

Promotion — Take Away Materials

It's a fact of life that not everyone will buy your work at first sight. Often, people go to a crafts show, exhibition or store to browse without having an immediate desire to buy. It may be some time later that they decide to buy a piece for themselves or as a gift. You can improve your sales by having excellent promotional materials that people can take away for free, to study later. If your material is good, it could prompt people to purchase your work.

There are two important aspects to your promotional piece: format and content. Think of your paper piece as an opportunity to present your creativity and a strong marketing message that intrigues people enough to want to own your work. Think about medium and message.

Format

As an artist, you should be able to make your piece eye-catching and attractive. Graphics, visuals, drawings, or photos will make a big impact. Try to show some of your actual work, since that is what people will buy. Perhaps an image of you at work on a piece will convey some of the excitement about your creations.

If you have a charming or interesting studio, workspace or shop, showing it can help people to identify with your work. Some buyers are not artistic themselves, but would love to be, and dream of creating in a messy, chaotic or soothing and quiet space. By showing where you work, you help people imagine your pieces being created there. This can add meaning to owning your work.

Consider the paper stock for your promotional material. Different papers create different impressions, and the texture, colour and feel of the paper can reflect your personality and help convey the work you do. Explore creative folds of the piece, so that looking at it is fun and rewarding. Die cuts can turn the piece into a 3-D shape that can be highly impressive and memorable. Anything that turns your piece into a “keeper” increases your chances of being remembered and valued as a creative artist.

Money may be the only thing that limits the possibilities, so consider creating two classes of materials. Have a stack of two-colour pieces on modest stock so that masses of browsers can pick one up, but have a separate, full-colour version on more expensive paper for qualified prospects who might be ready to invest in your work. These could be people who have mentioned that they're looking to buy a valuable piece in the near future, perhaps for a wedding, anniversary, house warming or to go with new corporate offices. People like this should be given your most impressive material.

Content

When deciding the content of your promotional piece, try to think about what prospective customers might find interesting, rather than what you want to get across. A resumé or biographical sketch of your life and accomplishments might be less interesting to the general public than a description of your work and perhaps how you do it or what it explores. Perhaps you can convey the pleasure that people might get from owning your work. Some people might want an idea of your prices.

To encourage future sales, include all the ways that people can get to you and your work. Do you have a Web site? Is your studio open to the public or does a store carry your work? Do you teach courses anywhere? Do you take commissions? Give plenty of contact information so that people feel welcome to approach you without obligation.

An effective promotional piece promotes your work, yourself as a creative individual, and informs people of the various ways that they can buy your work. If graphic design, writing and supervising printing are not among your best skill sets, realize that people can be hired to turn your promotional vision into reality, at any budget. Even a modest yet imaginatively-executed promotional piece can bring good returns.