

About me: Not sure I'm an expert per se, but I have been selling online for 10 years, on etsy for 5 years, and blogging for 5 years. Have sold over 1500 items in those 5 years through etsy, and that is just part time when I can squeeze in marketing between mothering and homemaking tasks.

### Setting up your Etsy shop or Gallery

Why etsy? Beautiful site, easy to navigate, not covered in ads, don't charge much for listings or fees. Constantly being revised and improved. Listen to their sellers, and change the site accordingly.

Buyers are looking to etsy to find indie artists and designers to work with big corporations. Target. Urban Outfitters.

Through my presence and success on etsy, I was approached to sell at a juried show in dallas, to do a line of drawstring bags for a national yarn company, and write an article about sewing with children for an internet magazine.

### 1. Choose a name for your shop and register at etsy.com.

What makes a good name?

Does it reflect what you make, and is it memorable?

Remember, you can only change your shop name once, so choose carefully.

Your URL will be "shopname.etsy.com"

### 2. Your etsy identity.

a. Set up your public profile. How did you start your craft? Tell info on your family life. Do you have a blog? List it here.

Choose a picture for your avatar. (this will show when you make a comment or convo or purchase, so an interesting photo is helpful.)

#### b. Info and Appearance

Banner image. Must be exact size. Etsy has cute stock banners you can use.

Link to twitter or facebook fan page.

Shop announcement.

### 3. Photos and packaging.

Take clear photos with appropriate # of pixels. 3M is fine.

Take pictures of the process, progress, or even studio space.

Use a model or show the item being used.

You are allowed 5 photos per item. Use all 5 if you can.

Update your shop regularly. You can't sell what is not in your shop.

List multiples separately, or wait and relist.

Packaging: Make it feel like opening a gift. Charge appropriate shipping (see usps.com).

Include some kind of giveaway that makes sense to your company. (I do a vintage button)

Give a thank-you note that has a discount for future purchases.

#### 4. What will you sell?

Use quality materials and find a point of view that fits you.

The savvy etsy shopper wants high quality, unusual materials.

Sell something you are good at making—not just something that someone else is selling a lot of.

Make your shop cohesive. Do a few things well. Use the same colors, or the same materials, or a theme, and make it work for your whole shop.

Find a product that is worth your time. (something you can design and photograph once, and sell several times is always a good bet.) Fine art: is there a way you can convert your paintings into something else? A print or set of postcards?

#### 5. Marketing:

::On etsy: read the do's and don'ts. There are serious rules like don't contact people just because they "favorite" your item.

Renew your items and relist items often.

Read on the etsy blog about how to title and tag your items so that they come up early in searches.

"Heart" other shops that might be interested in your shop. (I sometimes heart quilters or upcyclers.)

::On social media: facebook page, twitter, blogs

Visit blogs that fit well with your theme (I visit quilting blogs) and comment, leaving a link back to your blog or shop. But don't be a spammer.

People like to see the process, get to know a person outside of etsy. You can set up your pages to alert people to new products or sales, but remember to not only sell yourself, include others' products so you don't seem self-serving. You don't want to turn off your followers.

Make your facebook and twitter feed interactive, and make it about your followers, not about you. Ask questions. Take polls. Bad question: Should I make pink scarves or red scarves for my fall collection? Good question: What is your favorite color to wear next to your face?

::In person (word of mouth):

Part of your packaging—make them feel special and they will come back.

Never leave home without business cards. Moo.com or vistaprint.com

Be careful when it comes to selling yourself to your friends. Set up boundaries for yourself. I never sell to friends and family unless they come to me. I never sell at church. If your business can't survive without selling to your personal friends and family, you do not have a business.

Give stuff away. If you make baby bibs, give baby bibs at every shower (and something that you bought) and attach your business card as a hang tag.

Remember, marketing is fun and challenging, but it will not make up for a lousy product and bad customer service. That is your first priority.

Thoughts: