



NWT Arts Workshop Series: A GUIDE TO SELLING YOUR ARTWORK

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Photos Front Cover

Left to right: Jennifer Walden | Karen Wright-Fraser | John Sabourin

The bottom of the page features several overlapping, wavy lines in shades of teal and light green, set against a background of a light-colored, textured surface that resembles stone or concrete.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to A Guide to Selling your Artwork, a booklet to go along with the **NWT Arts Workshop Series: Selling Your Artwork.**

The eight workshop videos are available on the NWT Arts [website](#) or on a **USB stick** available from your regional Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) office. This booklet is a summary of the information presented in the workshops and should be used as a workbook as you watch the videos. The workshop videos and the booklet are designed to help you – the northern artist – learn about options for selling your work. This includes things like pricing your art, creating an artist portfolio, **marketing** your artwork, and most importantly, the different ways to sell.

As you watch the videos, have your booklet in front of you to follow along. Feel free to pause each video to complete an assignment or take notes for later. By the end of the series, you will have some effective tools to help you achieve your goals!

Throughout the booklet, you will notice words in a lighter shade of **blue** – these are glossary terms. In the back of your booklet you can find a list of definitions for these words to ensure you understand them the same way they are being used. We have also created a *Selling Your Artwork Resources* page on the NWT Arts [website](#), which will be updated regularly. You can find that page here: nwtarts.com/selling_resources

Let's start working through the materials and get you on the way to selling your art.



Cindy Daniels

Workshop 1:

INTRODUCTION TO SELLING YOUR ARTWORK

It's a good idea to ask yourself a few important questions before you start selling your art. Your answers will help you make decisions on how to approach and achieve your goals.

There are blank pages at the back of this booklet to write down your answers.

What is your main goal for selling your artwork?

Making art and selling art are two different things. The reasons you make art may affect the type of work you offer for sale in the **marketplace**.

- Are your goals artistic or financial?
- How many pieces do you want to make and sell a month?
- Would you like to become a full-time artist?

Is your work ready to sell?

When you are just starting, it's helpful to get an honest assessment of your work from a fellow artist, mentor or teacher. Some helpful feedback may include:

- Quality.
- Skill.
- Finishing.
- Price.
- Materials.
- Originality.
- Design.

The feedback you receive will help determine your **marketplace** readiness and where you may need a little help. This feedback is also crucial in determining the value of your art in the **marketplace**.

How much time do you have to make your art?

This is a practical question. For example, if you have a full-time job and you've set a goal of how much you want to make per month, you'll need to ensure you have the time to create, sell, ship and restock your supplies.

- If you work full time, how much time do you have to dedicate to making your art?
- How much time do you have to maintain your social media pages?
- How much time do you have to photograph your work?
- How much time do you have to source and purchase materials?

Too often, artists underestimate the time they have and become overwhelmed.

Can you create artwork under deadlines?

Selling art often comes with deadlines. An honest assessment of how much time you have to create (and sell) your work will be helpful in determining your sales plans.

- Do you have the time, focus and commitment to honour deadlines?
- Do you want to sell what you make, take custom orders, or both?

What skills do you have to sell your work?

Selling art requires both social, practical and technical skills. How you answer these questions will help you determine what skills you need to develop and if you wish to invest the time in gaining those skills. Some artists may prefer to focus their skills on making their art, and leave the selling to someone else.

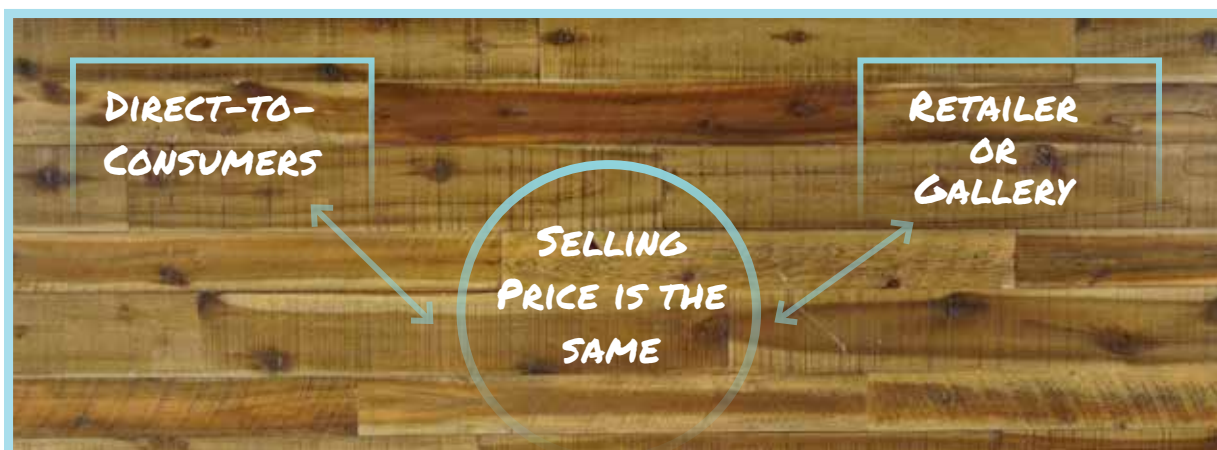
- Do you have the time and interest to deal with potential customers directly?
- Would you prefer to work behind-the-scenes and let someone else handle sales?
- Do you want to attend festivals and art market?
- Are you good with a computer?

These are just some of the questions you need to keep in mind as you learn about how you can sell your work. Answering them now will help you determine your future goals as an artist.

Your Prices

Pricing your art is often cited as the most challenging task for artists, especially at the beginning. With time and practice, you will gain confidence in pricing so you are paid fairly.

Regardless of whether you sell **direct-to-consumers** or through a **retailer**, or both, the price the customer pays should be the same everywhere your work is available for purchase. The **selling price** doesn't change depending on who is selling it. It's the **profit** that changes. You will learn more about the importance of consistency in your prices throughout this workshop series.



Ways to Sell Your Artwork

For many years, in-person sales were the only way art was sold. Artists sold directly to buyers, or to a retailer who then sold to customers who came in their store or called them on the phone. Today, the online arts market enables artists to reach people all around the world without leaving their community. That doesn't mean in-person sales or retail stores are no longer needed. We will discuss selling **direct-to-consumers** or through a **retailer** in depth later in the workshop series, so you can determine the best way to sell your artwork.

Your Portfolio

Every successful artist needs a portfolio. It is a collection of your best work to show potential customers. This is where the NWT Arts Program can help. The NWT Arts website is a place for you to build your own professional online profile. This helps customers learn more about you, see photos of your best work, and find ways to contact you through phone, email, social media or your website. In the next workshop, we will talk more about your portfolio and work on developing your NWT Arts online profile.

Workshop 2:

THE ARTIST PORTFOLIO

Think of your artist **portfolio** as a place where all of your best work is collected.

In this workshop, you'll learn what goes into your artist **portfolio**, the different types of **portfolios** you can have, and how to maintain your **portfolio**.

Lesson 1: Introduction

Your **portfolio** shows viewers who you are as an artist. It communicates the type, scale, and quality of the art you are currently making. It also conveys the kind of artist you are by the level of professionalism, quality and creativity of your presentation.

Your **portfolio** is the main supporting document for any proposal submission involving your art such as funding applications, grants, exhibitions and other art programs. It is also necessary when submitting your work for consideration to some **retailers** and art **galleries**. No matter what format you present it in, a **portfolio** is an essential tool for every artist.

Lesson 2: Best practices

There are a few best practices to keep in mind when creating an effective artist **portfolio**. Remember these few tips:

- Show the work and ideas that reflects work you are currently creating.
- Organize your **portfolio** so it is easy to read or view on a screen.
- Make your **portfolio** creative so it stands out from the crowd.

Lesson 3: Types of portfolios

There are two types of **portfolios**: hard copy and digital. You may need both depending on your goals.

Hard Copy

A **hard copy portfolio** is essentially a printed version of your **digital portfolio**. You can use a binder or folio in a size that best reflects your work. It might even be a simple photo album of your best pieces. NWT Arts can help you create a Personal Profile Sheet which you can print and hand out to potential customers.

Hard copy portfolios are useful at tradeshows and art markets or if you have an appointment with a **retailer** or art **gallery**. Make sure your **portfolio** is well organized and pleasurable to view.

Digital

A **digital portfolio** is essentially the same as a **hard copy portfolio**; it just isn't printed.

You can create and distribute your **digital portfolio** in the following ways:

- **PDF** emailed (with a file size no larger than 7 MB).
- **PDF** on a **USB stick** (more room so files can be larger than 7 MB).
- On your own **website**.
- Link to your **NWT Arts artist profile** page.

The simplest way to create a free, professional **digital portfolio** is through the NWT Arts **website**. Later in this workshop we will work on developing your **NWT Arts artist profile**.

Digital portfolio tips:

- Keep **PDF** file sizes manageable by compressing photos before inserting images.
- Do not email separate files.
- Tailor your **portfolio** (**content** and images) to the purpose of your submission.

True or False: *Links to social media pages are the same as an artist portfolio.*

Answer: False. *While people can see your work in these places, social media platforms are not designed for a detailed look at your art.*

Lesson 4: What goes into your portfolio?

Content

There are three things you need to write for your **portfolio**.

- 1. Artist Statement** – a personal story written by you, focusing on your work’s ideas, concepts, and materials. It should be written in first person, using the terms “I” and “me”, and be about 100-300 words. An **artist statement** can be written to introduce a body of work, or your work in general.

