Business Strategies

Empowering Artists to Meet Their Individual Goals

Arts and Business Council of Greater Boston
& Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts
Topics to Discuss

1. Introductions
2. Prof. Practice Classes - Lessons Learned
3. Strategies that Empower
   1. Know You - Needs vs. Wants
   2. Share Your Passion and Knowledge
   3. Be Creative with Your Business
   4. Build Your Community (your team)
   5. Constantly Gather Resources
   6. Create Options – Build Reserves
Introduction

- Who The Heck is This Guy?
  - My Story
- Story of the VLA in Massachusetts
  - 2000 Calls a year * 12 years
  - 1.5 Million in Legal Services per year
- Artist Professional Toolbox Program (APT)
  - 9 Month Prof. Development Program for Visual Artists
- Merger with the Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston
  - A&BC Programs
What We Learned

- APT & APT Fellows
  - Who is our Audience?

- What are the Needs?

- How do we Gain Knowledge?
  - Advisory Group – crafted a plan and survey
  - 900 Survey Responses
  - Focus Groups
  - Staff and our Experiences

- So Much To Do – How Can We Help
What We Learned

Age Range of Respondents

- Under 35: 33.6%
- 35-44: 25.2%
- 45-54: 17.8%
- 55 and over: 23.4%
What We Learned

Profile of Respondents by Gender

26.2% Male
73.8% Female
What We Learned

% of Income Earned from Art

- More than 75%: 58.2%
- About half, more or less: 30.3%
- Less than 25%: 11.5%

Legend:
What We Learned

Percentage of Income Derived from Art

- Less than 25%
  - More than 10 years: 42.2%
  - Less than 10 years: 62.5%

- About half, more or less
  - More than 10 years: 13.8%
  - Less than 10 years: 12.5%

- More than 75%
  - More than 10 years: 44.0%
  - Less than 10 years: 25.0%
What We Learned

![Bar chart showing learning in less than 10 years and more than 10 years. The chart indicates the percentage of respondents in each category.]

- No – not at all.
- Slightly – I could use a lot of help!
- Somewhat – I know some things
- Yes – I know most of what I need

Less than 10 years

More than 10 years
Your Plan – Not My Plan

- Myth #1 - The Secret Little Black Book of All Art Knowledge – I have it - you do not! NOT!
Know You – What is Your Plan?

- Personally - Think about how you define success?
  - Travel more
  - Family
  - Working alone or with a team
  - Financial Security
  - Pursuing non-work interests
  - Separation between work and life

- Professionally - What do you want to get out of your business?
  - Job Security
  - Work for yourself (Not working for the “Man”)
  - Financial Independence
  - Job Satisfaction
  - Pursuing your craft / art (Best at what you do)
Know You – What is Your Plan?

Needs

- People to see my work – share my work – enjoy my work
- Time to make more art
- Enough money to ....

Wants

- To live on the South of France and make art all day....
- Never have to worry about money anymore ...
Know You – What is Your Plan?

- How Are You Going to Get There?
- Yes – the G- Word (Goals)
  - What is your path?
  - Small steps taken towards a Plan
  - Short and long-term
  - Will you know when you get there?
    - Make it measurable!
Know You – What is Your Plan?

● Goals

  ● Long Term
    ● Judy Mozkin - first day of APT Goal setting
    ● To work / study in China
    ● 5 years later
    ● + new line of work

  ● Short Term
    ● What do I need to do to get there?
Know You – What is Your Plan?
Share Your Passion and Knowledge

- MYTH #2
  - This is impossible – I am not a sales person!!!!

- Reality
  - It’s about having passion for your work
  - It’s about being knowledgeable about you and your work
  - Sharing these is how to Frame it.
  - You are cool – don’t forget it!
Share Your Passion and Knowledge

- Who is Your Audience?
  - How do I get to them?

- Where is Your Audience?
  - Local, Regional, National, Global

- How do Your Audience Experience Your Work?
  - Does your product need to be seen in person? Touched?

- How Do You Talk About Your Work?
- How Do You Talk About You?
  - Artist statements – the words you use matter
  - May not be the same for different audiences - work
Share Your Passion and Knowledge

- Listen to the People!
- One fateful September day, they printed up 48 Jake shirts for a local street fair in Cambridge, Massachusetts. They laid the shirts out on their rickety card table. By noontime, all 48 of those tees were gone. A star was born.
Be Creative About Your Business

Galleries

- Very important but not complete business model
- Diversify your representation
- Understand their needs – protect yourself
- Be smart – Do you know where your work is?
- Know about consignment laws – terms
Be Creative About Your Business

"I work as a commercial artist focusing on children's book illustration, but also as a fine artist in the mediums of wood engraving and painting. I enjoy my commercial work as much as my fine art. The challenge is that each style has its own marketing strategy."

Beth Krommes
Be Creative About Your Business

- Other ideas – Integrated Approach
  - Corporate Dealers
    - Boston Corporate Art
    - Hartford Fine Art and Framing?
      http://www.hartfordfineart.com/
  - Designers – need work for clients
  - Public Art - Get on lists (Urban Arts – Public Art Network)
  - Agents / Consultants
    - Do your homework – get references
  - Licensing Programs
    - Art is everywhere – designs and images are needed everywhere
Be Creative About Your Business

Examples:

- **Wine Labels**
  - Art sells products

- **Products**
  - APT artist worked with General Contractors / Builders (custom Tiles)
  - Her work is now in new homes
  - Met both their needs
Be Creative About Your Business

- Kids rooms – decorative painters
- Art lending programs
- Open Studios
- Hotels – Restaurants
- The Art Connection – Boston
- Auctions (be careful with this one)
- MA College of Art annual sale – your art school – set up a sale
- Keep going, these are just a few ....
Building Your Community (your team)

- What are you good at? (SWOT)
- What do you like to do?
  - Not always the same thing
- What are your challenges?
- What are your risks?
- Who are my contacts? (make a list)
  - Who do my contacts know – go meet them
Building Your Community (your team)

- Peer Groups
  - The power of peer support
  - Safe place to set goals – (Not your partner)

- Critical Feedback
  - Seek out feedback on an ongoing basis
  - Peer or Professional portfolio reviews
    - Formal or informal

- Join Trade Associations
  - E-lists / newsletter
  - Blogs
Building Your Community (your team)

- Collect a network of Partners
  - Work Partners / Collaborators
  - Lawyers
  - Accountant / bookkeeper
  - Insurance Agents / Brokers
  - Life or Career Coaches / Strategic Planning
  - Marketing (materials, writing, editing)
  - Technology (databases – websites – email)
  - Suppliers/Subcontractors
  - Galleries from around the country
  - Licensing Agents
  - Residency Programs
Constantly Gather Resources

- Getting the information and resources you need to meet your needs

Sources:
- Seminars / workshops / webinars
- Books
  - Allworth Press
  - The Artist’s Guide
  - Getting to Yes
Create Options, Build a Reserve

- Have extra water saved.
- What is your plan B?
- What's next?
- What projects can I start now but will take time?
Create Options, Build Reserves

- Build resilience
- Conflicts
  - Absorbs energy
    - People get stuck
- Finances
  - Understand your money
- Legacy Planning
- Life is Messy – an art career is a kid eating spaghetti
Good Luck!

- Empower yourselves

- Seek out situations where you can grow and invest in you as an/a:
  - Artists
  - Person
  - Small Business
  - Agent for Change
  - Community Member / Leader

- Don’t Forget To Have Fun!

- THANK YOU!