

**Salon Leader Version:** Discussion questions in dark blue. My comments to you, the leader, are in *[italics]*.

## The Artist's Marketing Plan

### 1: INTRODUCTION

*[You may not need all of the blue discussion questions and comments. They are there only to help you bring out certain points and fill in where needed.]*

***[PLEASE make a habit of reiterating the Welcome message at the top of each session. Reminding everyone of why they're here and providing an agenda will help provide structure that a group needs to maintain momentum, focus, and discipline. Incidentally, these are the same qualities you want when marketing your work.]***

***[To prepare for this meeting, you might want to ask everyone to bring a portfolio or sample of his or her work to share. You should also remind them to come prepared with their 10-second introduction.]***

#### **WELCOME!**

I'm so glad everyone could make it and I hope you were able to download the information for Session 1.

We're here to get organized as an artist-marketing salon as part of the Art Biz Connection, which is an offshoot of ArtBizCoach.com. Alyson Stanfield, who owns ArtBizCoach.com, has provided us with free materials, but we are on our own throughout this process. If anyone ever wants individual marketing consultations with Alyson, s/he can contact her directly about those.

Before we get started, I want to reiterate our reason for being here. We are here to:

- Participate in regular, structured meetings with an agenda and action steps.
- Set and attain goals important to you.
- Receive support and accountability from the group.
- Solve problems creatively as a result of group dynamics and shared experience.

I also want to remind everyone of the tenets that will guide our discussions. These were outlined on the sheet on which you signed up.

- Be serious about marketing our art. Everyone should come prepared to discuss the subject at hand, bring the materials requested, and share thoughts and ideas.
- Attend all nine sessions (three months of bi-weekly meetings, plus a follow-up meeting one month later). Irregularities in participation will create disharmony and some frustration from other members.
- Participate with positive feedback and support other group members in their endeavors.
- Commit to complete confidentiality when requested. The group must be a safe place for members to feel they can be open, honest, and trusting.

It is very important we're all on the same page here! That we all want the same thing from our experience.

As the salon leader, it is my job to:

- Maintain a membership list with this Alyson Stanfield of Art Biz Connection and ArtBizCoach.com
- Call meetings (make sure they're on everyone's calendar, send reminders).
- Lead and facilitate discussion in a democratic fashion, keeping the needs of every member in mind. That means I will try to keep us on task. If we have time, we can tackle

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other issues, but we must take care of business first and respect one another's schedules.

- Provide follow-up as needed.
- Evaluate progress with Alyson Stanfield.

At the beginning of each meeting, I will remind everyone of our focus and then we'll go over the agenda for the day. Please help me keep us on schedule and adjourn by the time we agreed upon.

**Today's agenda is this:** *[I have copied a sample agenda, but you should adapt this to your time and needs.]*

10 a.m.

As I have done, I'll call the meeting to order on time and go over the guidelines and daily agenda.

10:05 a.m.

In a minute, I'll call on each member for his or her 10-second introduction. During introductions, you will have two minutes (again, depending on size of group) to brag about your recent accomplishments.

10:30 a.m.

I will facilitate discussion based on the downloads.

11:45 a.m.

I'll go over the action plan for the next two weeks and ask if anyone wants to declare a goal they've set for themselves to accomplish before the next meeting. We do this to make a promise to ourselves and to have the support of the group.

12:00 p.m.

Adjourn on time.

**So, let's get started!**

## introduce yourself properly

**Please come prepared to our first meeting with a 10-second introduction.**

A good introduction is:

- Succinct
- Intriguing
- Enticing
- Colorful (forms pictures for the listener)
- Brief (no longer than 10 seconds!)

*Preparation is the key!* You only get one chance to make a first impression!

Your introduction includes:

- Your name (if you haven't already said it)
- The type of art you create
- Descriptive language that helps the listener imagine what your work looks like

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Let's take some time to go around the table (or room) and have everyone give their 10-second introduction. *[Bring a timer if you think you might need it.]*

*[If needed, you can take time to help some members develop theirs, being careful not to spend too much time on any one person.]*

Alyson says it took her two years to come up with her introduction. It's a process. The words have to roll effortlessly from your tongue. Alyson's introduction is: "I'm an artist marketing consultant. I help visual artist promote themselves and build their businesses."

**You should also be prepared to point to a recent accomplishment.** This is not the time to be shy or modest. You should make the most of your initial meetings with each and every person you come across. Remember, you only get one chance to make a first impression.