Here are some questions to get you started. This doesn’t mean this is the order of sentences for your final **artist statement**. At this point, just answer the questions with no structure or format. The next step will be to take your answers, turn them into proper sentences, and then flow the sentences together to create paragraphs and your story. You also don’t have to use all the questions or answers in your final story.

- How would you describe the type of artwork you make or the type of artist you are?
- What does your art look like? (Size, colors, shapes, textures, light, objects, relationships, etc.)
- What kind of materials did you use to create the work?
- How did you learn to make your art?
- Who inspires you?
- Why do you create art?
- Where do you get your inspiration from?
- What do you love the most about creating art?
- How does making your art make you feel?
- How has your work evolved over time as you have developed as an artist?
- What does your art represent to you?

Tips on how start sentences:

- *“I’m inspired by...”*
- *“My favourite part of making art is...”*
- *“My art makes me feel...”*
- *“I was taught to make art by...”*

- How does making art connect you to your culture?
- What is your creative process? *For example, do you sketch out your design first? Do you paint from photographs, use studio models? Do you make your own patterns for beading?*
- What do the different elements of your work represent? *For example, your beadwork style may reflect colours and patterns of nature in your community.*
- What would be the ideal space in which to exhibit or present the work?
- When did you start selling your artwork?
- Where do you sell your artwork?

2. Artist Biography – also known as a bio, this is written about you, with a focus on your path as an artist. Bios are written in third person and are about 250 words.

Some helpful tips for writing your bio:

- Keep your bio to one or two paragraphs (especially for a young artist).
- Include place of birth and where you currently live.
- Include your education and journey into creating art.
- You may want to include information on your spouse and children (if any).
- Consider creating a shortened version that can be easily sent to **galleries**, reporters, collectors, and audiences.

Tips on how start sentences:

- “*She went to school for...*”
- “*Her first exhibition...*”
- “*Her artform is...*”



Darrel Chocolate

3. **Artist CV** – a factual, chronological account of your art-making experience or career, written in resume format. Your **artist CV** can include:

- Education.
- Experience.
- Exhibitions.
- Publications.
- Awards.
- Art residencies.
- **Gallery** representations.
- Major grants.

Tips for writing a good artist CV:

- *Make headings for each category*
- *Keep it organized and chronological (in order of dates)*
- *Include start and end dates*
- *Include links to more information (if applicable)*

April Glaicar



Images

When you can't show your work in person, images are the next best thing.

Tips for taking photos:

- Make sure your images are clear, sharp and free of background noise or clutter.
- Photos shot against a white background brighten up your work.
- **Lightboxes** are an easy and affordable way to take great pictures with your smartphone.
- Take close-up shots to highlight details like texture, stitching, brush strokes, or beadwork.
- Make sure the images of your work reflect their size. Including dimensions in your descriptions will help viewer know the true size of the piece.

You will also need a good quality photo of yourself taken against an uncluttered background, either in a studio or outside. This is also known as a headshot.

If you want to have your work professionally photographed but are not ready to hire a professional, consider working with an **emerging** photographer to help build each other's **portfolios**.

NWT Arts is here to help you with all these things. Your regional ITI office has **lightboxes** that are available for you to use anytime. They can also arrange for a local photographer to take a photo of you or your art if you can't.



Cheryl Thomas

Lesson 5: Extra information

Other useful **content** might include:

- Media (a high quality printed copy, or link to published articles about your work).
- Price list (if applicable).
- Works in progress.
- Letter of introduction (for **galleries** especially).
- Awards and honours.
- Return shipping label (prepaid envelope to send your **portfolio** back to you).

Lesson 6: Your NWT Arts artist profile

The NWT Arts **website** is an efficient way for customers to find artists who make authentic northern art. Having a complete **NWT Arts artist profile** enables customers to find out more about you, the story of your art and see images of your work online.

First step is to log in with your username and password. If you don't know this information, NWT Arts can reset it for you. Then, start adding content and images to develop your **digital portfolio**:

- **Artist statement** (or story).
- Feature image.
- Artist bio.
- Artist image.
- Portfolio images.
- Contact information.
- Type of artwork you make.
- Social media and **website** links.

Note: Your **artist statement** and feature image can only be added by NWT Arts, so once those things are ready, we can upload them for you. Our contact information is on page 69.

Darrel Nasogaluak



Workshop Summary

Tips to create an effective artist **portfolio**:

- Show current work that reflects who you are as an artist right now.
- Avoid showing old projects and ideas that you will not be revisiting.
- Organize your **portfolio** so it is easy to read and professionally put together in one digital location or one hard copy.
- Update the images and **content** in your **portfolio** regularly.
- Be original and show your creativity.
- Keep your **NWT Arts artist profile** page updated with new images of your work and current contact information (email and phone number).



Chris DeWolf

Workshop 3: PRICING YOUR ARTWORK

Art and fine crafts are considered a luxury item. This means only a small percentage of consumers will be in the **marketplace** to purchase these items. With a growing interest in Canada's North, demand for certain works continues to rise. The Internet can expand your **marketplace** globally where new buyers await.

How to price your art is often one of the toughest things for artists as they begin to sell their work. This workshop will show you a few of the most common ways to approach pricing. As you grow, you can evolve your methods.

Note: NWT Arts has blank pricing worksheets you can use to price your work - ask us to send them to you! There is a different one for craft, painting and carving. These will help you include all the factors you need to consider when you are pricing your work for the marketplace and ensure you are being paid fairly for your work. This will also help you determine where your efforts are best spent when you are selling your art.

Lesson 1: Principles of pricing

Regardless of how you choose to price your work, there are some key principles to consider.

- 1. Know Your Market** – The **marketplace** (also known as “the market”) refers to a group of people or organizations that share a need or desire for your art. This group will help determine what you sell and will often influence what you produce. The **economy** can affect the **marketplace**, which affects sales, and in turn may affect the type of work you make and where it appears for sale. Observe what is happening in the **marketplace** and rise with the trends.
- 2. Product Development** – Remember this phrase: “Produce what you sell, don’t sell what you produce.” This doesn’t mean you have to compromise your artistry. Not every appreciator of art can afford a one-of-a-kind handmade piece of work but is still looking for something authentic and well made. Explore cost efficient ways to create simpler products that reflect your designs and patterns but can be offered at a lower price point.

Rosemary Elemie



3. **Quality Outweighs Quantity** – Always use quality materials and create the best work you can. It is better to sell fewer good quality products for more money, than it is to sell lower quality products for less money.
4. **Know Your Unique Value Proposition** – Your **unique value proposition** is what makes your work stand out in the **marketplace**. This can be anything from using rare materials, applying unusual techniques or telling your personal cultural story. This value can help influence your price beyond the regular **pricing formula**. The process can also help differentiate authentic works from replicas and act as a tool against cultural appropriation.
5. **Establish a Pricing Formula** – Having a **pricing formula** can help take the emotion out of pricing your work. You may become attached to certain pieces and feel they deserve a higher value. While there is room for slightly higher prices based on artistry, it's best to stick to a formula to ensure accurate cost recovery and consistent pricing. Pricing will eventually become intuitive.
6. **Pricing for Today's Market** – In the past, you worked through a basic cost recovery formula to get the **minimum price**, and then the **retailer** doubled that to get the **selling price**. This model does not work for all types of art, nor does it work in all **marketplaces**, especially with many **retailers** and artists moving online to sell their work. The need for consistent pricing across all **marketplaces** is more important than ever to create trust amongst buyers, **retailers** and artists.



No matter how you choose to sell your art, your prices need to reflect the **market value**, which helps everyone sell for a fair price, and more importantly, helps establish a common value for northern artwork.

Christina Rae Carrigan

Lesson 2: Determining your price

There are three important factors you might consider when determining the price of your art beyond your **minimum price**.

- 1. Reputation** – Your reputation is built not only on your skill and style, but also how professional you are to deal with. The way you conduct your business, meet timelines, communicate and deal with your customers contribute to your overall success.
- 2. Skill** – Skill can be measured by the quality of your work, as well as the complexity of your design. Your prices should reflect the quality of your work in relation to the **market value**.
- 3. Recognition** – Being recognized by your peers, collectors and the art world is a great honour and can come in many forms such as awards, media coverage, exhibits, **commissions** and **gallery** representation. Recognition can help sell your work, and also help you to increase your prices when the time is right.

Lesson 3: Increasing your prices

A good indicator of when to increase your prices is when the demand for your artwork exceeds your ability to produce.

- Price increases should occur in small steps.
- Start with 10-20% and monitor your sales.
- Value trends may drive the price of specific types of work up.
- If the cost of producing your work increases (such as your expenses and/or materials), your prices should increase as well.
- As a general rule, be sure you are selling at least 50% of your inventory (or a specific product), before you consider a price increase.

Pricing your work too high or too low will have negative impacts on your business, so you really need to research your **marketplace** and set the right price for your art.

Your prices can continue to increase in a healthy **marketplace**. Try increasing the price on your more popular items, while other items remain the same. If you have your work in a variety of places, be sure they can all sustain a price increase before making changes. Whatever you do, make sure you are doing it consistently in all your **marketplaces**.

Lesson 4: Factors to consider

Labour

You cannot work for free – you need to account for your time. This means no matter how you sell your work, you will at least have been paid a basic hourly wage for the time it took you to make your art. Keep in mind the principles of pricing when determining what your basic wage will be.

