ReVAMPing Your Etsy Shop

a brief journey to getting your etsy shop in tip-top shape

HOW TO GROW A SUCCESSFUL CREATIVE BUSINESS ONE STEP AT A TIME
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What You’ll Learn
“Success is a learnable skill. You can learn to succeed at anything. If you want to be a great golfer, you can learn how to do it. If you want to be a great piano player, you can learn how to do it. If you want to be truly happy, you can learn how to do it. If you want to be rich, you can learn how to do it. It doesn’t matter where you are right now. It doesn’t matter where you’re starting from. What matters is that you are willing to learn.”

-T. HARV EKER

Introduction
Written By: Meagan of Baby Swank

So you want to make your Etsy shop AWESOME? Is it time to step it up a notch or two in some areas of your shop?

If you’re anything like me, I’m always looking for ways to improve my shop & get out there more. People are asking for shop advice all the time on the Etsy forums. Especially newbies, but it’s not only limited to them. Everyone’s shop could use a good going over from time to time, & what better time to do it than the beginning of the year when the holiday rush has passed. Start fresh, start clean. Revamp your shop & your business, & become more successful than last year!
Shop Success

Now don’t get me wrong. Anyone can start a shop on Etsy & get everything set up for selling. A premade banner, an avatar with your picture, a “Welcome to this shop!” announcement, & maybe some policies, but it takes some real work to make your shop stand out in the crowd. We all want successful shops. What makes them successful? Sales? Well if that’s the case your photos have to be eye catching, your wording has to be easy to understand, & your policies clear & simple. If people aren’t attracted to your shop front, they probably aren’t going to bother looking at what you’re trying to sell them.

Help Is Out There

The Etsy blog is full of articles by Etsy administrators, shop owners & experts in certain areas of small business, but sometimes it can be overwhelming as a new Etsian to go find all the help you need for your shop. Where to begin? Well, here, for one!

This e-book is the result of a blog series created by 16 Etsy shop owners, each contributing to a different area of Etsy shop/creative biz know-how. I can’t tell you how helpful this is going to be when it comes to either setting up shop or revamping it!

We’re going to start by covering the basics of your shop...some of the big & little things to keep in mind when getting your shop in tip-top shape. Then we’ll take a shot at some basic creative business musts that will help you not only get your shop & products looking great, but also get your business “out there” for the world to see!

Are You Ready?
Avatars & Banners
Written by: Meagan of Baby Swank

30 Seconds

Did you know that you have about 30 seconds to get someone’s attention? Not long, I know, but it’s true...at least that’s what the marketing industry says. 30 seconds. **What are you going to do to get someone’s attention in 30 seconds?** Well, one of the easiest ways to accomplish that in your Etsy shop is to have killer, attention getting graphics!

Banners

Your shop banner is going to be one of two things that people will first see when they visit your shop. What’s the second? Your featured items, but we’ll get to those later. I personally love, love, love it when I visit a shop & their banner & avatar match or their avatar is a picture of them! It’s all a part of branding. What’s branding? Well we’ll learn more about that later on from Mayi Carles of Heartmade, but as for now, back to banners.

Your banner is like your store-front sign. It sets the mood & feel of your shop. It gives people an idea as to what your shop’s about.
Your banner doesn’t always have to stay the same. It’s a good idea to change it when:

- you’re having a sale
- you’re going on vacation
- you’re promoting seasonal or holiday items

Why? Again, this is the first things customers see when they get to your shop. It stands out! If you do decide to change your banner remember...**make sure your identity (brand) shows through no matter what your banner looks like.**

Here are some additional things to keep in mind when it comes to banners.

- Is the writing & images on your banner clear or fuzzy?
- Can you read it easily, or is the font too strange or too small?
- Do you have images of what you sale on your banner, & are they for sale in your shop?

These are some things to think about when evaluating your current banner & any future ones you consider using in your shop.

**Avatars**

An avatar is an image that is associated with your shop. Anytime you post on the forum, join a chat room, send someone a convo, or your shop is favorited by someone, your avatar will appear by your shop name. This is something that you shouldn’t change often, if at all. **People recognize you & your shop by your avatar**, & if you change it all the time then it can be confusing & make you harder to remember.
It can be a picture of something you sell, a picture of yourself, or something else that relates to your shop. Again, remember the previous questions about text & clarity. Is your avatar image memorable? It matters! Don’t forget that you want your shop to look professional as well.

Now I’m going to use my shop as an example when it comes to branding with my banner & avatar. The name of my shop is “Baby Swank”, & I sell fashionable & eco-friendly products for babies & toddlers. Here’s a screen shot of my shop.

Do you see how my banner & my avatar match? Although I do change my banner at times, not all the time, this is the main one I use. I always come back to it after a sale or holiday promotion. As you can see, my blog has similar graphics.

And for the record, I did not design my graphics. I’m not
that great at it. I had mine designed by a fellow Etsian, Dreamlike Magic, & I’d highly recommend her.

So when it comes to shop graphics, remember...

- You have 30 seconds to get someone's attention
- Your banner is one of the first things people see in your shop
- Your banner sets the mood & feel of your shop. It gives people an idea as to what your shop’s about.
- Your avatar is what people will remember you by.
- Keep branding in mind when evaluating & changing your banner or avatar.

Good luck!!

xo, Meagan
Profile Bio
Written by: Rachael of Little Birdie Baby Shop

There are so many ways that you can revamp your shop, but you may as well start at the top with your shop bio! Your bio is a great tool for marketing yourself & your business! A great bio can even help you attract that ideal customer we’re always on the lookout for. It may help to think of your shop bio as a job interview, you want to put your best foot forward. Of course, in this case, your Etsy shop should be a reflection of you, your personality, & your craft; much less structured & stuffy than your typical job interview! Be yourself, be honest, professional, & don’t be afraid to share!

What about You?

In a community setting like Etsy, people like to know a little bit about the artists they are buying from. It helps potential customers feel more connected, & in turn, more invested in the artists they’re supporting. In your bio, tell us about yourself, your craft, & even how you got your shop started. Who doesn’t like to hear an inspirational story of someone pursuing their dreams?
**Business, but not as Usual**

Tell us about your business as well as your products. Does your business have a specific purpose, or are you sharing your hobby on Etsy? Is this a new craft, or a lifelong obsession? {Let’s not kid ourselves; there are plenty of us who are obsessed!} What may be unique or special about what you sell? If it doesn’t jeopardize your craft, you can even share a little bit about how you make your goods to give buyers a truly unique insight to your creative process.

**Keep it Straight**

Be detailed about your shop policies, projected production times, & return requirements, but keep it simple. If you have a 30 day turnaround for custom baby bedding, be honest about it so there are no surprises when someone is ordering from you. **Organizing your information with headings** is a great way to help your buyers find the information they need most at a glance, especially if you have a large amount of information to share. Your bio is sometimes your only opportunity for clients to “meet” you, so reassure them that you are going to take great care of them & great care with whatever it is they’re purchasing from you.

**Prioritize**

Let’s be honest, shoppers can be lazy. Not everyone reads the bio section, & not everyone reads it all the way through. So when structuring the body of your bio, lead with the
important stuff. No matter how excited/passionate/articulate you may be, readers may not make it past the first few sentences. What do you want readers to know first & foremost?

**Final Thoughts**

Realistically there is no “perfect” way to write your bio, & yours should be as unique to you as your shop is. The best way to get started is just take a deep breath & start writing. You can always go back & edit, after all!

Now, go get writing!!

XOXO
Rachael
You have made that big decision- you have taken your creative interests to the next level & have opened your own Etsy shop. Hoorah! It is exhilarating, exciting, & of promise. A new focus & outlet for your crafting & collecting interests. What could be better?

I was thrilled to open my shop. It gave me a new direction & purpose for what had become a very expensive little hobby. However, I was not prepared for the work involved in setting up shop. Really- all I wanted to do was make a few earrings, take a few pictures, & post.

The business of creating a business is time-consuming, & having a fabulous product is only the starting point. A vital starting point, true- but this is just the beginning.