Here is an example of a 10-second commercial (a little more "commercial-ly" than an introduction) that could be used in a formal networking opportunity such as the marketing salons:

"Hi, I am Arthur Jackson. I create colorful, abstract paintings with collage elements. My large-scale works have become very popular with interior designers and building managers." (26 words)

Notice in the example that Arthur Jackson succinctly stated his name, described the content and size, and snuck in the fact that he works with interior designers and building managers. If the conversation continues, he could be more direct and ask if his audience might know anyone in these professions. He gave enough detail to visualize a particular style, but he didn't overload them with too much information. He could shorten it to this in a less formal situation in which he is just asked what kind of work he does:

"I create colorful, abstract paintings with collage elements."

**Highlight those things in your introduction that will intrigue people the most.** Perhaps it is your technique, subject matter, or materials. If you aren't sure, practice a lot and see what works best for you. I encourage you, as always, to write it down, spend time away from it, re-write it, practice a lot, and repeat until you get it right, realizing that the spoken word has a much different rhythm than the written word. You will just have to experiment and see what works best for you.

**Start now!** Don't wait until it becomes critical or even too late! Remember: every person you meet is a potential collector. You must be prepared.

## marketing overview

*"Marketing" is the complex process of creating customers for your products and services. A marketing plan is a written document which helps you manage this process—including the action steps needed to make the plan work.—David H. Bangs, Jr., [The Market Planning Guide](#), page 15.*



That pretty much describes the approach I have taken to help you with your marketing plan, although we'll change the title "product and services" to "art."

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I know you have probably read the marketing overview and introduction. I hope you have! I wonder what your thoughts have been about marketing in the past and where you are now with your marketing.

**What I didn't want to do is to make this so complex that you will feel overwhelmed and never implement it.** When I developed a marketing plan for ArtBizCoach.com, I read lots of material, and then simplified it to meet my needs. Most of the business plans I read were too detailed for my needs. Since my business was originally set up legally as a sole proprietorship, which I assume yours is as well, I left out all of the parts about employees. I have done the same for you. You can make your plan as detailed as you like. I chose to stick with a plan I could implement quickly and change as my needs changed.

Here is another view on marketing:

*Marketing is letting people know that you have something they want or need. The traditional definition of marketing is "A system or organizational activities designed to plan, price, promote, and distribute something of value (product or service) for the benefit of present and potential customers." We define marketing as everything related to how you operate your business. Every action your business takes sends a marketing message.—Claude Whitmeyer and Salli Rasberry, [Running a One-Person Business](#), page 179.*



That's worth reiterating: Every action your art business takes sends a marketing message. Or, to put it another way:

**Every move you make sends a marketing message.**

That's powerful! And should make you think twice about each move.

Let's talk about that a little more. What are the things you do that send a marketing message?

*The way you dress. (Yes!)*  
*What you say about your work and everything else.*  
*What your marketing materials look like.*  
*How your work is framed or presented.*  
*How you write your emails.*

## time

**How much time are you spending on your business right now?** You have to strike a realistic balance between creating your art and marketing it. At the same time, you cannot expect people to buy what they don't know about!

**Artists are no different from anyone else.** You have chosen to be your own boss, which means that you are responsible for your successes and your failures. Like other people in business for themselves, you have to pay attention to all aspects of your business if you want to succeed. This means spending time on some things that you don't always enjoy.

**Publications on the business of art will tell you to spend 50% of your time marketing.** Small business manuals will tell you to spend 70% when you are just starting out. That's a lot of time, but you can't succeed without coming close to those numbers. Many have tried. Many have failed.

How have you learned to manage your time better?  
How do you balance other work with your art career?

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How much time are you spending on marketing right now? How much time do you think you should be spending?

*[As leader, you need to make sure this doesn't go off into a whine session. Everyone everywhere wishes they had more time. Let your members complain about their lack of time, but then refocus the discussion. Remind them that they'll find a way to do it all if they really want it badly enough. The salons need to stay positive, nurturing environments. Members will be driven away if the sessions include one or more people who are constantly complaining.]*

**What one thing do you want to accomplish before the next meeting?**

### **BEFORE WE GO**

I'd like to take the last 10 minutes and have each of us go around the room. What one marketing project do you want to accomplish before we see each other again?

Remember, it can be anything related to your marketing: visiting a gallery you've been neglecting; putting all of your deadlines on your calendar; spending 10 hours a week on marketing tasks.

What's it going to be?

**next session: goals**

Be sure to download this section and go over it before our next meeting. I'd like for everyone to come prepared to talk about the marketing goals they have set.

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