- Many artists use \$15 to \$25 as their hourly wage. As your skill and experience increase, this wage can be increased to bring you in line with your reputation and the **market value** of your work.
- Determine how long it took you to make that one piece and multiply it by your hourly wage. This number goes in your **pricing formula**.

Expenses

You will need to account for the expenses related to making your art.

This includes tools you use more than once to make your art that eventually have to be replaced.

- Assign a small dollar amount to each piece to account for the wear and tear of tools.
- To figure this out, estimate the number of pieces you might make before you need to replace the tool, divide that number by the cost, and then add that to your price.



Sarah Cleary

Other expenses include studio space or workshop rental, utilities and insurance. Or if you have a dedicated space in your home, you can allocate a portion of your utilities, and your rent or mortgage.

- Some full-time artists allocate anywhere between 20-35% of their monthly expenses.
- If you make your art part-time, it would be lower.

Add up all the expenses to making your art, and divide by the number of pieces you will create that month. This number goes in your **pricing formula**.

Expenses related to selling your work, such as **marketing**, sales transaction fees and **gallery commissions**, come out of your **gross profit**, or **mark-up** and are not factored into your price.

Note: *If calculating your expenses is too complicated, you can give yourself a higher base wage to account for living costs and not worry about including expenses in your calculation.*

Materials

The cost of materials to make your art need to be included in your **pricing formula**. It costs money to purchase materials and have them shipped.

- Things such as fabric, stone, hide, canvas, beads and other materials.
- Always choose quality materials.
- If you have harvested natural materials from the land, consider the amount of time it took you to go and collect, clean, and prep them for use.
- Gifted materials still need to have the normal value assigned to them.
- Buying materials bulk has its advantages.
- Check with your fellow artists to see how ordering together may help save you all money.

Mark-up

Mark-up is a percentage that is added after you determine your **minimum price**. This is often one of the most difficult aspects of pricing your own work.

- This might be anywhere from 20-50% depending on the product you are selling, how and where it is being sold.
- The **mark-up** percentage should consider your skill, the quality of the work and the **market value** for that piece.
- Simpler items might be able to sustain a 50% **mark-up**, whereas more labour intensive items might only be able to sustain a 20% **mark-up**.
- Think of simpler items as ‘bread and butter’ pieces. These are smaller items you know how to make really well so it doesn’t take as much time, and they priced to sell easily in the **marketplace**. These items can help provide more reliable income while other more labour intensive items may take longer to make and sell (as you might have to wait for a while for the right buyer to come along). This approach may also help ensure you have money to pay your bills when you are creating larger more expensive pieces.

Your **marketplace** research is important to understanding how much of a **mark-up** your art can sustain. You can also work together with **retailers** and **galleries** to establish consistent pricing for your work.

The main two things to remember are:

1. Prices need to be consistent, no matter where and how you sell your work.
2. You need to get your **minimum price** (or close to it).



Lucy Simon

Lesson 5: Putting it all together

Now that you have learned the principles of pricing, and some factors to consider, let's do the math.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{MINIMUM PRICE} &= \text{LABOUR} + \text{EXPENSES} + \text{MATERIALS} \\ \text{SELLING PRICE} &= \text{MINIMUM PRICE} + \text{MARK-UP (20-50\%)}\end{aligned}$$

If you sell **direct-to-consumers**:

- You keep the **mark-up** percentage as **gross profit**.
- You have to invest time and energy to sell your work this way and any costs you incur in selling your art come out of your **gross profit**.

If you sell through a **retailer** or **gallery**:

- The **mark-up** percentage will be their **commission** for selling the work.
- The percentage may be negotiable, which will help you be paid fairly for your time and materials to make the piece, and still enable the **retailer** to make some money as well.

Adding **mark-up** to **minimum prices** and subtracting **gallery commissions** from **selling price** do not equal the same figure, which can sometimes be confusing.

Dalhai Vela



Pricing Example 1: Beaded Moosehide Moccasins

Rebecca is an experienced sewer who makes her traditional crafts full-time. Rebecca uses her worksheet to calculate the costs to making her moccasins.

Her first calculation is labour to ensure she is paid a fair hourly wage for her work.



Next are expenses. Rebecca calculates 25% of her monthly home expenses (\$2,000 for rent and \$750 for heat, hot water, hydro and Internet) and adds \$20 for each pair of slippers to account for the wear on her sewing tools so they can be replaced at some point.

EXPENSES

$$\begin{aligned} & \$2,000 + \$750 \\ & = \$2,750 \times 25\% \\ & = \$688 / 16 \\ & = \$43 \end{aligned}$$
$$\begin{aligned} & \$43 + \$20 = \$63 \end{aligned}$$

Materials are next. Rebecca bought her hide for \$1,500. She buys three beaver pelts for \$150 each. She estimates she will use \$70 worth of beads for the 16 pairs of moccasins. Shipping all the materials cost her \$100. When she adds these all up, and divides by 16 pairs of slippers, Rebecca's material costs are \$132 for each pair she makes.



To find her **minimum price**, also known as **cost price**, Rebecca adds these all together. This will ensure she receives a basic wage while recovering her expenses and materials, making it financially viable for her to make traditional crafts full-time.



Next Rebecca calculates the **mark-up** and **selling price** to bring her work in alignment with the **marketplace**. She has done her research and feels that a 25% **mark-up** which equals \$100 would work well. She adds this to her **minimum price**, bringing the **selling price** to \$495. This should be the **selling price** everywhere she sells her work.



How should Rebecca sell her work? If she sells **direct-to-consumer**, she will have made a **gross profit** of \$100. But she also has to cover the costs of selling her work, such as **marketing**, transaction fees, and packing materials, which come out of her **gross profit**. If she works with a **retailer** or **gallery**, she has two options. First, she can sell outright to the store asking for her minimum price of \$395 and work with the **gallery** to sell her work for the same (or similar) amount of \$495 to keep her prices consistent in the **marketplace**. Her second option is to sell her work on **consignment** in the store. If she sells this way, she will need to consider the **gallery** commission she will pay on a **selling price** of \$495, and she may receive less than (but close to) her **minimum price**. Her **net profit** comes after the sale has been made and the costs of both making and selling have been calculated.



In the end, Rebecca decides to sell ten pairs **direct-to-consumer**, and six pairs through the **retailer**, who has agreed to take them on **consignment** for a reasonable **commission** of 25%.

Pricing Example 2: Oil Painting

Pricing paintings is somewhat different to other forms of art, and there are different approaches you can take. Pricing by size (linear inch) is often the best way for **emerging** painters to start selling.

- Create a set price list based on size.
- Prices gradually increase by size.
- Customers can easily understand your pricing structure this way.
- If you are just starting out, start low and build gradually.
- With the exception of **commissioned** paintings or other specialty work.

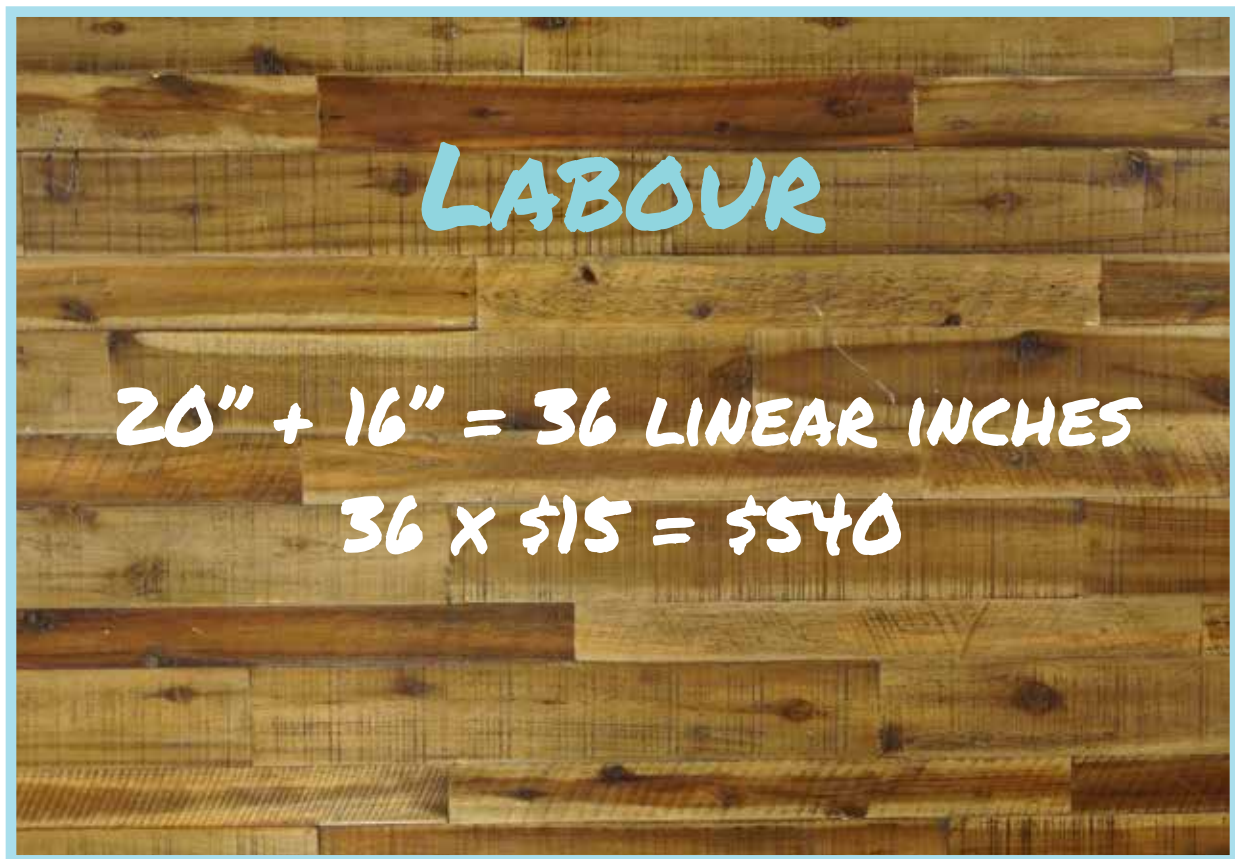
How you come up with a price per linear inch can be subjective as there is no set way to go about this. Do your research, combined with an intuitive approach, as well as an honest assessment of where you are at in your art making, to find the number that feels right to you. It's best to avoid comparing your work by size and subject, as you must consider your experience, reputation and mastery of your craft.