The Etsy forums can be an excellent resource for advice & suggestions on promoting your business & getting your name out there. That’s the key- get your name & your product out there. The forums will tell you this: you should make a treasury every day, should join teams, should have a Facebook page, should Tweet about your shop, should use Apps, should make a blog, should renew, renew, renew &....well, it can be exhausting, overwhelming, & perhaps a little disheartening.
Certainly, it is important to get your name out there. Keep in mind the ‘if you build it they will come’ approach doesn’t work so well for the small business. You need to take your product to them. Make people aware of what you offer. You also need to craft your shop’s identity to really help make that effective. Part of your success will come from the way in which you present yourself. And it is not just about what makes you different from the other Etsians that sell similar items, or work in the same medium. Creating your presence on Etsy is about telling people about you, what makes you interesting, intriguing, & memorable.

So take a step back from the social networks and look at some of the basic, built-in features right in your shop that you might otherwise overlook.

**Location, location, location**

In a virtual marketplace, the location of your shop in the physical world may seem less significant than its URL, but you may also be surprised at the influence the location can have on your business.

I like supporting independent designers & businesses because they offer something unique, unusual, & interesting. And, of course, it offers opportunities for great conversation with other moms on the playground. I like being able to say that this scarf was hand-made by an artisan in Nelson, BC, for example.
In my opinion, it makes it more personal, more valuable, & more memorable for me.

Aside from the warm-fuzzies, indicating your location can have an impact on your sales for more practical reasons. Certainly, there are those who will purchase regardless of where something is coming from, but there are other benefits to making your whereabouts known.

Location alerts potential buyers to shipping times, & may help avoid those frustrated emails about why an item has not arrived within 3 days. And, as we know, a happy buyer is more likely to be a return customer, & give positive reviews, both online & to friends, of your shop.

Location can also help to explain shipping costs, & prepare the buyer for the possibility of paying additional taxes or customs.

Finally, location will include your shop in geographic searches, & there are more people who shop by location than you might think! Considering the current economic climate, many shoppers are more willing to spend if they know that they are supporting home-grown economies; others might be looking for quick delivery, or want the lower shipping costs.

You have nothing to lose by listing your location- but you may indeed have much to gain!
A few of my ‘favorite’ things

A read through some of the discussions on the Etsy forums will reveal all kinds of reasons why people choose to keep their Favorites list private: they don’t wish to be contacted by vendors, they don’t want family or friends to see gifts they purchase, they use Favorites to mark items that provide them with inspiration for their own work, or they don’t want someone else to buy the items on their Favorites list (insert single cocked eyebrow, as this is a marketplace of *thousands* of shoppers and hiding a Favorite doesn’t hide the listing from the community at large).

Making your Favorites public can go a long way for your shop, however. Not only will they remind you of those fabulous trinkets and treasures that you find in your own journeys around the Etsy market, but *it holds the potential for exposure to new audiences.*

When you see that someone has marked one of your items as a Favorite, it just feels good. The Activity Feed has really helped- no longer hidden away in the hearts of each individual listing, the Activity Feed alerts you when someone has marked your shop or your item.

*A word of caution, however*- Etsy does not consider a Favorite to be an invitation to email the viewer, or encourage them to purchase. This is considered spam, and can get your shop into a spot of trouble that really, no one wants.
That said it is nice to know who has marked your shop as a Favorite because it makes you warm & fuzzy, but also gives an indication of who is looking at your work. It just might help you figure out who your target is, or where your niche may lie. Think of it as a developmental tool. If you see that you are receiving a lot of traffic & Favorites for a certain style or medium, you can use that to your advantage & create a specialty line.

So why make your own Favorites public? Good karma, for one. Show your love for the work on Etsy, & it will come back to you. Cliché, perhaps, but there is something to be said for good will & a good spirit.

Public Favorites are also an avenue for introducing your shop to customers that may not otherwise know you are there. For example- when you favourite someone’s tote bag, or you mark their shop as one of your Favorites, they will receive a notice in their Activity Feed with your name, your icon, & a link to your shop. If you keep your Favorites private, they will not receive that notification, & will only see the beige question mark of the Secret Admirer. Similarly, if a shopper is browsing through the listings of one of her favorite shops, that person may just want to know who else has marked an item as a Favorite. Again- if your Favorites are public, other people will see your shop name, your icon, & have an immediate link to your shop.

Your Favorites list can also tell people a little bit about who you are, outside of your shop. It consists of things you enjoy, dream about, or aspire to. It tells us something about who you are & it gives your buyers a sense of your interests, your tastes, & your inspirations. It may help others gain exposure (there’s that Karma, sneaking around again) but it will also tell your customers what makes you interesting. When your customers feel they know something about you, your work becomes more personal & valuable to them.
And that makes for excellent customer reviews, & relationships.

A big beige question mark does nothing to help establish your identity & presence on Etsy. Be bold - be public!

**Keepin' up: Using the Activity Feed & Circles**

The activity feed- some love it, some hate it. It does offer some very helpful tools, though- such as notifying you of your favorite shops’ new listings (dangerous for my pocket book). The Activity Feed itself is sort of a summary of activity for your shop, as well as for people you have added to your Circle (more on circles coming up).

**Benefits?**

For one, it will tell you if an item of yours has been added to a treasury - & who doesn’t love being featured in a treasury! This little perk eliminates the need for checking for your own shop in a treasury search, & gives you the link so you can visit, click, reply, & pass on the listing. Conversely, the shops featured in your treasuries will also be notified. It is still a nice touch to send a note - that personal contact is important, & some Etsians have deactivated their Activity Feed & won’t receive a notice otherwise.

The Activity Feed will also tell you when your shop, or an item, has been marked as a favorite - enter those warm fuzzies. No more browsing the hearts links in each listing - it is all right there for you. Same applies when you mark a new favorite. The shop will receive a
note in their Feed, unless you have set your favorites list as private.

The Activity Feed will also keep you up with the bigger picture of what’s going on with the shops you have included in your Circle. Every time one of your Circled shops makes a treasury, marks a favorite, adds someone to their own Circle, you get a note in your Feed. If you have a very large Circle, this can get a bit busy. But you do have the option of disabling the Activity Feed (see your account privacy settings for this), or for limiting the Feed for just your Circle, just your shop, or just your own activities. The default is to show everything, & these delimiters will only apply for the current viewing.

The benefits of the Feed are the opportunities for meeting new artisans, finding out about new items & genres, & – of course- exposure. Circulating your name, making connections with people, & bringing your work to new audiences is key. The Activity Feed is one of those features that Etsy has created to help its vendors find their niche, & make connections with people.

**Circles**

Circles have been a point of confusion for many - the most common question, “What is the difference between a Circle & a Favorite? Don’t they do the same thing??” Well, sort of, & not really. It depends on how you look at it, & what use you make of it.
Circles, as some explain, are about people, while Favorites are about things.

The Favorites list shows the things that you like, whether you are marking a single item, or everything the shop has to offer. The focus, however, is on the item itself. Adding someone to your Circle is really about the person behind the shop. It is- or can be- about creating a community rather than a shopping list. It is about connecting with people who have similar interests, who have Favorites that you find interesting, or that create treasuries that fascinate you.

- When you add someone to your Circle, you receive an update in your Activity Feed every time that shop makes a treasury, adds someone to their own Circle, or adds a new item to their Favorites. You won’t see purchases or new item listings, but you can keep up with what that person is looking at & marking. Someone described it as a moving billboard for shops & items, & it is a fun & easy way to see some of the things that other people have discovered. As a shopper or a treasury maker, this is really exciting because you will encounter things that you may not have otherwise.

