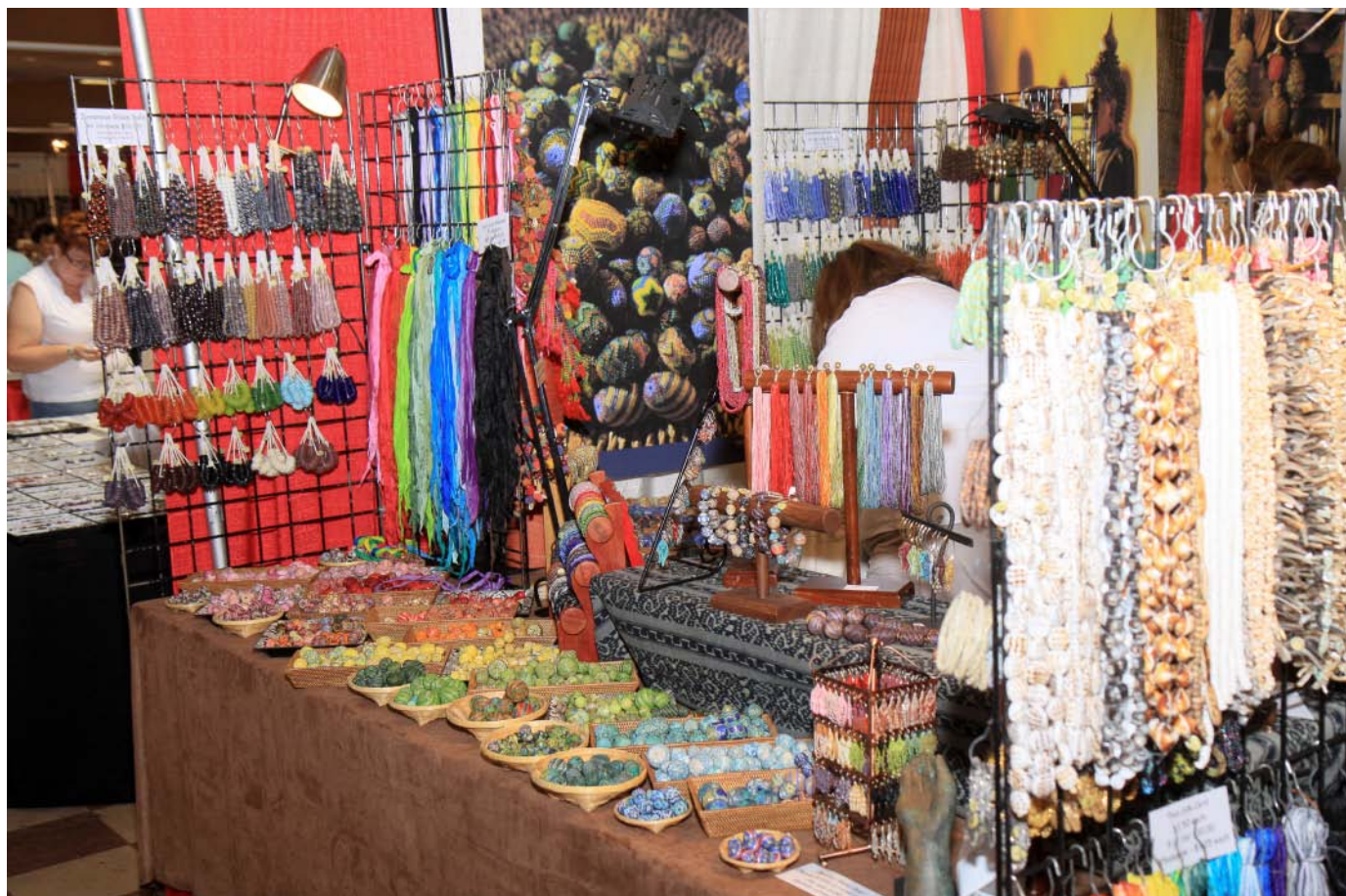
signage for your booth. Imagine, for instance, a beautifully framed table-top display showing you working in your studio. A matching framed piece could talk about the materials in your jewelry or the technique or style you use. This kind of treatment is attractive, and it can help sell or speak for you when you are busy with other customers. The frames and mats could coordinate with the color and style of your hang tags, earrings cards, and other printed material.