Robyn Scott

Justine is a talented **emerging** painter who has been selling her work for just over a year. She has just completed a beautiful oil painting. Justine uses her worksheet to calculate the costs to making her painting.

Given Justine's overall experience and reputation, she uses a multiplier of \$15 per linear inch to calculate her labour. She adds the width and length of the canvas together and then multiplies this by \$15 for a total of \$540.



Justine now needs to calculate her expenses and materials. Expenses include her Internet, home studio and utilities, plus her brushes that will eventually have to be replaced, which she works out to be \$50 for each painting she makes. Her materials are \$75 for the paint supplies and canvas. She adds these together for a total of \$125.



To get the **selling price**, Justine adds her labour with her expenses and materials, and rounds up.

SELLING PRICE



$$\$540 + \$125 = \$665 \text{ (ROUNDED UP TO } \$675)$$

How should Justine sell her work? She has found a **gallery** she wants to work with, but the commission fee is 50% of the **selling price**. This means, if she sells through the **gallery**, she will pay them \$337.50 in commission. From that, \$125 goes to her expenses and recovering her materials so she would only earn \$212.50 for her time and skill to make the painting.

RETAILER OR GALLERY

\$675 → 50% = \$337.50 STORE COMMISSION

\$675 → 50% = 337.50 JUSTINE (GROSS PROFIT)
- 125 EXPENSES AND MATERIALS
\$212.50 NET PROFIT

DIRECT-TO-CONSUMERS

\$675

\$675 JUSTINE 100%
- \$125 EXPENSES AND MATERIALS
\$550 GROSS PROFIT
- OTHER SELLING COSTS
= NET PROFIT



In the end, Justine decides to sell directly at a local art market. This way, after she subtracts her expenses of \$125 from the **selling price** of \$675, she will earn a **gross profit** of \$550, which is in line with her price per inch. It is also important to remember her though that Justine also needs to spend time and energy to sell her work. She might also have additional costs such as packing materials and transaction fees that would come out of her **gross profit**, to total her **net profit**.

Pricing Example 3: Carving

The **marketplace** for carvings varies slightly from other art forms. The nature of stone and heavier materials can make it less portable, and therefore can limit the sales opportunities due to shipping alone. Selling carvings online is slowly growing but has not yet caught up to other forms of art sales that are thriving in the online space.

Galleries remain an effective place to sell carvings, especially larger ones. **Galleries** rarely purchase large works outright and usually operate on the **consignment** model.

You may choose to make pieces that have a broad **marketplace** appeal and can easily sell, while working on larger, more unique fine art pieces – especially when you are just starting out. The pieces, often known as ‘bread and butter’ pieces, can help provide more reliable income while other larger pieces may take longer to sell. This approach may also help ensure you have money to pay your bills when you are creating larger works for an exhibition.

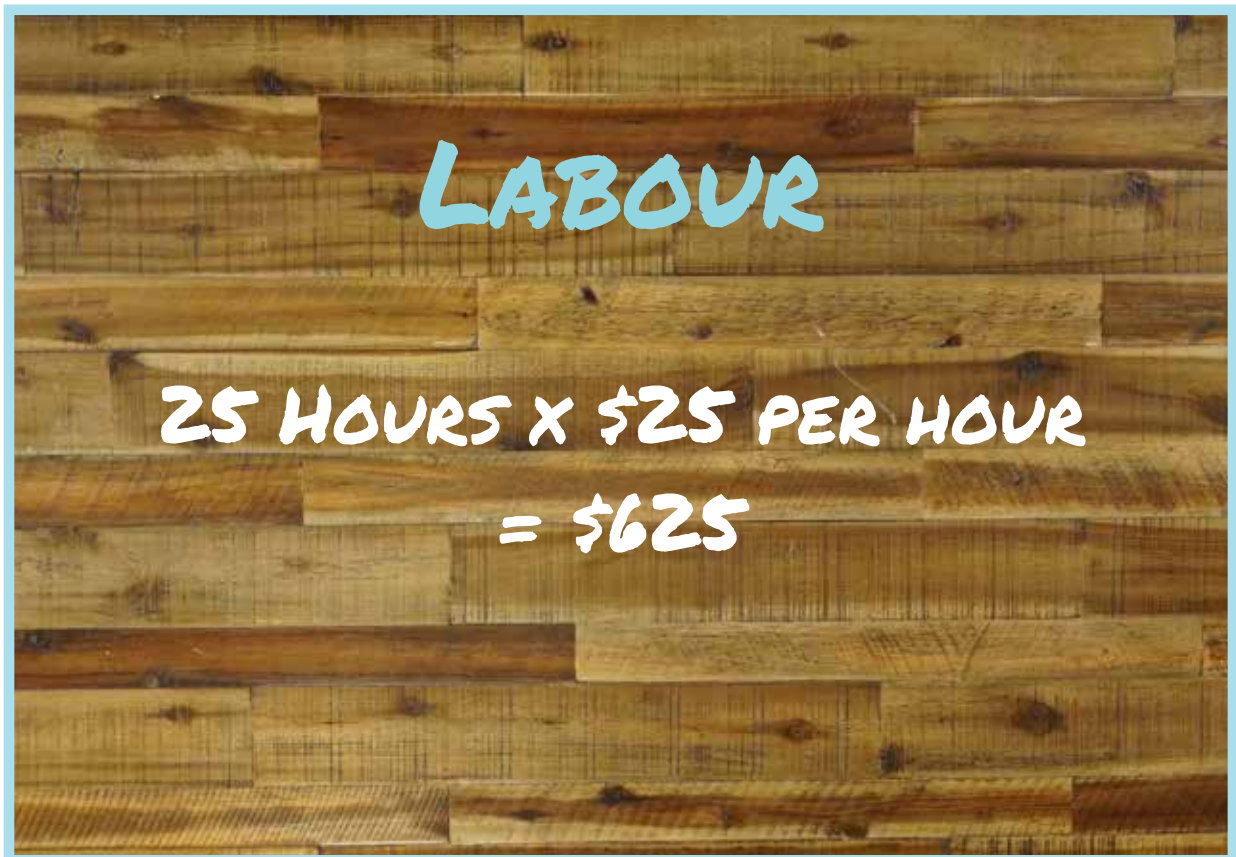
Since stone is ordered by the pound, it’s easy to calculate the cost. Each piece of stone can be priced individually by dividing its weight by the total amount of the stone order, including all the shipping charges. Write the price directly on the stone so you remember what each piece cost before you start working on it. If you wait until the piece was finished, it would be lighter, and you would not recover the true cost of the material.

Eli Nasogaluak



Peter is a mid-level carver who works from a studio he shares with other carvers. He just finished a carving and needs to determine a price for it before he ships it to a gallery he is working with in Calgary. Peter uses his worksheet to calculate the costs to making his carving.

Peter's first calculation is labour to ensure he is paid a fair hourly wage for his work.



Next are expenses and materials. Peter calculates his fixed monthly costs, which includes a portion of his studio space and utilities at \$50, tools, sanding and finishing supplies at \$50. His stone cost is \$35. Lastly, shipping and insurance of this piece to Calgary will be \$65. Although shipping is technically a cost of selling, in this case, he needs to recoup this cost so he includes it to his equation.



Peter adds all these costs up and calculates his **minimum price**, also known as **cost price**. Similar to Rebecca, he decides to add a **mark-up**. Based on Peter's research and knowledge of the **marketplace**, he feels his carving will sustain a 40% **mark-up**, which equals a **selling price** of \$1,155.



When the gallery receives the piece, they feel it is underpriced and suggest they increase the **selling price** to \$1,250, which Peter agrees to. Since Peter's **consignment agreement** states a 40/60 split in his favour, he will receive 60% of the final selling price or \$750, which is not quite his **minimum price** but close to it.



If Peter was to sell this piece **direct-to-consumer**, he would get 100% of the **selling price** but it would be up to him to find the buyer – and he would rather start on his next carving. As long as Peter knows his costs and what he needs to make, he can work with the **gallery** and adjust prices accordingly to ensure he is earning a fair price for his work, which is a better strategy for him to reach new audiences and build his profile as a professional artist.

Lesson 6: Consistent pricing

The most important thing when it comes to pricing your art is ensuring you are consistent with your prices. This illustration shows you the consistency you should try to achieve with your pricing.

Regardless of whether you sell **direct-to-consumers** or through a **retailer**, or both, the price the customer pays should be the same everywhere your work is available for purchase. The **selling price** doesn't change depending on who is selling it. It's the **profit** that changes.