- Similarly, when someone adds your shop to their Circle, they will have an update every time you make a treasury, add a Favorite, Circle another shop (they will not see new listings, purchases you make, or items purchased from you). In addition- & here’s a nice perk- when you are added to someone’s Circle, or someone Favorites an item of yours, an update is sent (complete with an image and a link to your shop) to anyone that has that person in their Circle. Now your items & your shop becomes part of that moving billboard- it is like free advertising, thanks to your fellow Etsians. Sound confusing? It is actually much simpler than it sounds. Really!
Example: 10 different Etsians have added Maddy’s shop to their Circle. Those 10 people will receive an update every time Maddy makes a treasury, favorites a shop or an item, or adds someone to her own Circle. This means that when Maddy hearts your diaper bag, your baby bows, your earrings, or adds your shop to her Circle, an update- picture and link included- is sent to those 10 Etsians watching Maddy’s activity. That’s 10 people out there who will now see your work that might not have otherwise. And if one of those 10 Etsians hearts your item or Circles your shop, an update is sent to everyone watching that person.

Conclusions

The business of running a business can be a challenge, and takes time away from what we really want to be doing- creating. But the time & effort spent in developing your business, in marketing your work, in creating your presence & image in a competitive marketplace is vital.

RuPaul - a master of presence & image, indeed - said, “Life is about using the whole box of crayons.” This is true, to my mind. The big bold colors might be the most exciting, but every hue offers something new, & to overlook them means an opportunity lost.

So look again at those features that perhaps you thought didn’t matter much in the big picture. Think about what advantages they offer, & how they can work for you, because you never know what opportunities you will find when you make the most of the little stuff.
Shop Announcements
Written by: Lisa of Fairy Card Maker

Your shop announcement is the text that appears under your shop banner on your shop homepage. There is a maximum of three visible lines. After that, there is a link to “read more” which will pop up a window with the rest of your announcement. Your shop needs to have something in its announcement because that text is searchable by search engines {hint, hint… SEO}.

Two primary functions for your shop announcement

1. To set the meta-tags for your shop’s homepage in internet search results.
2. To alert shoppers to important information like vacation notices, wait times or current news & promotions (headlines).

Meta-Tags

Many will debate which function is the true primary function, but I would argue Etsy decided that for us when it made the first 160 characters of your shop announcement serve as your meta-tags for your shop homepage. What’s a meta-tag, you ask? It’s a string of text that search engines use to identify & categorize the content or purpose of your page.
As you can see on my example, the “title” line is my shop title. {This line is set by you under Your Etsy, Info & Appearance, Shop Title}. Next is a “keyword” line, which is actually all of my shop section names, then is the “description” line. The description line is a snippet of my shop announcement.

When your shop is found in search results, this is the text that will display below your link. When you’re editing your shop announcement on Etsy, there’s a preview of how your description will appear in a Google search so you can see what it looks like. You need to
pay attention to this description because it helps with where your shop is placed at within the search results...your “ranking”.

As I said before, it’s 160 characters long, so make it count. “Welcome to my shop!” does nothing to help internet searches categorize your shop, so you will get a poor ranking. It’s best to use this space to describe what you sell via keywords.

My shop announcement hits on my main products: “handmade cards”. If you sell jewelry, describe it as accurately as you can such as “beaded jewelry”, “wire wrapped jewelry”, “hammered silver jewelry”, “family birthstones” or “heirloom jewelry”. If you sell bath & body products, you may use those as keywords or you may be more specific: “organic soaps” or “cold-pressed soaps”.

It’s a good idea to use Google’s Keyword Tool to help you gauge the popularity of your keywords.

**Shopper Information**

Yes, Etsy gave us a “read more” button, but honestly, do you ever click on it in other people’s shops? I’m not saying the rest of your shop announcement after the first visible three lines is wasted space, but it is certainly less important space. The less work your shopper has to do to be informed about your product, the better. Put your headlines in the visible part of your shop announcement rather than make it into a treasure hunt.
Here’s the catch though

Putting your headlines in the first part of your shop announcement changes your meta-tags. Make sure you keep checking your Google preview to ensure your keyword tags didn’t get squeezed out of your meta-tag string!

Then there is the risk of a lag. Google & other search engines take some time to catch up to your changes. There is a risk that an outdated or expired headline will appear in your buyers’ Google search & they’ll be sorely disappointed when they click through to your shop. Therefore, I strongly recommend that, if you use this space for headlines and promotions, INCLUDE THE DATES!

Plan promotions early & post them early so that internet searches will have time to pick up that information for display during your actual event. It will also save you a disgruntled customer if the Google search informs them that the sale ended on X day so that they will know at a glance whether they missed it or not.

It is a lot to fit in, so keep checking your Google preview. You might have to rewrite your announcement to work your keywords directly into your headline or make them the very first words after your headline.

Keep in mind, too, that search engines are not the only ones who will read your shop announcement. Human eyes will also see it. Don’t just sling some keywords together & stick them all in a row. Using appropriate keywords will bring the buyer to your door
via an internet search. Now that they’re here, invite them in!

Let’s take a shop selling organic soap for example. **Why do they need soap from YOUR shop?** What you have to offer can be the same as your keywords. Maybe “botanical & fruit scents” is your specialty or maybe it’s “scrubs for every skin type”. Maybe it’s a lifestyle you are selling: “the everyday spa” or “your inner princess”. Pitch a very brief blurb that ties in to your slogan or brand to fix the buyer’s attention on your shop & not on the list of other merchants in the search result that is still open in another tab!

**I have used the first few words to state my value proposition.** I want my buyers to immediately know what benefit my products can offer them. I advocate sending handmade cards because they demonstrate that you went the extra mile for someone to seek out & send them something uniquely theirs. The other key feature of my cards is the absence of excessively bulky embellishments like poufy bows & giant flowers which help make them easier to mail so that you won’t be stuck with any grievance at the post office. I want to display that value right at the top of my shop.

So there you have it! **Your shop announcement is a key element to both bringing buyers to your door & inviting them to stay.** Marry your keywords with your value proposition {be that a traditional value proposition or the promo-du-jour} so that your shop is findable, relevant & inviting.
Why is it important to have policies in your shop? Well, besides it looking professional, it lets your potential customers know what to expect from you in a few areas. Your goal as a seller should be to answer all questions your buyer may have without them asking!

So let’s get started going over each section of your policies. I’m going to give you a bunch of questions that you can answer for each area. You don’t have to address them all, but it is a good idea to know what your answer would be in case you ever do get asked that question by a customer.

**Welcome**

This section is titled “Welcome” for a reason. It’s where you’re going to welcome customers to your shop. There are several other places you can do that as well, like in your shop announcement & your profile bio, but here especially. You can talk about what your shop’s about & what your philosophy is. This is a great place to include your mission statement. You want to appear to be the nice, friendly, accessible person that you are to your customers. If you seem like you’re going to be difficult to deal with then you can say bye-bye to that sale. You can link to your profile page & your convo page. You could also include links to other places you can be found on the web...Facebook, Twitter, your blog, & email account.
Payment

Here you need to let buyers know what forms of payments you accept, and when you expect to receive the payment. Within 24 hours, 3 days, 1 week?

- Do you want to receive payment before you ship items? You need to let potential customers know that!
- What about sales taxes that you need to charge for your state? Address that here.
- What should your buyer do if they need to cancel an order. Explain to them the process.
- What about PayPal policies like verified addresses. This is a problem that I ran into not too long ago which caused me to go update my policies.

A lot of your policies will come from trial and error. It’s a never-ending process. Don’t just write these policies and then forget about them. You need to periodically review them to make sure they’re up-to-date!

Shipping

This is where you need to explain how you ship.

- What service do you use?
- When do you ship? After each order, 2 x week, once a week, etc.
- Do you include delivery confirmation?
- Do you offer expedited shipping?
What about insurance?

How does a buyer go about upgrading the shipping on their items or adding insurance?

How do you package your items for shipping? This is especially important if you’re selling breakable items or food items.

Do buyers need to be aware of weather conditions with your items?

What about local pickup for local customers?

Do you offer international shipping or no? Let customers know if you provide money returns for overcharging on shipping, and don’t forget to include info on customs, taxes, etc. when it comes to international shipping.

Answers, answers, answers, and don’t forget customer service! Be accessible.

There’s a lot to think about when it comes to your shipping policy. More will be covered on the topic of packaging and shipping later on by Affie of Crafty Bird Creations. Don’t miss it!

