

Guide to a starting a home-based art business.

Make a Profit with Your Passion: Starting a Home-Based Art Business

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One

Begin Taking Stock

“We come this way but once. We can either tiptoe through life and hope that we get to death without being to badly bruised or we can live a full, complete life achieving our goals and realizing our wildest dreams”

- *Bob Proctor*

It is so important to be realistic and set goals. If you have no idea where you really are right now, you cannot build from it and begin to achieve what you are truly capable of achieving. Start by asking - and answering - as honestly as possible the following questions.

Current Personal Inventory

1. What field(s) of art currently interests you the most?

2. What education and training do you have in Art or Business? Degrees? Certifications? Classes?

3. What Business or art related job experience do you have?

4. Are you confident using a computer? _____ Yes _____ No

If not, what *do* you know how to do on one?

5. Do you constantly seek out time and ways to be creative in your life?

_____ Yes _____ No

If you answered yes, how have you have been creative in the last two weeks.

6. You have at least 3 months living expenses saved up to live off if you needed to.

_____ Yes _____ No

7. Is there adequate space in your current living situation to be able to conduct your business? _____ Yes _____ No

8. You are very self-directed and do not need someone else to tell you to complete projects? _____ Yes _____ No

9. People closest to you are willing to support you emotionally if you go into business with your art. _____ Yes _____ No

10. You find new challenges exciting and love learning new things as often as you can?

_____ Yes _____ No

There is no right or wrong answer to any of the questions above. I created them to make you think about what you want your business to be.

1. What areas of art interest you the most? Life is too short to concern yourself with what others think is a worthwhile creative activity. If you are going to stay for the long haul, you need to choose area(s) that mean the most to you. Otherwise, your heart will not be in it, and you may as well be doing something else.

2. Your background is important. You may have had to take that business course in high school or college in order to fulfill requirements for another area. Now you can put it to use to help you with what you love to do.

3. Are you good at keeping business records? Is organizing your environment one of your strong skills? Have you created art on commission? What related hands-on, real world experience have you had? If you sit and really think about it, you may be surprised at what accomplishments you have accumulated over the years.
4. As in any business today, you will need to know how to use a computer with ease. If you feel your skills are lacking in this area, begin working toward improving your abilities right away. Look into computer classes at your area college, seek out an online course, or perhaps a friend could tutor you?
5. If you seem to be craving ways to be creative, it is a sign that you desire a challenge. This is a good thing, and expected if you are reading this book. If you do not, perhaps another area would be better for you to go into business.
6. It is important to have a financial safety net when starting any business, Three months is a low estimate. When starting out it will be a while before money begins to come.
7. Do you feel cramped where you currently live? Perhaps you should look for alternatives for a workspace. If you are not sure at this point, do not be over concerned, as they say, "Where there is a will there is a way".
8. It is essential that you be able to follow through on plans in order to get your business off the ground and running. Being a self-starter and self-directed are necessary personality traits for a business owner, you alone are responsible for your business flourishing or floundering.
9. If you are married, is it going to cause difficulties in the relationship? What if you need to work long hours, or you need to invest your personal assets in your business? What about possible child care situations? You will need to examine these areas carefully before taking the plunge.
10. Things will come up on a daily basis that will require you to be able to shift gears, look for solutions, or possibly learn a new skill. Unless you are fortunate enough to have an army of people at your beck-and-call, you will wear a large number of hats in your career.

Ideal Business Life

It is important for your overall happiness that your business plans fit into your life as a whole. What would an ideal life for you look like? Think big! Do not censor yourself while doing this. Tell your inner critique to go get a cup of coffee you are too busy right now to listen. Give as much detail as possible. If you need more space than is provided here use a separate piece of paper, do not limit yourself!

1. If money was no object and you were able to do anything in the world with your art, what would it be?

2. How does this compare to what you do now?

3. How much money do you want to be making? Give an actual number, and a time frame.

4. How much do you make now?

5. Could you make adjustments in your living expenses? Jot down where you think you could make changes. You can look into the actualities later.

6. In your ideal life, who would be there with you?

7. Do you currently have someone in your life that does not support your career decisions?

8. If you answered yes to #7 how do you think you could improve the situation?

9. How much time a day, a week, a year would you spend working at what you love?

10. How much time do you work now?

11. What would you do for sheer enjoyment?

12. What do you currently do for fun?

13. Where would you live? Rural? Urban? Apartment? House?

14. Where do you currently live?

15. Would you work alone or with others?

16. In ten years, how old will you be? _____

Guess what? In ten years, God willing, you will still be that old. However, with some planning you will be where you want to be in your business.

I designed the questions to get you thinking. I asked how this ideal life compared to where you are right now. Go back through them and jot down any idea or notes below:

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