Workshop Summary

Pricing your artwork is one of the hardest things you will do as an artist! Remember these basic principles:

- Quality outweighs quantity.
- Establish your formula.
- Pay yourself a basic wage.
- Recover your costs including expenses and materials.
- **Mark-up** according to the **marketplace**.
- Price your work consistently.

Once you establish a **market value** for your art, remember to be consistent, increase your prices according to your skill and what is happening in the **marketplace**, and stay true to your prices. Soon it will become second nature on how to price your work!

Workshop 4:

SELLING DIRECT-TO-CONSUMERS: IN-PERSON SALES

In this workshop, you will learn about the ways you can sell in-person and the different payment options there are. You will also get a sense of the amount of time and energy that is needed to do this properly.

Lesson 1: Are direct sales right for you?

Selling **direct-to-consumers** means just that. You are selling your artwork directly to the people who are buying it.

This approach means you are taking care of the business side of art, which requires organization, time and the desire to put in the effort. Many artists just want to make art!

The answers you gave to the questions in the beginning of this booklet will help determine if selling direct is a good option for you, either in-person, online, or both. You can choose what works for you!

Lesson 2: The business side of art

There are several things to think about if you are considering in-person sales that are considered the business side of art.

- 1. Time Management and Organization** - The first thing to know is that selling your work on your own takes time and organization. Whether you are attending a local art market or festival, or a larger one in Yellowknife or even outside the territory, there might be things you need to do in advance to prepare for the opportunity.
- 2. Meeting Timelines and Creating Stock** - When you attend an art market or festival, you need to have enough stock. Prepare well in advance and do not leave this to the last minute. Some artists find it useful to make one piece to sell, and one piece to stockpile for upcoming events or arts market.

- 3. Planning your Display** - When you sell at an art market or festival, have a vision for what your display or table will look like. Create yourself a checklist of things you need to get or make in advance. This can all be a lot of work if you haven't done it before, but if you know you want to do this more in the future, it is worthwhile to invest time and money to get these items made. You will also get more efficient at setting it up and taking it down each time.

Display Checklist:

- Tablecloth.
 - Signage or banners.
 - Stands for your artwork.
 - Price tags on your work in advance (from NWT Arts).
 - Packing materials – bags, tissue, tape, scissors, markers.
 - Email sign-up sheet and pen.
 - Artist Portfolio – hard copy or digital on a tablet.
 - Business cards and/or Personal Profile Sheet (from NWT Arts).
 - Amount of **inventory** you will need.
- 4. Have Help** - Family and friends often make great helpers, allowing you to take breaks and connect with fellow artists. By giving yourself some scheduled breaks, you can recharge and get the most from the experience.
- 5. Being Social** - Selling your work in-person involves being social and answering a lot of questions. It is a great way to build customer relations and share the story of your art. Connecting with customers in-person also provides a chance to receive valuable feedback about your work.
- 6. Marketing** - In larger communities and outside the NWT, the **marketplace** is competitive. **Marketing** tells customers where you will be and when. Events usually do a good job of **marketing**, but you can also let your customers know, which is a good way to stay in touch with them too.

7. **Sales and payments** - Completing a **direct-to-consumer** sale requires thought and preparation. Tracking **inventory** and sales is a big part of being an artist. Keeping track of your sales also helps you understand what is selling and where. It's a good idea to have a receipt book which can also help you keep track of your sales.
8. **Forms of payment** - It's good to have a few options for your customers so you don't lose out on a sale.
- Cash:** If you accept cash, you will need a float so you can provide change to your customers.
- E-transfers and cheques:** Unless you personally know and trust a person, it's not a good idea to take a personal cheque. If you accept an e-transfer from someone at an art market, be sure to complete the transaction before giving the customer the purchase.
- Point of sale device:** A **point of sale device** accepts debit and credit cards through your smartphone or tablet making sales very easy. These apps also help you track your sales and send receipts to your customers. The small percentage these companies take off the transaction total is worth the convenience.
9. **Packaging** - Lastly, you will need to think about how the customer will leave with their beautiful purchase. Having proper packaging materials will ensure customers know their purchase was special and well worth it. Consider the following:
- Will you wrap it in tissue and put it in a bag?
 - Does your artwork need a box?
 - Does it need bubble wrap?
 - Do you have a product card or care instructions?
 - Have you included your business card?

Selling your work in-person is fun and also lot of hard work and planning. The benefits of keeping 100% of your **net profit**, meeting your customers and networking with other artists make it all worth it!

Lesson 3: Finding in-person sale opportunities

For many northern artists, annual art markets and festivals are some of the best ways to sell work to the public. Sometimes, conferences or special events provide an opportunity for delegates to see and purchase work.

To make sure you are ready for any opportunity, have your artist **portfolio**, business cards, NWT Arts price tags, and even a bit of art ready to sell at any moment!

Art and Craft Markets

Art and craft markets happen in communities across the NWT throughout the year. These markets are highly anticipated and are an effective, affordable way to sell your work, connect with fellow artists and build your customer base.

If you are attending an art and craft market outside your community, or outside the territory, learn as much as you can about the local **marketplace**, the expected attendance, as well as the venue and set up so you can prepare.

Art and Culture Festivals

The NWT is home to many amazing art and culture festivals where artists can exhibit and sell their work. Festivals are scheduled in advance and happen on an annual basis giving artists plenty of lead time to prepare their art to sell. Workshops and demonstrations allow you to interact with fellow artists and customers.

Some festivals take a small **commission** on art sales to cover the costs of providing a professional experience for artists. While this is not exactly **direct-to-consumer**, it is worth the opportunity to connect with customers who may grow into life-long champions of your work.



Dorothy Wright

Email Lists

Selling work through email may seem old fashioned, but if you have an email list of people who regularly buy from you, it can actually be an effective, easy way to sell your work especially if you don't participate in online sales. You can write an email to a person, or a list of persons, and attach images, prices, and descriptions of the work you are offering for sale.

To build an email list be sure to have a place for people to sign up. When the event is over, add the new addresses to your distribution lists and you are ready to send personal emails whenever you have new work.

Lesson 4: Your prices

When you sell in-person, the price the customer pays should be the same in all your marketplaces. Refer back to the illustration on page 36.

When you sell directly, you are responsible to do all the things we have talked about in this workshop, but you keep 100% of the **selling price**. You will also have to cover additional costs in selling your work, like festival fees, packaging materials and **marketing** materials to get your table ready.

For many artists, in-person sales is a fun and rewarding part of making art for sale, even if it is a lot of work. It all depends on your goals and what works for you.

Workshop Summary

Remember, whether you are making art full or part time, and selling it **direct-to-consumers**, or **retailer** – or both – making and selling artwork should be an enjoyable experience.



Delia Cepoi

Workshop 5:

SELLING DIRECT-TO-CONSUMERS: SOCIAL MEDIA SELLING

Social media is an effective and easy way to engage with people interested in your work. It's redefining the art experience all over the world as both a **marketing** and sales tool.

At the end of this workshop, you will know more about the ways you can sell **direct-to-consumers** through social media. You will also get a sense of the amount of time and energy that is needed to do this properly.

Lesson 1: An introduction to social media

Two of the most popular platforms are **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

- Both apps can be downloaded to your smartphone.
- Both apps require an email address.
- Keep personal and business profiles separate.
- Be mindful to create a business page and not a group.

When choosing platforms and ways to sell your work, it often comes down to time and desire to want to sell online. Skills can be learned if you have the time and desire. One thing to remember about building your business on social media is that you don't own the platform. You may want to think about creating your own website, which we'll learn more about in Workshop 6.



Erica Lugt

Lesson 2: Social media options

Facebook Business Page

Your **Facebook** business page is public so anyone can see it and interact with you. This is how customers will find your art and learn more about your work.

Benefits of a **Facebook** Business Account include:

- Expand your online network locally, nationally and globally.
- Manage **content** easily with scheduling tools and a messaging system.
- Tag people, pages or products associated with the **content** you post.
- Boost or advertise your posts at affordable prices.
- Access to **Facebook** Shop.
- Your page has a dedicated URL.

Professional Instagram Account

Instagram is considered the go-to **social media platform** for art sales. With a Professional **Instagram** Account, you can share photo and video **content** which followers can interact with.

Benefits of a Professional **Instagram** Account include:

- Expand your online network locally, nationally and globally.
- Image and video based platform so quality photos of your art do the selling for you.
- Share **content** easily on **Instagram** with your **Facebook** Business Page.
- Boost or advertise your posts at affordable prices.
- Access to **Instagram** Shop.
- Your page has a dedicated URL.

Louie Nigiyok



Lesson 3: Setting up Facebook

The first step is to set up a personal profile, which is required to set up a page specifically for your business.

From your personal profile on your smartphone, click the three lines icon. If you are working from your desktop, click the plus sign at the top of your personal profile instead.

- Click *Pages*.
- Click *Create*.
- Follow the steps to finish the setup.

Lesson 4: Setting up Instagram

Unlike **Facebook**, you do not need a personal account to create a professional one.

If you already started an account for your art but set it up as a personal profile it's easy to switch to a professional account. From your personal profile on your smartphone, click the three lines at the top of screen.

- Click *Settings*.
- Click *Account*.
- Click *Switch to Professional Account*.
- Follow the steps to finish the setup.

Social Media Tips:

- Keep your personal and business/professional accounts separate.
- All your social media accounts should have the same look and feel (brand).
- Choose great photos that reflect the style of your art.
- If you have a logo, make this your profile photo.
- As space is limited on **social media platforms**, be sure to include links to your **e-commerce website** or **NWT Arts artist profile** for customers to learn more about the story of your artwork.