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**Refunds and Exchanges**

- Do you offer refunds or exchanges?
- Is it on all of your items or only some?
- What about on custom orders?
- Is there a time frame for refunds or exchanges?
• What should a customer expect when their item is damaged or lost during shipping?
• Who covers returned shipping fees...you or the buyer?

**Additional Info**

This is a great place to let customers know that you accept custom orders. Make sure you link to your alchemy settings so people can find them easily. Refer back to the Alchemy post if you missed it to learn about alchemy settings! Do you accept wholesale or consignment orders? Also include any other info about what you expect or provide here.

xo, Meagan
The Power of Words: Crafting Item Descriptions that Help You Sell

According to the old saying, a picture is worth a thousand words. It would be silly to argue the value of a good photograph, certainly, but our words, stories, & descriptions hold a ton of potential when it comes to selling an item sight unseen. So while good photographs are essential to shop success in Etsy, *don’t underestimate the power of words.*

In Etsy, your *item descriptions serve multiple functions.*

- They help online buyers find your items using keywords in search engines.
- They explain details & information about your item that buyers can’t glean from photos alone.
- They provide the buyer with some sense of who you—the seller—are.
- And after your photos have captured their attention, it is the stories you tell with your item descriptions that help keep your buyers’ attention.

These are the *four cornerstones to creating successful & compelling item descriptions.* While writing new listings, these are the elements you should aim to incorporate into your listing.
Optimizing Item Titles and Descriptions for Search Engines

If buyers can’t find you, they can’t find your items. Make it easier for them to find you in Etsy & online searches by making use of keywords—the words that buyers might use to search for similar items. Put yourself in a buyer’s shoes, & ask yourself what words you’d use if you were searching for a similar item online. Make sure you have a Google Analytics account set up & activated for your Etsy shop {learn how to set up Google analytics for your Etsy shop}, & then use the data it provides to learn which keywords buyers are using to find your shop.

Once you have a good selection of keywords to use, sprinkle them liberally throughout your listing, using a few in your title, many in the first couple of sentences of your item description, & some throughout the rest of your item description.

Don’t use words like “COME LOOK,” “WOW,” “SHOW STOPPER,” & so on. These are not words potential buyers will search for, so they simply waste space. Likewise, if you must use punctuation, do so sparingly.

Title Conundrum

Etsy suggests that you keep your item titles between three to seven words & that your most important words {that’d be your keywords!} come first. Personally, this is one piece of advice I don’t follow. I prefer to give each item a specific name that helps me tell a story about my item later in the description. For example: EVERGREEN – flower hair accessory in green & black. In doing so, however, I lose some prime real estate that might help buyers find me who are using an online search engine (google, bing, yahoo, & so on). This is a
choice you’ll have to make for yourself, but if you decide to name your items as I do, at the very least, keep those names as concise as possible.

Descriptive Descriptions

When you’re buying something from a brick & mortar store, you can use all of your senses to make a determination about whether or not you want to purchase the item. Your sight probably pulls your attention initially, perhaps followed up by your sense of touch, as you pick up the item & feel its texture & weight. Some items might have a smell, such as a scented candle or bar of soap. Others might make a sound you want to hear. In the case of an edible treat, you might be allowed to taste a sample. When you buy an item online, you lose all but the sense of sight {via a two-dimensional photograph}, & a picture isn’t always adept at explaining all of an item’s qualities. This is when words come in handy—they can often do a better job of evoking the buyer’s other senses. Consider these two short descriptions for the same stuffed animal.

Version A:

This sweet stuffed bunny is made from soft, minky fabric. It has two black buttons for eyes that I’ve carefully sewn on.
**Version B:**

Bunny’s soulful black-button eyes entreat all who pass by for a quick hug. Be warned—your hug will be anything but quick! Made of luxuriously soft, minky fabric, this bunny feels so heavenly you’ll want to stay & cuddle for hours.

Version A isn’t horrible. It hits all the keywords (sweet, stuffed, bunny, soft, minky, fabric, button), but the description falls a bit flat. It tells us mainly what we already see in the picture. Version B hits all the same keywords, but also provides richer descriptions to help us imagine what our senses would experience if we were holding Bunny in our actual hands. Bunny wouldn’t just be soft; he’d be so soft that it would feel like heaven to snuggle up against him. And his little eyes aren’t just buttons; they’re sweet and expressive & help breathe life into the little stuffed animal.

When writing your descriptions, think about ways you can help fill in the gaps for your buyer’s senses, like Version B above.

Evaluate your pictures carefully. Will a buyer understand what they’re seeing in the picture? **Is it absolutely clear what you’re selling?** If not, make sure your description offers an explanation of your item. Do your pictures include props that aren’t included in your sale, tell the buyer. An informed buyer is a happy buyer!
Make sure your description clearly lists the particulars such as dimensions, weight, & materials used. Consider calling them out with bullet points or a section header, so buyers can find the information quickly & easily.

**Tell a Story**

For me, part of the joy of buying handmade on Etsy is the **feeling of connection** I get to the item’s creator. I love reading about how an artist created a new piece, or from where she drew her inspiration. I relish descriptions that make me feel like I was part of the creation process or that I’m listening to a good friend tell me about the amazing materials she repurposed for her latest work of art. Descriptions such as these tell a story that makes the seller come alive for me, & I thrill to know I’m buying something that wasn’t mass produced in a huge factory & touched by 15 different sets of hands.

There are many different types of stories to tell. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Tell the story of . . .

- **What inspired your creation of the item?** Was it the colors of a beautiful sunset? Your own desire to find a functional but fashionable diaper bag? The lyrics from a song that brings you to tears?
- **Something funny/sad/touching that happened during your creation of the item.** Did your child see your item & come up with a clever name for it? Did you create the item in memory of a loved one?
- **What makes your creation process unique?** Do you create your items on the rocky riverbed outside your back door while the children are at school? Use your great
grandmother’s sewing machine passed down through the generations? Shy away from using tools that run on electricity or batteries?

- **How you found the materials for the item?** Do you find your materials while out on nature walks in the woods? Did you rescue them from the landfill? Repurpose them from a vintage treasure you found at a flea market?

- **The historical reference or inspiration behind an item.** Is your item influenced by the fashions of a famous starlet from the 40s? Are the words of a politician’s famous speech painted on your canvas?

The item listing {by [barmojo](#)} shown below tells a clever story that caught my eye & pulled me in immediately {note that the listing also includes dimensions, which were cut off by my snipping tool}.

If I were looking for a monster pillow & deciding between this listing & another by a seller with a dry to-the-point description, you can bet the Rock Star Monster pillow above is the one I’d purchase. This seller’s listing gives me the information I need but also tells me the seller is fun & has a sense of humor. Now, I feel a connection to this seller that I don’t for the other seller.

{click image to zoom}
EcoImbiber, an EtsyMom, combines the two techniques of storytelling & descriptive descriptions in her fun product listings that had me laughing hysterically & wondering who I could gift one of her clever items to!

Item Description Tips

It’s up to you to decide whether you want to focus on telling a story or write richly detailed descriptions or a combination of both. Whatever you decide, here are a few more tips to keep in mind when writing your item descriptions.

1. **Keep it concise & avoid long blocks of text.**

Lengthy paragraphs that go on without breaks can weary the eye & lose the reader’s attention. Reread your descriptions & see where you can cut out extraneous words or simplify sentences. DO tell a story & give detailed descriptions, but DON’T do so in five long
paragraphs (something I’m notorious for!) Break up your description into sections & bullet points, allowing your customers to find the information they want easily.

2. **Don’t forget to scatter keywords throughout your item description!**

3. **Edit & proofread your descriptions. Then do it a second time.**

Poor grammar & typos can drive off potential buyers, who might interpret your errors for a general lack of care & poor attention to detail. Most word processing programs have grammar & spellchecks, which point out potential errors in your writing. Consider using such a program when initially writing up your descriptions, then copy & paste the descriptions into Etsy once you’re finished. Conversely, have a friend or family member read through your descriptions—a fresh set of eyes can more easily spot areas of weak writing or spelling & grammar mistakes.

