

"We could not have imagined how much of an impact James Dillehay's advice would make on our business. To our delight we are seeing results on a faster and larger scale than we expected in such a short period of time!"

Ken Kobrick & Angela Geene,  
www.Passchal.com,  
featured on the Today Show

**Issue 42: May 19, 2006**

**Publisher**  
James Dillehay

**Contact**  
Craftmarketer.com  
Warm Snow Publishers  
PO Box 75  
Torreon NM 87061  
505-384-1195

Give this newsletter as a gift. Invite your craft friends to subscribe at [craftmarketer.com](http://craftmarketer.com). There's no risk. I don't share your email with anyone for any reason and you can always unsubscribe at any time, easy and fast.

***Craft shows come in all kinds of shapes and sizes. The best way to learn if an event is appropriate for your craft items is to visit the show before you apply for entry. Don't neglect shows that aren't typically for crafts, like home and boat shows. They can provide more selling opportunities.***

---

# Craft Marketer

## NEWSLETTER

---

## Choosing the Best Craft Shows for Your Crafts

by James Dillehay

When selecting craft shows, you can increase your sales and your profits by choosing the kind of event that will attract buyers of the products you make.

There are several different kinds of craft shows available. Some are for fine arts only. Others are known as juried art and craft fairs. There are also country craft shows.

Arts and crafts are also sold at a variety of other events such as state and county fairs, mall shows, renaissance fairs and large trade shows.

The following descriptions will help you understand the differences so that when you go searching, you can make the profitable choice:

- Fine art shows feature paintings, photos, posters, prints, sculpture, and other fine art. Often fine art shows are found in combination with popular craft fairs which draw a large attendance.
- Juried art and craft shows are often

the most lucrative market for the craftsperson. Because these events are juried, the crafts displayed tend to be better quality and higher priced. A juried show is one where slides or actual pieces of your work are judged by a jury committee who selects the best from hundreds of applicants. Most of the finer art and craft events are juried to screen out mass made products from kits and imported items.

- Country craft shows are distinctly different from the juried art and craft shows, though you may not be able to tell this from some of the show guide reviews. The crafts exhibited are usually items for the home, selling from \$2 to \$50. These shows often work well for small inexpensive arts and crafts gift items.
  - Renaissance fairs are outdoor events themed around Medieval times. Craft booths are typically included as a part of a total entertainment package. All the vendors dress in medieval costume. A variety of food, drink, jugglers, jousters, knights, and fair maidens abound at these festivals. Many renaissance shows run every weekend from one to two months. You are responsible for building a substantial booth in the medieval theme. It must be sturdier than normal craft shows, because it will be up for several weeks.
-

**Craft shows have been the mainstay of many crafts people because they provide huge crowds anxious to buy. But other events which draw crowds may not be as competitive since most crafts people ignore them.**



**James Dillehay**  
*Helping You Profit from Your Creativity*

*James' craft marketing books have been highly recommended by The Crafts Report, Family Circle, Sew News, Bead & Button, Country Almanac, Sunshine Artist, Ceramics Monthly, Working Mothers and many more craft magazines. He serves on the advisory boards of the National Craft Association and ArtisanStreet.com.*

Since you rent the space for most of the weeks of the show, you become a lessee or tenant. Management may also takes a percentage of your sales.

- Historical theme shows, like renaissance shows are costumed events that provide entertainment and crafts demonstrations. They are often put on by historical organizations to coincide with special heritage days festivals.
- Mall shows are produced by the mall management, a show promoter, or a local organization. These shows are usually part of a tour sponsored by a producer putting on events in one or several nearby states. Many exhibitors follow the circuit for several weeks, especially in the fall and pre-Christmas months.

At mall shows, you usually find more fine arts than crafts. Many shopping centers have restrictions on what can be sold, because they don't want you to compete with their store merchants who pay substantial rents. Promoters usually ask a space fee, plus a percentage of the sales.

A well known juried crafts show usually attracts far better attendance than a mall show. When you can't find a good show, malls remain an option for otherwise empty weekends. Mall

shows might help, too, in slow months like January and February.

Other kinds of events provide excellent alternative markets for arts and crafts that can be quite successful. These shows cater to a niche market rather than to several different kinds of products. You can find out about shows for any kind of business or interest group by checking with your city's convention center and tourist's bureau.

- Local fashion shows. Women's groups and charity organizations often produce fashion shows for original work. Call your chamber of commerce and check the library for listings of associations in your area.
- Home shows and boat shows. Many major cities have a home show and a boat show at least once a year.
- Gift shows. Gift shows exist for store buyers, usually held in large convention centers. The Oasis Gift Show, in Arizona has hundreds of exhibitors, many of them jewelers, but also a special section for crafts. See [www.oasis.org](http://www.oasis.org).

To find craft shows and craft fair guides, see [www.craftmarketer.com/craft-shows.php](http://www.craftmarketer.com/craft-shows.php)

Excerpted with permission from *The Basic Guide to Selling Arts and Crafts*, (Warm Snow Publishers). Everything you'll need to know to start your own business; succeed at craft fairs and trade shows; sell to stores, interior designers, and corporations; pricing tips, extra income ideas and more.