Lesson 5: Selling on social media

The most straightforward way to sell your work on social media is by posting your available artwork on your business page. To best represent your art:

- Images should be well lit in an uncluttered background.
- If you are worried about copyright, add a watermark to photos before uploading.
- Include a short description with details about size, price and how to purchase.

Tips:

- Once something sells, edit the post and mark it SOLD.
- Consider posting interesting and short videos that highlight your work.
- Reach more potential customers by using hashtags relevant to your artwork.
- Schedule posts in advance so you can stagger the release of the pieces you have for sale.
- Both platforms provide tips on how to keep your account safe and prevent fraud.

Facebook and Instagram Shops

Virtual shops on **Facebook** and **Instagram** allow you to showcase all the artwork you have for sale. Your shop will appear under a tab on your business pages. When you add **inventory**, your followers will see it in their **newsfeed** and get notifications.

There are two ways to complete a sale from your shop:

- If you have a **website**, you can sync your shop to redirect to your **website** for checkout.
- If you don't have a **website**, you can complete a sale on your shop through Message To Buy.

Tips:

- **Instagram** pulls product from your **Facebook** shop so you should have both a **Facebook** business page and **Instagram** professional account to make shops work properly.
- Set up your shop on both platforms and link them together.
- Build your store by adding images, descriptions and prices of each item.

Facebook Groups

Facebook Groups is another way to find new customers and promote your artwork for sale locally, nationally and internationally. Each group has different rules so read the guidelines before posting. To join a group:

- Send a request to join from your **Facebook** business page.
- Once accepted you can start posting.
- Your posts will either be published automatically or submitted for approval.
- Group members will be able to comment on your post or message you directly.

Tips:

- If the group doesn't allow business pages to join, you can join with your personal profile and then share posts from your business page. To do this, find the post and pick the group to share it to. Be aware group members will be able to see both your business and personal profiles.
- Groups have different rules set out by the person who started the group so make sure you read the group guidelines before you start posting.

Facebook Marketplace

This platform is basically a free classified ad. Selling your art like this reaches people in your local market. To get started, access the Facebook Marketplace section of your personal profile.

- Click *Sell* to create a new listing.
- Follow the steps to create your listing.
- Pick which groups and places you would like your item to appear.
- Click *Publish*.
- Your post will be seen by users in these groups.
- Messages will come to your personal inbox.

Considerations:

- You have to sell from your personal profile versus your business page.
- You must belong to a group in order to post to it.
- The Facebook Marketplace sells everything from household goods to cars so your art will be shown with items that may not align with your brand.

Lesson 6: Managing your pages

Selling your artwork on social media is a form of direct sales. As the manager of your business page, you will be in direct communication with customers, which takes time and energy.

- Be sure you are clear on your selling procedure.
- When you post, be sure you have time to answer inquiries right away.
- If people are asking the same questions, consider including this information in your descriptions.
- Be clear as to how you accept payments.
- State that payment must be received prior to delivery.
- Be sure to note if shipping is extra.

Tips:

- Best practice is first person to pay gets the piece.
- Know your worth and avoid negotiating your set price.
- If you have a shop, customers are taken straight to checkout so you won't have to decide who gets a piece or have negotiation discussions on the price.
- To reduce multiple messages and manage points of sale, consider selling your artwork through one platform and **marketing** through the other.
- Monitor your social media pages to help ensure safety and privacy.

Lesson 7: Payment and shipping

Offering a reliable, affordable secure solution for your customers is important. Platforms like Square and PayPal make it very easy to capture the sale, keep records, and even provide shipping labels.

Shipping has become much easier thanks to some small business solutions from Canada Post. Canada Post's [website](#) allows you to:

- Set up an account.
- See shipping quotes if you provide destination information as well as dimension and weight of package.

Workshop Summary:

- Both [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) have great potential reach for your work, and built-in, simple solutions to give both you and your customers a personalized shopping experience.
- Use [social media platforms](#) to build your brand and sell your work to buyers around the world.
- There are many other platforms built specifically for selling art. Do your research and find out which ones might be right for you.



Gerri Sharpe

Workshop 6: SELLING DIRECT-TO-CONSUMERS: E-COMMERCE WEBSITES

An **e-commerce website** is your own personal **website** and online store where you have the ability to load **inventory**, sell work, take payments and track sales.

In this workshop, you will learn more about how to build and maintain an **e-commerce website**, the benefits of having your own place on the Internet and some of the most popular **e-commerce website** options.

Lesson 1: Introduction

Having your own site creates opportunities to grow your business at your own pace, and gives you creative control over the look, feel and functionality.

If you're currently selling your work in-person or on social media but find it's too time consuming to manage, an **e-commerce website** could help streamline the process. You can still use social media as a **marketing** tool and have your social media shop direct customers to your **website** for sales.

James Wedzin



Lesson 2: Benefits

Let's look at some of the benefits of having an **e-commerce website**.

- **Have your own place on the Internet** – you have a personalized **website** address and customized site that matches your brand.
- **Inventory Management** – easily manage your **inventory** and create product categories, which is very helpful if you have a lot of stock and a variety of work. As soon as an item sells, it is automatically removed from your **inventory**.
- **Order Processing Management** – a built-in order processing system that take a lot of the manual labour out of completing your sales. The platform can also calculate GST and shipping, generate shipping labels, and send email notifications with tracking information.
- **Tracking and Reporting** – gather information on who your customers are, what they are buying, and how much stock you have left. This is beneficial when preparing taxes, reporting GST earnings, projecting revenues and developing **marketing** plans.
- **Customization and Integration** – each platform will have its own set of templates to choose from, all with varying levels of customization like email management, and even connecting to social media and accounting software.

Tips:

- List all the functions you need and want.
- Calculate the costs for any extra add-ons.
- Look for platforms that might meet your needs.
- Be sure you are not paying for a bunch of fancy things you are never going to use.



Emily Squirrel

Lesson 3: Prices and fee structure

Each e-commerce platform will have a different pricing model. Be mindful of additional fees like transaction fees and processing fees.

Plans with low monthly rates may have higher transaction and processing fees. You may be able to save money by paying annually, versus monthly.

Lesson 4: Creating your site

Creating an e-commerce website yourself is cost effective but takes time and skill. Skill can be learned if you have the time and desire.

Another option is to hire a professional to help you. This may save you time but you still need to know how to manage and update your site or it will become outdated very quickly.



Jennifer Buckley

Lesson 5: Platform options

Two of the most popular e-commerce platforms used by artists are Shopify and WordPress.

- Shopify is Canadian-owned, easy to set up, connects to your social media shops, offers many plans, pricing and templates and have an extensive tutorial library.
- WordPress is extremely customizable with templates and plugins and offers superior search engine optimization.

Other e-commerce platforms include Big Cartel, BigCommerce, Wix, Squarespace and Weebly. These are simple, straightforward solutions with e-commerce capabilities however functionality and integration is limited.

E-commerce Networks

E-Commerce networks are another option if you aren't ready to build your own **e-commerce website**. Some of these include Etsy, Artsy, and Saatchi. Benefits of these platforms include being able to create your own shop within these networks, products you post will appear throughout their network and expose your work to larger groups of people. There are many support resources to help you build a shop on these platforms but they do come with additional costs.

Workshop Summary:

- Your time and money are precious.
- List all the functions you need and want. Calculate the costs for any extra add-ons. Look for platforms that might meet your needs.
- Don't spend time building something that doesn't meet your needs, costs too much, or doesn't grow your business.



Jessica McVicker

WORKSHOP 7: MARKETING YOUR ARTWORK

Learning how to create and post online **content**, either on your social media pages or your **e-commerce website**, is critical to your success in selling your art.

In this workshop, you will learn best practices for creating and posting online **content**. From branding to social media selling strategies, we'll give you some useful tools to bring you and your art online!

Lesson 1: Introduction to marketing

Marketing refers to activities a company or person undertakes to promote the buying or selling of a product or service. It is a vital component when it comes to your success as a working artist. There are many ways you can do this, but we will focus on **marketing** online.

Lesson 2: Your online artist brand

Your artist brand is a reflection of who you are as an artist, what inspires your work, and what story you want to tell. This includes things such as the tone of voice you use, the colours you pick and the story you want to tell about and with your artwork. Your brand contributes to helping you stand out from other artists online.

Your brand is more than just a logo. Your personality, values and style are a part of your brand.

Tips to creating your brand online:

- Decide how you want your artwork to be perceived. What key words describe you and your work.
- Think of how you want your social media pages to look. Consider colours and moods that reflect you and your work.
- Look at other social media accounts and take note of what you like or dislike. Think about why you followed them, and if you interact with them, what makes you want to do that.

...Tips continued on Page 54.

Continued... **Tips to creating your brand online:**

- Quality and composition of photographs you post are connected to your brand.
- Create engaging **content** your customers will want to share, repost and comment on.
- If your profile looks professional and friendly, you should be, too.
- Your tone of voice should convey professionalism and trustworthiness.
- Answer posts in a timely fashion.
- Think of key words that describe you as an artist and your work.
- Create engaging **content** your customers will want to share, repost and comment on.

Lesson 3: Marketing on social media

Social media is a great way to connect with new and existing customers while giving them a glimpse inside your world. Your goal is to stand out in a way that works for you while tapping into what consumers are looking for.

Photos

Well-photographed images have a higher **engagement** and are shared more often. You don't need a fancy camera - your smartphone will do!