4. **Refrain from copying.**

Many sellers spend hours creating & perfecting their item descriptions. Even when tempted by a particularly clever bit of phrasing, respect your fellow Etsyian’s by refraining from copying. Remember, lightly rephrasing something into your own words is still copying. It’s much better to be original & make your item descriptions uniquely your own!

5. **Don’t let ‘em get away!**

If you’re open to custom orders, say so. Let customers know you can match colors, change the shape, add a different scent, or alter the length. Include a link that directs customers to
your other shop sections, your Facebook page, your blog, or another favorite item in your shop. Give them an easy way to stay in your shop for as long as possible.
Tagging is an essential part of the listing (& selling) process. Tags are keywords sellers attach to items in the item listing process. Many shoppers are using keywords to search for the exact type of items you make, & you want your work to show up in these search results! The key component in this search & rescue mission is your items’ tags.

It’s important to understand how to tag your items correctly & effectively so that buyers can find them! If you aren’t using all 14 you are missing opportunities!

Your **first tag will be the category** of your item. If you’re not sure, go to the Categories page, & see if your item is a Subcategory of any Category. Or, do a search for like items & see what Category most of the items are listed in. *Eg. Does an apron go in Accessories or Clothing?* Doing a quick check will help you find apron listed under the Accessories category. Yikes, I had my apron listed under housewares {it was one of my first listings, I’m still learning!}

There are times where your item will fit into **two categories**. If your item fits in two categories (e.g. Children & Clothing or Children & Toys), you should pick which one you use for your top category tag. Another tip, you can list a few in another appropriate category to increase your exposure; but overall, the Children category is the best place to list Children’s items. After you list, check the views & hearts of your items to see which category is best for your items. Don’t just copy & paste your tags from one listing to
another (which I am guilty of – oops!). Varying your tags will get your work seen in many different searches. Always remember, try to decide where a shopper might look first! Remember, **vintage items are 20 years or older.**

Now you will choose your remaining 13 tags. The order of them does not matter. Related tags will pop up as you add tags; remember these are only suggestions that might apply to your item. You may also create your own tags based on what will be most accurate for your item.

**Here are some helpful questions to ask yourself:**

- **What is it?** Tip: Pick what it is, not related words. *Eg. Don’t tag bracelets with “earrings”*
- **What is it specifically? What type?** *Eg. Hoop (for earrings), v-neck (for sweaters), long sleeve (for shirt)*
- **Who is it for?** Tip: You may pick as many correct ones as you want.
- **What is the main material?** *Eg. cotton, canvas*
- **What is the main color?** Tip: Buyers are not likely to look for minor colors in your piece, so stick to the main color(s) or important color combos
- **What method or technique did you use to make it?** *Eg. hammered, burned, appliqued, embroidered*
- **Where or how will the item be used?** *Eg. kitchen, hair, office, beach, garden, car, nursery, breastfeeding, nursing, play, dress-up, educational*
- **What size is it?**
- **What style is it?** *Eg. goth, victorian, hippie, punk, impressionist, post-modern, feminine, sophisticated, southwestern.*
• Imagery or motifs that are on the item. *Eg. owl, landscape, nature, Marilyn Monroe*

• **Are there synonyms?** Tip: Use these if the word means exactly the same thing as the tag you already used, it is accurate for your item, & you think it will be an important search term that buyers will look for.

**When tagging, remember these tips:**

• Team tags or your shop name don’t need to be added to every single item in your shop. Just use them on a couple of items. It’s smart to tag a few items in your shop with your business name just in case someone searches for your name but forgets to use the dropdown menu to select “Search Shops."

• If you sell similar items in your shop, it is helpful to create a listing template on your desktop with your most commonly used tags. This way you can quickly pick & choose which ones are appropriate & just copy & paste them into place.

• Check out this [list of colors](#) to inspire using more than just a simple specific or general tag.

• Use a second browser window to navigate through the Categories & Subcategories that pertain to your item. This way you can be sure to include tags for all the Subcategories that relate to your item.

• Using [Google’s Keyword Tool](http://www.google.com/adsense/keywordtool) or Yahoo’s Keyword Selector Tool will help you generate a list of the most popular related search words & phrases. This involves a good amount of time & research, but can be a valuable tool to help create a list of the most
commonly searched for words to use as tags.

- Keep a notebook & for every item, start brainstorming descriptive words for your product.
- If you sell internationally, list tag colors in the languages of the countries you sell to, as well as list the type of item {necklace, earrings, etc.} in the languages of the countries you sell to.

When I started pulling together all the information for this blog post, I thought I understood tags correctly! I realize that I still have a lot to learn. I think one thing I will start doing is looking at my views & anything that is unusually low, I will look more closely at my tag listings. I hope you find this information helpful & useful.
Building A Brand With Your Photography

In online retail, a picture truly is worth a thousand words – & potentially, thousands of dollars. A customer who can’t touch, use, or try on your product needs to be convinced to buy it another way. Not only are product photographs your primary advertising vehicle, they are the fundamental platform on which to build not just your business, but your brand.

Once you’ve mastered your camera in terms of technical proficiency, it’s time to look beyond the basic photo & take your product images to a higher level. Using the building blocks of backgrounds, props, angles, lighting, framing and focus, you can create visual cohesion that expresses an individual style.

Let’s take a look at each one below.
Backgrounds

The planes behind & under your item constitute the background of your photo. For large objects only the vertical background may show, for small objects, only the surface under the item. The possibilities for backgrounds are virtually endless, but there are two key variables that should be carefully considered: color and complexity.

When choosing a color for your background, think about contrasting, complimentary, or neutral colors. A background in a contrasting color will make your item pop & add excitement, while a complimentary color will create a more soothing, harmonious feel. A “neutral” background of either black or white will let the item stand on its own as the focus of the image.

The complexity of a background can either enhance or detract from a photo. Images with solid, featureless backgrounds can look either bold or bland. Injecting some complexity into the background with textures or patterns can enrich an image with additional detail, but also runs the risk of becoming a distraction to the item.
**Props**

Props are objects in the photo frame that aren’t the item for sale, but are utilized to display the item or add character to the image. For example, jewelry can be hung from a tree branch or draped over the edge of a vase.

Old books can prop up a vintage frame. Pillows can be stacked upon a wicker chair. You can use virtually any item as a prop, so long as it does not detract from the item for sale. The purpose of a prop is to subtly enhance the object for sale, not to overwhelm it. Think about props in terms of visual cues.

If your product is environmentally conscious, use greenery & natural objects. If you sell vintage items, use props that suggest an earlier decade. The goal is to trigger associations in the viewer’s mind that reflect your brand. One caution: always be sure to state that the props in your photographs are not for sale, lest you disappoint a buyer.
Angles

Angle refers to the position of the camera when the photo is taken. Objects that are photographed straight-on often appear flat & two-dimensional. By changing to a high, low, or three-quarter angle, you can create depth & drama in the image. This technique can be enhanced by selecting a point or edge on the object – the corner of a book, the rim of a bowl – & turning it to be closest to the camera. You can add further interest by photographing items at unusual angles, or tilting the camera itself, but this approach should be used with restraint so that it doesn’t render the item unrecognizable.

