

The Art Marketing Project Podcast — The ONE Key To Selling Your Art

I'm Cindy Hohman, and this is the Art Marketing Project Podcast, where I help empower artists just like you to take the reins of marketing and selling your work into your own hands. So you can sell your work consistently, and confidently, and get yourself back into the studio where you belong.

Today we're going to talk about the one key to selling your art, which is knowing your ideal buyer. So we're going to get into a little bit more about that. We're going to talk about why it's important for you to have a clear, ideal buyer profile for your art business. And we're going to talk a bit about how to go about creating an ideal buyer profile. And then as usual, I have an action item for you at the end of the episode.

Okay, so I absolutely believe that having a clear ideal buyer profile is the one key to being successful at selling your art. You might think, "Oh, well, I just have to have buyers." Well, if you don't know who that person is, how are you going to find them? The one thing is to be in the right place to sell your work. Well, how do you know where that place is if you don't know who your audience is? Who your ideal buyer is? So I wholeheartedly, 150%, 300% believe and teach that identifying your ideal buyer is the one big key to being successful at selling your art. And the reason that is because knowing your ideal buyer, or other people will talk about it as target market, is the foundation of successful marketing. I prefer to talk about it as an ideal buyer as a person rather than a target market. Because when you think about target market, it sounds like a big group of people who are in personal and have some amalgamation of behaviors or trades or experiences.

When you think about your ideal buyer as a person, it's much easier for you to target what you're doing to that person, speak to that person, which means it's easier for... When you actually do come across that person, they feel a connection to what you're doing. It helps you understand how to organize content on your website. I had an artist ask me recently, "How should I organize my work? My portfolio on my website?" And I said, "Well, you're going to have to go back and think about who your ideal buyer is and how they would be shopping your art. What are they looking for? Are they looking for specific colors? Are they looking for specific sizes? Are they looking for higher priced originals versus lower price reproductions?"

So knowing this ideal buyer helps you make all of these decisions, what social media outlets will you spend your time on? You need to know who you're trying to reach. different social media outlets have different demographics. So knowing who it is that you're trying to reach will help you make that choice. Where are you going to sell your work? Online, or in person? Well, my question always is, where do you feel that your ideal buyer will be shopping? Is your ideal buyer and online shopper? Do they go to festivals, to galleries? Would they run across you in your work in an alternative venue, such as a local business, or a nonprofit organization, or restaurant?

It gives you also the permission to not feel like you have to sell your work to everyone because that feels icky at best, honestly. And if you feel like everyone is potentially your audience, you feel like you're not doing your job. If you don't talk to everyone about your art. And I don't blame you, if that's the approach that you have, you're going to feel pushy. You're going to feel like you're imposing yourself on people because not everyone is your audience. There are a particular subset of people who would be interested in your work and you can focus your time there when you know who they are. And then everyone else

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when they ask you what you do, you tell them that you're an artist and what kind of work that you create. And if the conversation continues from there, that's great. If not, you don't feel like you have to push your business card on people or ask them to follow you on Instagram or do any of that stuff because they're not your ideal buyer. They might be somebody who'd be interested in your work, and they might ask you more about it, and want to see your work and know where you're showing, and where they can... what your web address is.

But if you know who your ideal buyer is, you don't get yourself into the situation of feeling like you're pushing yourself on everybody out there. And it also gets you away from the idea of trying to be everything to everyone. Because if you try to make your work interesting and appealing to everyone you run across, you're going to appeal to no one. That's why in business always, marketing coaches, business coaches, they all talk about identifying who your best customer is, because it has having a niche is super important because until you identify who that person is, and identify that niche for you and your work. Until you do that, you're not going to be successful with your marketing, because it's just going to be bland and uninteresting to the masses rather than interesting to the people you care about.

So how do you get to know your ideal buyer? How do you create an ideal buyer profile?

Well, I think the most important piece of advice that I give across the board to artists is that you are the one who creates your ideal buyer profile. It is not your past buyers, or your lack of buyers, that tells you who your ideal buyer would be. It's your job as the business owner to decide looking at multiple criteria, who it is that your ideal buyer profile... You know, what that description looks like. Yes, you can definitely use and base it upon past sales people who you know, who have liked your work, who purchased from you. But if you don't have that information, it's not a deal breaker. Because if you think about it, every business out there who is starting out and selling, they all have to come up with some idea who they think their customers would be. Because if any business out there, sat down and said, "Well, we started our business, now we're just waiting for people to come find us. So we'll know who they are." No, it doesn't work that way. Businesses will go out of business who take that approach.

These days, it's not a build it and they will come. It is a build it, identify who they are, and go find them. So my best advice is, and I talk about this a lot, Liz Gilbert's book, *Big Magic*. In their references, I don't recall which author it is. I think somebody said Anne Lamott at one time, but she says, "Create your crappy," and of course, there's a more colorful word that is used in there typically, but create a crappy first draft and then you can revise. But until you get a draft put together, you have nothing to work with. So create your crappy, ideal buyer first draft, and then revise it as you learn more. And I really advise writing it down and posting it in your studio, next to your computer, wherever you work so you can keep an eye personally.

I one of those big massive hanging on the wall post it notes that's the size of a poster. I have a description of my ideal customer written on that and I keep it in my office so I have it in front of me. So then keep asking questions of yourself and of your buyers to get to know more about this ideal buyer. So you can add more detail to that ideal buyer profile as you learn more. And that is the process.

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Of course your ideal buyer profile... If you talk about what goes into the ideal buyer profile, I get into this pretty significantly in a lesson within my membership, my create a marketing plan course that you can have access to within there. But it's just asking yourself those questions of, is it a male or a female? What do they do for a living? Why are they interested in my work? Where would they be shopping for my work? What's the value that it brings to their lives? Asking questions about how they live their life, what they do? Things that would help you understand how to make decisions around finding them.

So my action item for you based on this episode, is to create a crappy first draft of your ideal buyer profile. And I would love to hear from you when you get this created. You can send me a message, a DM on Instagram, or you can message me from my website. And I would love to see it, I would love to see what you put together. And to help you do this, I have a freebie for you that you can download when you go to my website in the show notes. That is my ideal buyer worksheet. So you can go download that and take a first stab at creating your ideal buyer profile. And again, you can get to the show notes for this episode at artmarketingproject.com/9.

All righty, I hope this was interesting for you and helpful. And I look forward to hearing or seeing from you how you liked this episode. And if you're actually following through on the action step, I would love to hear. So thanks so much for joining me. I'll talk to you again next week. Bye.

Thank you so much for joining me today and listening. I really appreciate it. If you enjoy this content and you have a minute, I would love it if you would rate the podcast or leave a review, wherever you listen to podcasts. If you have questions for me, a suggestion for a podcast episode, or if you just want to say hi, you can connect with me on Instagram at Art Marketing Project. Thanks, everyone.