How to make your photos stand out:

- Make sure your background is clutter-free.
- Stage your artwork on similar backgrounds for a consistent professional look.
- Make sure your art is in focus and well-lit.
- Get up close and capture any intricate details that highlight your artistic skill, or something special about that piece.
- Make sure the scale of your art is correct, the colours are right, and there are no shadows that distort the image at all.
- Take photos of your work from different angles.
- Consider taking images of work in progress, materials and supplies, studio or workspace images and what speaks to your brand.
- Include yourself in some photos if you are comfortable with that.
- Include photos of happy customers with your artwork.
- You might want to crop, lighten and brighten your images.
- Use a **lightbox** if you have one (regional ITI offices have them for you to use). If nothing else, photograph your art on a contrasting background near a window where there is light but not direct sun.

Photo Captions

Once you've chosen a photo, think of a catchy caption.

- Write in your own voice that is consistent with your brand.
- Don't make an obvious "sales pitch".
- Be intentional and consistent with your voice and message.
- When posting about fine art, less tends to be better. Let the image speak for itself.
- When posting about handmade craft, tell a story of the materials or of the piece itself.
- If you are posting an image for sale, you may or may not wish to include the price.
- Be sure to include where to purchase and/or invite followers to send you a direct message (DM) for more information.

Tips:

- If you are posting an item that is not for sale, indicate *NFS* at the top of your post.
- When a piece sells, edit the post and mark it *SOLD*.
- Be mindful of how you interact with others online.
- Be professional at all times.
- To reach a wider audience use relevant hashtags. Don't forget to use **#nwtarts** and tag **@nwtarts**

Stories and Reels

Stories and reels are fun ways to share photos and videos on your social media.

Stories:

- Disappear after 24 hours unless saved to Story Highlights.
- They can be photos or a short video of what you are making/what you are up to.
- You can also engage followers and draw them into your world by asking questions or running contests.

Reels:

- Are short, edited video clips on **Instagram** that use creative audio and visual effects.
- Are shared with your followers as a story or a video post on your **newsfeed**.
- Can be seen by a wider community through explore (the search feature on **Instagram**). Using hashtags with your reels will ensure your reel comes up when people search for that hashtag.

Answering Questions

Often, people will post questions on your **newsfeed**. By responding directly to a client, you have the opportunity to connect with them and potentially make a sale.

If you are comfortable sharing publicly, answer questions in the comments. Otherwise respond with a direct message. Always respond in a timely manner.

Keep it Current

As a general rule, you should post at least once a week. If you're not actively posting online, you won't show up in people's **newsfeed**. The goal is to build a dedicated following, however big or small, of people who share, and buy your work.

Lesson 4: Insights

If you set up your **Facebook** and **Instagram** pages as professional accounts you will have access to a valuable feature called insights. Insights provides you with information about:

- Your followers.
- How many people your posts reached.
- How many people engaged with your posts.

Lesson 5: Other marketing platforms

There are other online **marketing** platforms and you should always remember to be on brand wherever you post.



Your Website

Your **website content** needs to be carefully curated and intentional, much like your artist **portfolio**. You have more space to tell the story of your artwork, your cultural background, the materials you use, and your process. Your **website** doesn't need to be updated as often as your social media pages unless you have an **e-commerce website**.

Levi MacDonald

Content on your website should include:

- Images of work that are relevant to the style of art you are currently making.
- Images of work you have for sale.
- Information about the artwork like materials, medium, dimension and price.
- Your **artist statement**, **artist biography**, and even your **artist CV**.
- Links to your social media pages so viewers can interact with you there.

Blogs

If you have something to say or share, and enjoy writing, blogging can be very beneficial to your art business. You can write more freely in your blog. People love learning more about an interesting work of art. If this interests you, be sure to look for a **website** platform with templates that allow blogging.

A blog can:

- Invite people into your world.
- Offer your unique perspective.
- Develop greater connections with your followers.

Newsletters and Email Marketing

Newsletters and email send outs are ways to advertise directly to people who are interested in your art. There are several online platforms that will allow you to create a template newsletter that matches your artist brand.

Ways to grow your distribution list:

- People can sign up for your newsletter on your **website**.
- Gather email addresses at art markets or tradeshows.
- Offer a contest on social media.

Important Tips: If using email groups, always be sure to blind copy (bcc) people so you are not sharing people's email addresses. Also, be mindful of government privacy laws, ensuring people agree to receive your emails and have an easy way to unsubscribe.

Lesson 6: Social media selling strategies

There are a variety of strategies for selling and promoting your artwork through social media.

Drop Sales

If you have a dedicated following and a large selection of items, a drop sale is an effective way to sell your art.

Creating a drop sale:

- Set a date and time for the sale.
- Promote it through your social media accounts, newsletters, and email send outs.
- Share behind-the-scenes photos and videos to create interest before the sale.

Tips:

- If you use multiple **social media platforms**, be clear which platforms will be hosting the sale.
- Clearly communicate in advance how to order and pay.
- Write out descriptions and prices of everything that will be for sale.
- Keep a spreadsheet.

Contests and Giveaways

Contests and giveaways can help build your following by requiring participants to follow you and tag a friend, or share your post.

Hosting contests and giveaways:

- Determine the action your followers need to perform in order to enter.
- The action should help promote your social media account resulting in new followers.
- Be clear about the details including eligibility rules.

Tips:

- There are apps that help you randomly choose a winner from your followers.
- Once you pick a name, verify that person follows you.
- Announce the winner on your network.

Facebook Ads

Facebook Ads are another way to reach new customers. With this method you are paying to have your posts come up in people's **newsfeed**. You set the price of how much you want to spend, how long you want it to run and who you want to see it.

Benefits of **Facebook** ads:

- Guaranteed visibility.
- You can target your ads to reach a particular audience.
- Ads can increase traffic to your page.

Tips:

- There are different ad templates to choose from.
- Choose one interesting photo, a series of photos or even a video.
- Keep captions short and engaging.
- Direct viewers to your social media pages, shops and **e-commerce websites**.

Workshop Summary

Learning how to create and post online **content**, either on your social media pages or your **e-commerce website**, is critical to your success in selling your art.

- **Marketing** can be done in many different ways.
- Your brand is a reflection of who you are as an artist – every time you promote your artwork online, you should adhere to your brand.
- Create engaging **content** that catch people's attention on social media – this includes well-taken photos or videos of your work, and interesting captions that go with them.
- Your **website**, blogs and newsletters are an opportunity to share more about the story of your artwork with your followers.
- Social media selling strategies can help build your following and boost your sales.
- Technology is constantly changing so keep up on new ways to sell and **marketing** tools by joining forums and reading blogs on this topic.

WORKSHOP 8:

SELLING THROUGH RETAILERS AND GALLERIES

Prior to the explosion of art being sold online, **retailers** and **galleries** offered a physical place for people to view and discover art. As the landscape changes, art buyers today have the ability to connect with artists directly through online platforms. While **retailers** may not be as vital for artists to sell their work as they used to be, they do still play an important role.

In this workshop, you will learn about the role **retailers** and **galleries** play in selling your artwork, how this can benefit you, and options for what this relationship might look like.

Lesson 1: Introduction

Retailer – a store where you buy art and crafts. They might also carry other things like books, CDs, northern made soaps or food.

Gallery – purpose built space with specialty lights and display systems, that has more of a curated approach to showing the work that is for sale. **Galleries** typically carry artwork of a certain caliber and quality and are harder to get your work into. **Galleries** can raise your profile through exhibiting and promoting your work through their networks, both in the **gallery** and online.

Lesson 2: The role of retailers and galleries

Working with a **retailer** (or **gallery**) can be a wonderful, mutually satisfying experience for both the store and the artist. These businesses are there to:

- **Make sales** – **retailers** want your artwork to sell so they can build their clientele and receive their **commission**.
- **Reach new audiences** – **retailers** take care of **marketing** because they want your artwork to sell.
- **Reach your goals** – **retailers** might want a certain number of pieces per month from you, can provide professional advice and feedback, help with pricing your artwork, or provide access to interior designers and corporate collectors.

The biggest advantage to working with a **retailer** or **gallery** is you have more time to make art as you don't have to spend time selling your work on your own.

Lesson 3: Seeking out retailers

A relationship with a **retailer** can be a fruitful one and can offer you some stability. You can either work with one **retailer** exclusively, or with several at a time.

Retailers look for:

- Dependable and professional artists.
- High quality of work.

When meeting with a **retailer**:

- Schedule an appointment with the owner or manager.
- Bring your **portfolio** and paperwork including the prices you have worked out for your pieces.

When working with a **retailer**:

- Keep appointments.
- Return emails and phone calls promptly.
- Deliver work as promised.

Lesson 4: Seeking out galleries

Seeking out an art **gallery** to represent you can be very competitive. Some take submissions while others prefer to handpick their artists. Recommendations from fellow artists, art magazines and the Internet are great places to do some research.

Galleries look for:

- Professional artists actively working on their art.
- High quality art or craft.

Find a **gallery** that:

- Shows similar style of works as you create within a similar range of prices.
- Has a good reputation.
- Accepts **portfolio** submissions.
- Can expand your network and connections.

Research as much as you can about the **gallery** itself and how they operate:

- How long have they been in business?
- How often do they have exhibitions?
- Are they involved in any interesting projects for artists?
- Do you like the quality of their **website**?
- Is their **website** up-to-date?
- Do they promote regularly on social media?