Focus

When photographing objects that are highly three-dimensional, changing your camera’s focus can produce appealing results. A common & popular technique is the use of shallow depth-of-field, which creates a very small area of the image which is sharply in focus while leaving the rest of the image softly blurred. This pleasing blur is often referred to by its Japanese term, “bokeh”. Like framing, when taken to extremes, using a shallow DOF can render an object unrecognizable, so it should be used judiciously & with care. Using a deep DOF, on the other hand, will produce a sharp, crisp image that is entirely in focus.
Lighting

In this context, lighting refers to certain effects rather than lighting basics. Side lighting, back lighting & soft lighting can all add richness & depth to an otherwise bland photo. Side lighting & back lighting accomplish this by increasing contrast – the difference between light & dark tones – in the image, & adding dimensionality. Back lighting is particularly effective with translucent objects. Soft lighting visually “softens” photos, decreasing texture & smoothing lines. Side & back lighting are done by positioning the lighting source beside or behind the item during photography, while soft lighting bounces the light source off a white or reflective object onto the subject. Soft lighting effects can also be applied using photo editing software after the photo is taken.
Framing

When photographing an item for sale, the instinct is to present the item in whole within the image. However, consider cropping the photo to reveal just a portion of the item, or focusing in on some special detail. Even framing the item so that the edges disappear beyond the photo border can create intrigue. Photos that show only a small part of the item are like a tease that prompts the viewer’s mind to want to know more. Be careful not to show so little that the item is unrecognizable, & always be sure to have at least one image that shows the item in its entirety. Tightly framed photos can be the hook to draw the viewer’s interest, but they should never have to guess at the whole appearance. Conversely, the effective use of “white space” (empty space) where the item fills only a small portion of the image frame can also create a pleasing imbalance & visual interest.
Cohesion

Cohesion is developed through repetition of backgrounds, props, angles, lighting, framing & focus throughout your imagery. Choosing the same backgrounds, similar props, & consistent lighting, angles, frames and DOF in each of your photos will tie them together & create visual unity.

The temptation is often to try to tailor each photo to the object being photographed, which results in an uncoordinated mishmash of images that look completely different from one another. Of course, variations between items will almost always render certain options unavailable on occasion, but consistency is the key to a cohesive image gallery.

Finding a combination of all of the building blocks that will work for every item is extremely challenging, so instead, choose a couple of elements to work with consistently throughout your photos, & allow some variation in the others. For example, you might always work with the same lighting, angle, & focus, but vary the backgrounds. Or you might choose the
same background & props for every shot, but use different angles and framing. Experiment to discover which combinations work best for your product.

**Style**

Style is created through the individualized use of all of the above elements, used in a cohesive fashion. Style is easy to see, but difficult to achieve. It is the unique expression of each shop owner’s taste & inspiration, a character that can be easily identified by the viewer – soft & romantic, bold & dramatic, bright & quirky. It can take a lot of effort & experimentation to develop your own clear style, & you may find it changes over time & with the maturity & refinement of your product, but developing the voice of your brand will make a clear & lasting impression in the eyes of your customers.

*Now, go take a look at your photos. Are you incorporating all of these photography building blocks? If not, get out your products & your camera & get to shooting!*
Sections, Rearranging Your Shop, & Featured Listings  
Written by: Kimberly of Cinnamon Spice

So you’ve got your shop full of items & your pictures are eye-catching, what’s next? How about using some great Etsy Features to get organized & direct your customers to exactly what they’re looking for?

Let’s face it, we’ve all been to the “discount” brick & mortar stores that are a jumbled mess, & while sometimes I do enjoy unearthing that incredible buy, I much rather prefer to shop in stores where merchandise is well organized. Your Etsy shop is no different. The key is finding which style works for you & your potential customers. The best part is you can experiment until you’re happy with the results!

**Shop Sections**

Use *Shop Sections* to categorize your items. Some effective styles are to:

**Organize by Theme** – For cardmakers & shops that cater to party planning & decorating, a great way to organize your shop is by theme. Most of your shoppers will probably be looking to buy for a special occasion such as birthday, anniversary or holiday. Tailoring your sections according to theme, like *inkylivie* does should help guide them directly to what they need!

**Organize by Size** – Most shoppers really appreciate being able to hone in on the exact size they are looking for whether they are buying jewelry, apparel, handbags or shoes. Save
your customers time by using the sections to group your items by clothing size or even small, medium and large works well or non-apparel items. Cite fuzz labels her hats by size for quick reference.

**Organize by Type of Item** – Paper crafters like myself can benefit from organizing their stores by type of item. When shoppers visit my store they can instantly see what type of paper crafts I specialize in, whether it’s an Altered Journal, my “Get Scrappy Kits”, a Greeting Card or a Mini-Scrapbook Album. This style also works for hair accessory makers & those with a variety of different items for sale. Lil’ Princess Bow and Mary had a Little Party have their shops wonderfully organized by type.

**Organize by Price** – Bath & body sellers, or other sellers that make use of gift baskets or groupings, can get a lot of mileage from using their shop sections to organize by basket and price.

**Organize by Color** – If you make similar items in several different colors, you may help your visitors narrow their search by grouping like colors together.

Now, have fun organizing your Shop sections! Create &/or edit your sections in Your Etsy > Shop Settings > Info & Appearance (there is a tab for Sections).

**Rearrange Your Shop**

To allow you to further refine the look & feel of your shop, Etsy recently released the amazing “Rearrange Your Shop” tool. Anyone with a brick & mortar store will tell you that a “fresh” look daily is key to generating sales. Now you can achieve that with your Etsy shop!
This tool allows you to:
- Group items by color, size, materials, price etc.
- Move older stock to the front again
- Create theme based pages
- Create great mixes for pages
- Put a highly viewed item first
- Promote full pages on social networking sites like Twitter & Facebook so that the “new” page always looks new

Look at the amazing transformation of my shop before & after I rearranged my listings by color!
Change the look of your shop in Shop Home Page > Your Shop > Rearrange Your Shop. **Remember to save your changes!**

**Featured Listings**

Now you’ve got your shop super organized, did you know you can create your own “window display”? You know, the prominently displayed merchandise or “eye-catchers” that make you want to do more than just window shop? With the “Featured Listing” tool, you can designate which items (up to 4) you want to appear front and center to visitors. Change these daily to give your shop a new look! Which items should you feature?

**The Featured Item works well for:**

- Introducing a new product line
- Highlighting items that correspond to an upcoming holiday.
- Spotlighting items that relate to current trends as published in the Etsy Success Newsletter (need link)
- Showcasing older, inexpensive items that you don’t want to relist.
Here I featured Valentine’s Day Cards perfect for the upcoming holiday.

Designate Your Featured Listings in Your Account > “Currently For Sale” by clicking the star under the “Featured” Column next to your chosen item.
Message To Buyers
Written by: Affie of Crafty Bird Creations

Message to Buyers

What exactly is the Message to Buyers? Etsy allows you to include a notice to all of your buyers who make a purchase with your shop. This message is great for expressing your gratitude for their purchase or communicating additional information regarding their order.

Here are some examples of some things you may want to include in your Message to Buyers.

Thank You

A thank you goes a long way, especially when it comes to a buyer. Customers like to feel loved. A warm, yet professional thank you will let them know that you appreciate their purchase and it may even lead to repeat sales.

Shop Contact Information

In case your buyer needs to contact you, it is a good idea to place a link for your Etsy contact page. Where do you find this link? Go to your Shop > Convo. Copy & past the URL into your message & remind them that they can contact you with any questions,
concerns or comments that they may have.

**Dispatch and Delivery Information**

It is a good idea to always include as much information regarding delivery of your product as possible. Consider including dispatch & shipping times in your Message to Buyers. A general idea of when they should expect to receive their package will be greatly appreciated. Individual tracking numbers can be sent in a convo or included in your PayPal information to the buyer.

**Policies**

Some customers may need a reminder about reviewing your shop policies. Important information that they need to know can be contained in your shop policy, i.e. refunds & exchanges, lead times, etc. Place a link for your shop policies in your Message to Buyers for quick reference for your customer.
Coupon Codes & Shop Promotion

As an incentive to return to your shop, why not offer a coupon code to your newest customer? You can set up coupon codes by going to Your Account > Coupon Codes. Include the coupon code in your Message to Buyers. It’s a good idea to include a coupon expiration date to encourage them to buy as soon as possible.

Additionally, you may want to include links to your blog, Twitter or Facebook Fan Page. New customers love to keep up-to-date with all of your latest & greatest products and offers. You can even remind them to add you to their Etsy Circle so that they’re always in the know!

How to include a Message to Buyers:

Go to your Etsy > Info & Appearance > Scroll to the bottom of the page

Don’t forget to click Save!
If you have an Etsy shop supplying handmade things, chances are that you’ve been asked for a custom item at some point. Have you considered adding a custom order announcement to your shop announcement or product descriptions?

Below are some things to consider while setting up a custom order process in your shop...

