

"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

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Publisher
James Dillehay

Contact
Craftmarketer.com
Warm Snow Publishers
PO Box 75
Torreon NM 87061
4jamesd@gmail.com

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How Much Time Should You Spend Online Promoting Your Crafts?

by James Dillehay

This issue is in answer to a question from Michael Berlin on Facebook asking "How much time should I devote online to sites where I am creating links but not any real presence? (like zimbio, scribd, hubpages etc) - not a primary focus of relationship building (like on Facebook). Basically is it better to spread oneself out (mucho links), go deep (commit to Facebook and Twitter), or something in between?"

Because there are so many sites where you can have an online presence beyond Etsy, promoting on the Internet may seem like a maze leading nowhere and everywhere at the same time. Let's try to simplify the issue by looking at what some different sites can do for you as an artist.

Facebook and Twitter

Facebook and Twitter are for building relationships. They let you notify those on your list when you have something to promote, which is great, as long as you don't overdo it. Depending on the size of your personal network, FB and Twitter can be worth at least 30 minutes and maybe more attention per day.

If you get visitors (and sales) from Tweeting or from networking on FB,

REVIEW OF CRAFTSU.COM BY KILLERSTARTUPS.COM

"Buying handmade items has always proven to be popular. It has been that way long before Etsy came around, and if you look at stats regarding where do people turn for ideas and inspiration when it comes to buying gifts it dawns on you that a fair number resort to social networking sites.

"A website like CraftsU.com is highly appealing

since it is a social shopping resource that revolves around handmade crafts. That is, it will let the shopper do everything in the same place. He will be able to talk with his friends about these products that he likes, and he will be capable of buying these very same items through the site.

"Moreover, the website offers a true platform for interaction as artists can tell their stories and engage customers in real-time, while also answering specific queries and doing their best to fulfill specific requests.

"The ones who came up with CraftsU have covered so many bases that I doubt any user will come empty-handed out of it."



Best acceptance speech by an artist: "I don't deserve this award, but I've got arthritis and I don't deserve that either!"



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 served on the advisory boards of the National Craft Association and ArtisanStreet.com and is the founder of CraftsU.com, a social network for craft artists.

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Certified Guerrilla
Marketing Coach

than it pays to spend more time there: frequently posting new images, uploading videos, updating your status, etc. If no one is paying attention to you on FB, then you may need to dress up your presentations, which may take more time in the beginning, but once the initial work is done, you can maintain or tweak it with less effort.

Getting New People

Let's say you have developed your Facebook presence and you are looking to attract more traffic from the universe of people who aren't yet in your network. In general, you want to aim at getting these prospective customers into your personal network on Facebook and Twitter, where they can feel personally connected to you and your work.

I find it takes more time getting new people than it does to hang out on my network, because researching keywords, adding content, getting incoming links, fine tuning it all — these all require more effort than adding a comment or sending an email.

Aim for higher rankings in the search engines so you get free organic traffic. Then, direct (by linking) those new people into your social media presence on FB or Twitter. I recommend both sites, because these sites have millions of users.

I get higher search rankings by getting quality incoming links, like those from popular sites. Links from popular sites tend to stay live for as long as the site is up. Established sites work to stay popular so it's worth your effort to get links from them.

I don't bother going after reciprocal link exchanges anymore. Years ago, they worked, but now they just tend to cancel themselves out in terms of search engine rankings.

You have to have the right kind of incoming links or the effort is wasted. What I mean by that is you want your incoming links to contain the text phrases important to you. I describe in more detail how to go about getting links in an article at www.craftsu.com/profiles/blogs/why-and-how-you-should-get-by-researching-keyword-phrases-and-the-competition-for-them. You need to know whether it's even worth your time and effort attempting to rank for a particular phrase. I do keyword research almost daily and found the research is worth the effort.

How Many Links Do I Need?

How many incoming links to go for? It all depends on your keywords and your competition. For instance, if someone else is ranking #1 for "stained glass angels" and you are at #12, you need more incoming links than they have for that phrase to get to the top spot.

Varying your incoming link text to the same page looks more natural to Google — 60% of inbound links contain your main keyword phrase, 30% secondary words, 10% third important.

The good news about how many hours you invest online is that many of the benefits last far longer than the time initially spent. This helps when thinking about the hours it takes to do what's needed to reach the point where you see results.