Lesson 5: The financial transaction

When it comes to selling your pieces, there are a few ways this can happen.

1. **Selling outright** – means you are paid upfront for your work and your work becomes the property of the store that has paid you.

Benefits to **selling outright**:

- You receive payment on delivery of your work.
- The store is responsible for **marketing** and selling of the inventory they have.
- Cultivates a relationship that could bring in future work.

Disadvantages to **selling outright**:

- There is a cost to you, which could be 20-50% of the **selling price**.
- Your work may be marked up unfairly or discounted without your approval.
- No contract is required.
- Once purchased, a store can sell and display your work however they please.

Angus Beaulieu



2. Consignment sales and agreements – means you leave your artwork at the store to sell.

When it sells, the **gallery** will take a **commission** (a percentage) from the **selling price** for selling your work. The balance will be paid to you within the time stated in the **Consignment Agreement**. Most **galleries** (and some retail stores) use this model with higher priced works.

A good **gallery** will earn their **commission** through their **marketing** and sales efforts. Having an association with a **gallery** can grow your business and boost your profile.

Advantages to selling on **consignment**:

- There is a **Consignment Agreement** which is legally binding ensuring you are paid fair value and determines how your work is cared for. It also states when and how you will be paid, how your work can be used in **marketing** and promotion, and includes an ownership clause for your work.

You may be able to negotiate the **commission** rate.

- Before selling artwork make sure the terms of agreement are negotiated, agreed upon, and signed by both parties.

3. Commissioned work – means you are paid to create a specific piece of art for the customer.

Tips for commissioned work:

- Price them slightly higher as they often require additional time to meet with the customer.
- For specific requests (like a portrait) ask for a non-refundable down payment of 25-50% before you begin work.

Pierre Berreault



Lesson 6: Inventory, shipping and delivery

Having an accurate and up-to-date **inventory** of the artwork you have for sale is very important.

Inventory can be tracked:

- In a dedicated book.
- Through an **inventory** management system like social media shops or an **e-commerce website**.
- In a spreadsheet on your computer.

Tracking **inventory** allows you to:

- Know where your work is.
- Know what has sold.
- Track payment.
- Know what work is selling well and what is not.

Preparing **inventory** for a **retailer** or **gallery**:

- Label and tag your artwork with your name and any other important information.
- Include a price list with your **minimum price**, and your suggested **selling price**.
- Once delivered have your **inventory** sheet signed.
- Always know what pieces you have sent to the **retailer(s)** that you work with.
- **Retailers** may do this paperwork with you upon delivery. If so, request a copy.
- If shipping your work, prepare two copies: one for the shipment and one for your records.

Tips:

- Develop a system that works for you to keep track of your **inventory**.
- **Retailers** and **galleries** need to provide an **inventory** sheet if they send work back to you.
- Work out in advance who will cover shipping costs.

Workshop Summary

There are many ways to sell your art and you don't have to pick just one. Many artists sell in a combination of ways, which might change through the seasons or as your skills improve or your audience grows. Decide which ones work best for you and go for it!

Workshop Series Summary

At this point you should have more information on how to effectively price and sell your artwork in a variety of ways. You know that selling to a **retailer** or **gallery** means you make less money. You also realize there is the added benefit of someone else taking care of the selling and **marketing** side of your art, so you can do more of what you love – making art!

On the other hand, you might want to try social media selling, and then at some point decide to make your own **e-commerce website**. There are so many options!

The NWT is full of talented artists who are making unique and diverse arts and fine crafts, and who create for different reasons. Creating helps connect you to your culture, promotes personal healing and well-being, and can result in economic development opportunities.

As long as you enjoy making and sharing what you have created, all that positive energy will go into your artwork and the story of who you are as an artist.

Thank you for watching this *NWT Arts Workshop Series: Selling your Artwork*. Remember to reach out to your regional ITI office if you need help with anything this workshop series has discussed. They are there to help you reach your artistic goals.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Note: all definitions are specifically related to the **content** in this booklet.

Artist Biography – a factual narrative written in third person (about you) with a focus on your path as an artist.

Artist CV – much like a regular resume, this is a chronological account of your art making career, mostly used by professional artists.

Artist Statement – a personal narrative written by you (in your own voice), that shares the inspiration, process or ideas behind your work.

Consignment Agreement – a negotiable contract that is created when you provide a **retailer** or **gallery** with your artwork at no cost and, in exchange, the **retailer** or **gallery** agrees to sell the art for a **commission**. The **consignment agreement** is signed by both you and the **retailer** or **gallery**, and outlines important details such as price, fees, insurance and payment terms.

Consignment – when you leave your artwork at the store to sell and are paid a percentage of the sale price, as agreed upon in the **consignment agreement**, when the work sells.

Commission – a fee or percentage paid to a reseller of your work such as a **retailer** or **gallery**.

Commissioned Work – a custom request from a client to create a specific work.

Content – a piece of information (words, photos, videos etc.) that exists for the purpose of being viewed, engaged with, and shared.

Cost Price – also known as **minimum price**; this is the price you should not go below to ensure you do not lose money on the sale of your artwork. This price includes a basic wage for your labour, a proportion of your expenses and cost recovery for your materials.

Digital Portfolio – digital version of your best work that can be viewed in a variety of formats, such as on a **website**, in a **PDF** or on your **NWT Arts artist profile**.

Direct-to-Consumers – one of the two ways to sell your artwork. This type of sale is conducted by you, either in-person or online, and you are responsible for all logistics involved in selling (and shipping) your artwork to a customer.

E-commerce Website – also known as electronic commerce, this Internet-based platform enables the buying and selling of goods or services, using the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions.

Economy – the wealth and resources of a country or region, especially in terms of the production and consumption of goods and services.

Email List – a list of customers or potential customers email addresses, compiled into a distribution list.

Emerging Artist – an artist that is not only new to the **marketplace** but also fairly new to making artwork. From the perspective of the **marketplace**, they are just “emerging” on the scene. This artist would enter the **marketplace** with their prices set according to their quality and skill and work at sharing their story to justify their prices.

Engagement – with regards to a social network, this is interactions between a customer and your brand. These can include likes, shares, comments, following/unfollowing, etc.

Facebook – a **social media platform** that allows users to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don’t know. It also allows users to sell and buy goods.

Gallery – a commercial reseller of your artwork, dedicated to selling art.

Gross Profit – amount earned after subtracting the costs of making your work.

Hard Copy Portfolio – a physical binder, photo album, or special folio of images of your best work, in a size that best reflects the nature of your work.

Instagram – a mobile-based **social media platform** used to share **content** among friends and followers. It also allows users to sell and buy goods.

Inventory – the work you make and offer for sale.

Lightbox – an empty box with translucent white sides and a smooth, white backdrop, used to help make quality, uniform photographs of your artwork with any type of camera, including a mobile phone.

Marketplace – also known as “the market”, this is a group of individuals or organizations that share a need or desire for your art.

Marketing – the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including **marketplace** research and advertising.

Market Value – a fair price you would sell your art for in a given **marketplace**. This might vary depending on where you are selling your art.

Mark-Up – A percentage (or dollar amount) that can be added to your **minimum price**, to give you to a profit.

Minimum Price – also known as **cost price**; this is the price you should not go below to ensure you do not lose money on the sale of your artwork. This price includes a basic wage for your labour, a proportion of your expenses and cost recovery for your materials.

Net Profit – amount earned after subtracting the costs of making and selling your art.

Newsfeed (in the social media context) – a piece of software that provides notifications when new items have been posted to a **social media platform** like **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

NWT Arts Artist Profile – a tool designed for you to have a digital presence without having to build your own **website**. Artist profiles can be found on the **NWT Arts Program website**, **nwtarts.com**

NWT Arts Personal Profile Sheet – a single page document that includes your **artist statement**, 3-5 images of your work, and a link to your **NWT Arts artist profile**.

NWT Arts Program – a **marketing** initiative that promotes all artists of the NWT, including traditional arts and fine crafts, contemporary arts and fine crafts, performing arts, literary arts, and film and media arts. Administered by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Government of the Northwest Territories, the Program helps connect customers with registered artists and **retailers** that carry authentic northern artwork.

PDF – file format used when you need to save files that cannot be modified but still need to be easily shared and printed. **PDF** files open on a computer with Adobe Reader.

Point of Sale Device – a portable, cloud-based system that processes debit and credit card payments through a smartphone or tablet.

Portfolio – a hard copy or digital space where images of your best work are assembled for viewing.

Pricing Formula – also known as a “pricing equation”, this is a logical system for pricing, which is consistent and easy to apply. This is especially useful for items of a similar nature, but also useful as a base to ensure your **minimum costs** are recovered.

Product Development – the process of bringing an original product idea to the **marketplace**.

Retailer – a commercial reseller of your artwork, such as a gift shop or **gallery**.

Retail Price – also known as **selling price**; the price a customer pays for your work, regardless of where it is sold.

Selling Outright – when you sell your work directly to a **retailer** for your **minimum price** and are paid upfront. This may also be known as wholesale buying.

Selling Price – also known as **retail price**; the price a customer pays for your work, regardless of where it is sold.

Social Media Platform – digital space where users create and share **content**. **Facebook**, **Instagram**, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Google+ are platforms that people can join for personal or business use.

Unique Value Proposition – something of value beyond the physical work itself, such as a story, or a unique skill or style that only you make.

USB Stick – a portable data storage device. It is removable and rewritable.

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If you would like more information about the NWT Arts Program, please contact us.

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