**Explain the whole custom order process to the buyer.**

The first step to custom orders is directing your customers to your Policy page. Include your policy on custom orders in the “Additional Information” section of your policies.

Set this part of your policy up with all the applicable information for your custom order process. What steps do they need to take to start the process? You also may want to include some specific examples for items in your shop that they may be interested in. For instance, I might list something like this for my shop:

**Bows:**

*Please list quantity of bows you are requesting, approximate size you need, clip preference (alligator clip, french clip, etc) & ribbon colors.*
Payment requirements

Be sure to include whether you expect payment up front or payment upon approval of the item. This may depend on your shop & the expense & time involved in creating the custom item.

What’s next?

Explain the next steps in the process after the request is made. Steps may include a conversation via Etsy about the custom item between the shop & the buyer, payment arrangements, photos of the items before final shipment. Once the item is agreed upon, you can list the custom item as a “reserved listing” for the buyer with their name in the title.

Timing Matters

And, last but certainly not least; be sure to include how long a custom item will take! Buyers may not always understand the process involved in making the item, so be sure to specify your custom order turnaround in the announcement.

Good luck with your custom orders! A well specified process will hopefully lead to a great custom transaction.
Holidays & Seasons
Written by: Missie of Crafty Bird Creations

Holidays

So you’ve set up your shop, gotten a few sales, but suddenly, things start to slow down. It’s coming up on Christmas but you’re not getting as many sales or views as expected. What do you do? First things first, take a good look at your items. Once you are satisfied that you have a wide variety of products, your photos are taken well, your listing descriptions and titles are good, and your SEO is good to go, take a look at what exactly is posted in your shop. Christmas time is a perfect example of when you should have snowflakes, snowmen, Christmas trees, and Santa Claus in your items. If you can’t incorporate these themes directly with your items, use common winter colors. White, green, gold, silver, red...and all varieties! Keeping up with the holidays is very important when it comes to making sales year round in your Etsy shop. Typically people start shopping for the next season as early as 2 months in advance. It is currently January. Many are looking for Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, and Easter items. Don’t forget about non-Christian holidays! To see a list of all holidays celebrated within the US look here: Holidays in the US. A simple search online will show holidays celebrated around the world as well. Remember 1 in 4 sales is an international one, so don’t forget about those holidays as well!
**Seasons**

Not only do you need to think about holidays, but seasons are very important as well. Unless you are catering to a very specific crowd, people will want to shop within the season or possibly 1 season out. Not many swimsuits are going to be sold in November – catch my drift? Keep this in mind when stocking your shop. I’m not saying you shouldn’t have a swimsuit or two in your shop, but if you also make scarves, chances are you’ll have more success with those during winter months. Go shopping yourself on Etsy. Listen to what people around you are saying at the mall. What gift did your sister really want this year but didn’t receive? These are all very easy ways to come up with ideas of what to list in your shop.

**There’s help out there!!**

If you’re feeling like you don’t know where to start, sign up for an Etsy newsletter. The newsletter gives you fantastic ideas, what’s trending, what’s going on with Etsy, tips, and more. What’s better is you choose what you want to receive!
Google Analytics is one of the most important resources available to Etsy shop owners. Analytics offers raw data for sellers to review & use to make adjustments to their store. Not only can you determine your most viewed pages, but you can see where your viewers are located, how they found you, what hour in the day they found you, & which listings they viewed while they were in your shop.

If you don’t already have analytics set up for your shop, you can go to Google Analytics & sign up. When Google asks you for your Website’s URL, you will need to enter www.etsy.com, then Google will ask for your Account Name, enter your Etsy shop website address (shopname.etsy.com).

Please provide the URL of the site you would like to track
http://www.etsy.com
Examples: www.mywebsite.com
Note: You can add more profiles after you add this profile

Time zone country or territory: United States
Time zone: (GMT-06:00) Central Time

Cancel Finish
Once you’ve set up your account, the Web Property ID that appears on the screen with the tracking code & select Save & Finish at the bottom (the Web Property ID will also appear once you’re in your account just to the right of Etsy’s web address).

Take the code you copied & enter the code in your Etsy shop settings ~ Your Etsy, Options, Web Analytics. You will be able to view your site’s information the next day.
There are some helpful videos on YouTube that will show you around analytics & the different resources. My favorite is the [Google Analytics Tutorial](#). It shows you around your dashboard & what data information you can find on your viewers, whether they are new viewers or returning, how they found you (traffic source), the keywords they used to find you, your bounce rate & your highest viewed shop content (the most viewed items in your shop).

**Exclude Yourself!**

Since Google Analytics tracks your page views for your Etsy shop, it will also show your information as a viewer. Most shop owners don’t want to see their own information in Analytics. I visit my shop a couple of times a day, pretty much any time I’m on Etsy & a lot more when I’m adding items, so my page views will make it look like I’ve gotten more hits than reality. Analytics will let you exclude your IP address so that those page views aren’t tracked in your data. To exclude your IP address, click Filter Manager from your Analytics settings page (bottom right side), select +Add Filter. Enter a filter name for the file (My IP Address), & from the filter type drop down list, select Exclude + Traffic from the IP Addresses + That are Equal to, & enter your IP address. You can locate your IP address at [What is My IP](#). Then select the profiles to which the filter should be applied in the Available Website Profiles box (should show www.etsy.com), click Add in the middle to move the selected profiles into the Selected Website Profiles list, & Save Changes to save the filter.
Customize It!

You can also build custom reports that show specific information on your visitors. My custom report for my Etsy shop shows the Source {how the viewer’s found you, ei. Google search, direct link, Facebook, etc.}, then I break those down by Keyword, Region, City, & Hour of the Day. I break it down by keyword to see what search term the viewer used to find my shop in order to adjust my listing tags, then by region to see where the viewer lives.
I like to see if the hits from Facebook are new viewers from my fan page or if they’re my Facebook friends & family that live near me, so I also break the region down to city. Then finally by the hour of the day because I want to know what time I get the most viewers, in order to determine the best time to list new items or make shop announcements. I want the most viewers to see my new listings, so I want to list when there are 40 people searching & finding my shop on Etsy versus only 5 people.

There are many different variables you can use to make your own custom report ~ you don’t have to use the ones I picked. To make a custom report, on your dashboard page, select Custom Reporting, Manage Custom Reports, then + Create New Custom Report. You will need to select a Metric tab, for mine, I have Entrances selected because that is the main focus of my report. Then you will add a Dimension & Sub Dimensions. My main dimension is source then I break it down further. If you only want to know what time you get the most visits, select Entrances for the Metric & Hour of the Day for the dimension. Then select Create Report to save your custom report. You can also preview the report & it will show the information for what you picked for your metric & dimension, that’s useful if you’re not quite sure what it the variable describes.
There is also another good video on YouTube for Interpreting and Acting on Your Data, & Etsy also has articles with tips that help with Analytics. If you’re still unsure on how to read the reports or how to create one to show what you want, Google has a ton of tips, just select Help while you’re in Analytics (upper right hand corner next to your e-mail address) & it will take you to the Google Analytics help page.
Pricing remains one of the thorniest aspects for any artist or craftsperson. This is why the Professional Development Seminar at the SNAG Conference 2010 spent over two hours discussing just this issue. It was a “jam packed room” of over 350 people. The energy was high! The conversation moved quickly.

If you’re seeking a pricing strategy, listen to the SlideShare presentation with audio from our four speakers’ presentations titled, “Not Just Another Pricing Presentation: A Dialog About Pricing Your Work.” Then listen to the 55 minute Q & A with our speakers and the audience. The discussion was lively and informative. Find all of this information for free at either of the following links:

- Professional Development Seminar page on the SNAG website:
- Professional Development Seminar page on Harriete Estel Berman’s web site.

I recommend that you view the SlideShare PowerPoint Presentation first and then listen to the audio Q&A.

The first revelation during the podcast came from Francesca Vitali (one of our speakers and Etsy seller) with bold honesty. She realized that she was drastically under-pricing her work! She had not grasped that she needed to include overhead in her pricing formula.
So many artists & makers selling work on Etsy are selling their work at wholesale prices without even realizing the impact of this decision. What about you? Are you selling your work at wholesale price or retail price?