Maybe the most important kind of sign in your booth, though, is one that's often treated as an afterthought—the

price tags. Don't you hate it when items aren't clearly marked with the price? Most people won't ask, especially if the salesperson is busy with someone else, or they assume it's too expensive. So think about how you will display prices.

Sometimes labeling each piece individually just doesn't look right, though. For instance, if you have a standing grid holding a lot of earrings cards—to hang a price tag off each one would look tacky and would overwhelm the display. In this case you might give a price range: "Handmade sterling silver and freshwater pearl earrings, \$18 to \$35."

Interestingly, having your pieces marked with materials and price can actually help sell higher-end items. I don't know about you, but for some reason the more expensive something is, the more I want it! The price can really get someone's attention. You'll hear, "Three hundred dollars? Wow, what kind of stones are these? Rubies, really? I've never seen ruby beads." It can open up a whole new dialogue and appreciation for your work on the part of people who just thought those were red glass.



How to Sell at Craft Shows During Tough Times

DENISE PECK



Booth photo courtesy of Heather Powers of Humblebeads

NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS

If you do craft shows, you know show season is upon us and it's time to dust off the canopy and prepare for the warm months ahead and a busy schedule. There are so many fun things about doing craft shows: getting outdoors, meeting new people, developing relationships with customers and other artists, and making money! Doing craft shows is also very hard work and there's been lots written on how to assure success at shows. You've probably heard a lot of it. Make eye contact, don't sit all day, encourage people to come into your booth.

HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

During these economic times, though, just as we're having to make

adjustments in other areas of our lives, there may need to be a bit of a shift in the way we approach selling our jewelry. Let's face it, buying jewelry has always been a luxury. But I believe it doesn't have to be a luxury women forego. Plus, often when people feel the most stressed, buying themselves a small gift is exactly what they want to do. Having a positive attitude is rule number one for selling.

MAKE IT EASIER FOR CUSTOMERS TO BUY

Today's market requires a good range of price points. That doesn't mean giving away pieces for pennies that took you hours to make. But come up with some new, original designs that take little time with inexpensive materials and make them available next to your more expensive pieces. If you draw a crowd with beautiful designs, priced to sell, chances are your pricier pieces will be hard for some of them to resist!

MORE TIPS FOR SELLING AT CRAFT SHOWS

In the brand new Summer Preview issue of *Step by Step Wire Jewelry*, Connie Fox has written her personal

list of sins and virtues for selling at craft fairs. She shares both personal and professional tips for making craft show selling a positive experience and she offers even more suggestions for making purchasing easier for your customers.

There are also 13 brand new projects in this issue and an extra free one ("Garnets Galore") on Friday, May 8 on Beading Daily. So use those as inspiration for some new, less expensive designs and get a jump start on a long and successful show season.

What tips do you have for selling at craft shows? Share your thoughts on the website.

Special thanks to Heather Powers of Humblebeads for sharing the booth photo in today's newsletter.



DenisePeck is the editor in chief of *Step by Step Wire Jewelry*

Tips for Selling Your Jewelry in Shops and Galleries

JEAN CAMPBELL

Last year I decided I'd try my hand at selling beadwork. Oh, I'd sold a few pieces here and there, but nothing at a shop. What happened is a whole lot of learning and not so many sales. (Read my short piece "Beads for Sale!" if you want to relive my experience.) I've since decided I like writing about beadwork, not selling it!

Here's a list of what I learned:

- **Have a long, hard think** about whether you really want to do this. Selling beadwork isn't glamorous. It's sales. Research, marketing, production, fulfillment. If you're into beadwork for the creative outlet only, this gig may not be for you.
- If you decide you're up for the challenge, **visit lots of shops and galleries**, especially those with a textile bent if you're selling off-loom work. Don't even bother with the large retail places--most only take high-volume production work from major manufacturers.
- Once you find a place or two that feel right, **fully research the shop's stock**. Is your stuff too similar to what's already there? Is it so different that it wouldn't fit in? Don't be afraid to look at the prices. This will help you set your own prices to compete with what's already there.
- **Make an appointment** with the gallery owner. Never barge in. These people are busy running their business.
- Once you have an appointment, dress nicely and **come totally prepared** to present your wares. Think about it as you would if you were making a presentation at the office. You're selling a whole package—yourself included—since you and the gallery owner will have a relationship of sorts.
- **Bring a variety of samples** and know your prices down pat. Talk frankly with the owner about what sells well in the shop.
- Know that **your work probably won't be accepted at the first place you try**. You may have to make appointments all over the city, and it's possible that you'll need to send digital images if you need to solicit shops farther away.
- Once you've been accepted, **clearly discuss the terms for payment**. Many small shops don't offer a contract, but contracts are important! So if they don't offer one, simply hammer something out that outlines your discussion about payment, how the work will be displayed, how long the pieces will be held, and who will be responsible for returning the pieces. Also include a clause about damaged or missing pieces—some shop owners are less friendly with their wares than others.
- When it's **time for delivery**, come armed with dozens of pieces for the owner to choose from. Have each labeled with a price tag. You could even include little gauze bags or other doodads to make each piece a more attractive buy. Attach your business card to each piece. (The shop owner might remove all this extra stuff, but it's worth a try and makes you look like a pro.) Oh, and don't forget that contract for the owner to sign!
- **Check in periodically** to check on your work. You can call, but it's even better to stop by the shop and see if your stuff's being displayed and treated properly. Talk with the salesperson or owner to see how the work is selling.
- If you're selling the work, great! Keep doing what you're doing. If not, and you really like the shop, **strategize with the owner** on what might work better and adjust accordingly. Remember owners are in it for the money, too, so they want your work to sell.
- **Don't keep your work in the shop indefinitely if it isn't selling**—there might be a shop around the corner that will turn your work over like gangbusters.
- Finally, remember that **shops and galleries aren't the only places to sell your work**. One of the most successful beadwork sellers I know throws one huge pre-holiday sale in her home every year. She works for months creating high-end jewelry she knows her friends and family will love for themselves or to give as gifts. She invites everyone she knows to come, serves snacks and beverages to create a party atmosphere, and sits by the till and watches the dough roll in. She makes a quarter of her yearly income this way! You can also sell your work successfully at beauty salons, high-end clothing shops, church bazaars, school fundraisers, bead society sales, and online.



Jean Campbell is a contributing editor to Beading Daily

Advice on Naming Your Jewelry Business (and more!)

MICHELLE MACH

If you're looking for advice on choosing a business name, preparing for your first craft show, or dealing with folks who want a "deal" on your jewelry, you're in the right place! Today I'm sharing the answers to those questions thanks to Viki Lareau who writes the Bead Biz column in every issue of *Beadwork magazine*. Viki has been in the jewelry-making business for more than 20 years and is the author of *Marketing and Selling Your Handmade Jewelry: The Complete Guide to Turning Your Passion into Profit*.

—Michelle Mach, Beading Daily editor

I'm having trouble deciding on a name for my business. Is it better to include my name in the name of the business?—Gerry

I would go so far as to say it's probably one of the least important aspects of this type of business. Whether you use your name or not will have no bearing on your success. But to give you some direction, base your decision on how big you see yourself taking this. Is it always going to be a small at-home business? If so, including your name is probably more appropriate. Do you hope instead to grow into a midsize or even a very large business? Then it's probably better to not use your name, especially when it comes time to sell the business so it's not solely tied to the owner.—Viki Lareau

I have my first craft show coming up. How do I know how much inventory to bring? I've never done the

show, so I don't want to sell out. But I'm not sure how much I should be making just in case it's very busy. Help! Thank you! —Debbie

This is a great question. Whenever you sign up for a show, you are allotted a set amount of space—a 6- or 8-foot table, or maybe an 8 by 10 booth. Whatever size space, you need to fill it with merchandise or display props. It is a good idea to have a dozen or more pieces as back stock. As you sell down, you'll need to fill in. But when you're running out of jewelry (never a bad thing), you'll need to fill in with more postcards or business cards or mirrors or more display props. You can't afford to have the table look sparse, because that gives the impression that all the good stuff has been sold, and you won't sell the rest. Over time, you'll become an expert at making a 6-foot table look amazing no matter what your level of stock.—Viki Lareau

Everyone always says they love my jewelry, but no one in my area seems to want to pay for it. Everyone wants a deal. It's very frustrating. Help! —Sandy

You're just marketing to the wrong people. Often our friends, family, and co-workers are not our best customers just because we know them. You might need to approach stores or shows that are out of your area and are a better fit for your jewelry. Even though it's more work, it's often worth the effort to achieve bigger sales. Plus, these people

will only know you from your business, so there is no expectation of special favors.—Viki Lareau

For more answers to your beading questions, check out the Bead Biz column by Viki Lareau in every issue of *Beadwork magazine*. In the October/November 2008 issue on sale now, Viki answers questions about sales tax and what to do when a store closes, takes all your consignment pieces with it, and disconnects their phone (yikes!). In the December 2008/January 2009 issue, she'll answer questions about protecting yourself from bad checks and dealing with returns. Subscribe to *Beadwork* today to make sure you don't miss that issue! If you're just getting started, you will also enjoy Viki's book, *Marketing and Selling Your Handmade Jewelry* which covers everything from building your portfolio and pricing to designing marketing materials and filing taxes. Buy a copy of *Marketing and Selling Your Handmade Jewelry*.



Michelle Mach is the editor of Beading Daily

The Business of Jewelry: Choosing an Online Marketplace for Selling Your Handmade Beaded Jewelry

JENNIFER VANBENSCHOTEN



If you're ready to expand your jewelry business and start selling your handmade beaded jewelry online, you're in luck: there are more options for selling your jewelry online now than there were just a few years ago.

When I first ventured into the world of online sales, there were only a few options for selling handmade jewelry online. Now it seems that everywhere you turn, there is a new marketplace popping up where you can list handmade items (including jewelry) for sale. Doing a little research before you choose

an online marketplace for selling your handmade jewelry can make all the difference in having a successful jewelry business.

If you don't want to go through the hassle and expense of setting up your own website for selling your handmade beaded jewelry, you can find lots of options for setting up an online presence for your jewelry business. Before you jump in with both feet, however, look at these five key questions for choosing an online marketplace:

1. What kinds of fees are charged? Remember that these online markets are in business, too, and most of them charge fees for listing items. Listing fees are charged when you put a new item into your online shop for a certain period of time. A renewal fee is charged when you relist an item after the initial listing has expired. Some online markets also charge a fee in the form of a percentage of each sale you make. There are some online markets, however, that only charge a monthly flat fee for unlimited listings and don't take a percentage of each sale.

2. What do I get for my fees? Some online marketplaces like eBay allow a limited number of pictures for your initial fee, and then charge additional fees for additional pictures. You should also find out what their search function is like, and how items are found by buyers when they are browsing listings. If you're going to pay premium prices for your listings, you want to make sure that your items aren't immediately pushed to the end of the line when customers are searching!

3. Do they accept my preferred methods of payment? If you like to use one particular payment service for your online payments, you may be limited as to where you can list your handmade beaded jewelry for sale. Make sure you carefully research your payment options before you sign up and stock your shop, or you may find yourself looking for a new online marketplace.

4. Do they allow items other than handmade? Remember, if you are in the market to sell your handmade beaded jewelry, you don't want your jewelry business to have to compete with a

business that is importing inexpensive and poorly made jewelry from overseas. Check the terms of use for any online marketplace and find out how well they enforce their own rules.

5. How easy is it to contact them in case I have a problem? For several years, there was one major online marketplace that had no way to contact a customer service representative by phone. That left hundreds of sellers with no way to get assistance when they needed it most. Take a close look at the customer service page of each online marketplace that you consider. If there are no phone numbers, you might want to think twice before using that marketplace as an online presence for your jewelry business.

The bottom line when choosing any online marketplace for your handmade jewelry business is that you have to be happy with your bottom line. Don't sign up for any long-term commitments until you are satisfied with your experience selling in an online marketplace.

Don't feel overwhelmed at the many facets of creating and running a successful online jewelry business! You can

find expert advice from successful jewelry artists in each issue of *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* magazine. The Net Profits column in each issue covers topics like blogging about your jewelry, how to use social media like Facebook and Twitter and how to use publicity to increase sales. Subscribe to *Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist* magazine and see how you can expand your jewelry business in 2012!

Do you sell your finished beaded jewelry? Do you use an online marketplace or your own website? What advice would you offer to someone who is thinking about developing an online presence for their jewelry business? Leave a comment on the blog and share your thoughts, advice and experience with us!

Bead Happy,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.