Do you know what is your Cost of Goods Sold is? If you don’t carefully calculate how much is cost to make each item, it may best costing a lot more than you think!

Overhead is a topic that confuses many artists & makers. In simplest terms, Overhead includes BOTH Overhead Labor & Overhead Expenses.

Overhead Labor includes all the tasks it takes to maintain your studio &business. Overhead Labor vs. Manufacturing Labor

Examples include: (This is not a comprehensive list.)

- Cleaning your studio (whether it is daily, weekly or yearly, it counts!)
- Organizing or preparing your materials
- Bookkeeping
- Managing your inventory
- Posting your images and description on Etsy.
- Packing your work for shipping
- Working on your photographic images
- Filling out show applications
- Sending out images
- Preparing your displays
- Standing at your booth
- Driving back and forth
Overhead Expenses include:

- **Rent** for studio (if you don’t have a studio, save money for your future studio.)
- **Office expenses**: printer, printer cartridge, paper, computer, software, pens, magic markers, tape, boxes, stamps, mailing envelopes, CD, CD mailing envelopes, stationary.
- **Utilities**: electricity, water, heat, telephone (business line), internet access, trash, recycling.
- **Insurance**: business insurance, Workman’s Compensation (if you have employees.)
- **Depreciation** on major equipment in your studio, shop, or office. (This may include your camera, photography equipment, or computer.)
- **Shop/studio supplies** – Generally these are items that you need to fabricate your work such as brushes, drill bits, or gloves that do not go directly into a finished piece of art or craft, but are necessary expenses to keep your shop/studio running to produce new work.
- **Advertising**: Photography, postcards, business cards, advertising, fees for online social networking sites.
- **Travel expenses**: keep track of your mileage (the I.R.S. will allow $0.50 per mile), hotel, airfare, conference registration, a percentage of expense for meals.
- **Exhibition and Shows**: application fees, booth fees, lights, shipping (work to shows).
- **Professional Expenses**: Membership dues, classes, magazines, books, accountant, lawyer.
- **Taxes**: Social Security and Medicare for yourself and employees, sales taxes, etc

Learn how to price your work effectively & cover ALL your expenses. Then [ASK Harriete](#) about your pricing questions!
Packaging & Shipping
Written by: Affie of Crafty Bird Creations

Packaging

Great, you have a buyer for your fabulous handmade product! Now it’s time to wrap it up & send it on its merry way. Packaging is a great way to add that little je ne sais quoi to your product to inspire the customer & keep them coming back for more.

Eco and Cost Conscious Packaging

Perhaps you want to save the planet or a buck. Here are some great examples of how to create fabulous upcycled packaging on a dime:

- Use recycled materials like old wrapping paper, advertising, newspapers, magazines, postcards, & fabric remnants to tie up a pretty package.
- Use recycled brown paper bags, like grocery or lunch bags, with bakers twine or old ribbon. You can even write or stamp on the outside a special message to the buyer.
- Old plastic candy boxes (like Ferrero Rocher) make great, lightweight shipping boxes. If they are see-through, use attractive paper on the inside to add that extra flair. This is also a great excuse to eat more chocolate & candies!
- Reuse paper & bubble wrap to make your own bubble mailer. Check out this excellent tutorial from 27 Things: Make Your Own Bubble Mailers
**Branded Packaging**

Branding of your product and packaging is one key to leaving a lasting impression & gaining repeat sales. Here are some ideas of branding that you can incorporate in your packaging:

- Use business cards as gift or thank you tags
- Add a button or sticker on your package which is detachable. Customers will wear them & spread the word about your fabulous products. Don’t forget to include your Etsy
- Create your own gift boxes or bags with your logo & website address. This works great for jewelry that they will keep tucked away safe & sound.

**And Remember...**

Don’t forget to stock up, especially during busy times like Christmas & Valentine’s Day. You don’t want to be rushed during the rush. Always ensure that your packaging is sturdy & will protect your product from the harsh conditions it may encounter on its journey. You may be sending it thousands of miles away to a country where they don’t take their postal service as seriously as some countries do.

Above all – be thoughtful & creative with your packaging. Your customers will appreciate the extra effort that you make to create a special package just for them.
Shipping provides great confusion amongst sellers in the Etsy community. How much do I charge? Am I charging too much? How long will it take to get there? What options should I offer? Let us help to shine some light on this shipping conundrum.

How to Charge For Shipping

There are many different factors to consider when determining the cost of shipping to your customers. Not only should you take into consideration the postage charges, but also the cost of packaging, how much your time is worth to ship it, plus any gas and mileage you will incur to get it to the post office or courier. Take all of these aspects into consideration.

Most mail carriers have online shipping calculators (see below links). If you have a variety of different packages, measure and weigh them individually to get an idea of how much it will be to send to different regions. You may also want to calculate the cost of additional items would be for combined shipping. Don’t get caught charging too little for combined shipping as it might burn you later down the line!
Shipping Profiles

Etsy provides sellers a tool to help separate your products into different profiles for ease when listing your merchandise. By creating a shipping profile, you can determine shipping costs by size, weight, and shipping methods, and then quickly add the shipping information when listing an item. To set-up Shipping Profiles go to Your Etsy > Shipping & Payment > Shipping Profiles.

Shipping Add-ons

You may want to offer your customer upgrades to their shipping for peace of mind. Shipping add-ons might include expedited shipping, insurance and tracking numbers. Some Etsy sellers may already provide these services free of charge, but if you’re in an area where these upgrades cost more money, you may want to relay this information on to your customers.

Shipping Deadlines

During holiday rushes, it is extremely important to notify your customers of holiday cut-off dates in order to avoid confusion and disappointments. In terms of cutoff dates, every country, state, province and city is different. The best idea is to check with your local post office to determine cutoff dates for the regions that you ship to. It’s also a good idea to find out how long packages take to reach the destinations that you ship to for future reference.
Where in the World?

Some Etsy sellers have an idea of where in the world they want to ship their products. Some will ship worldwide, while others only feel comfortable shipping to their country or continent. Restrictions on materials being shipped to certain countries is an additional factor to consider. Please view this list of restrictions by country. However, if there is no restriction on your products, then why not ship to a customer in a faraway land? It will boost your sales and your knowledge of international trade!

Tools to Make it Easier

- USPS shipping calculator
- USPS Carrier Pickup
- Free Boxes from USPS
- PB Smart Postage
- Canada Post – Find a Rate
- UK Royal Mail – Price Finder
- Australian Postage Assessment Calculator
- International Shipping Tips
5 Unconventional Prompts to Rocking Your Personal Brand

I know! The word branding is a scary one indeed. So overused + so loaded + so broad + so very misunderstood as well. No wonder so many of us crumble into a fetal position when we come across it.

I’m actually not here to fix branding’s bad rep. Instead, I’m on a mission to show you how to build a freaking awesome brand, one that is unique + doesn’t require you to sell your soul to the devil or bend over backwards to please everybody.

In fact, if you want a brand for the mainstream, this post is definitively not for you. This article is for solo-prenurs that are interested in playing a different ballgame, one that requires innovation + creativity + a bit of edginess. If this is you, then you’re in for a treat.

To create an out-of-this-world brand that makes a specific statement about who you are + who you want to be, I advise following these 5 unconventional prompts:

1. Find your edge.

You’ve got to discover what makes you different + intriguing + unique. In order to stand out in an over saturated sea of sameness it’s indispensable to find your competitive edge. You can be the only juice maker in town that creates 100% organic blends that cure diseases or you can be the first eco-friendly shoe confectioner that teaches environmental awareness.
2. **Cultivate your uniqueness.**

In order to be authentic you first got to know yourself from the inside out. What makes you tick? What makes your heart sing? What get you out of bed every morning? What makes your cranky? When you figure you out, your brand identity will flow effortlessly,

3. **Rebel against something.**

Find something that offends you, that gets your very angry + that produces nausea in your core + see how you can develop a brand around that. I know my personal brand is a rebellion against excess + mass production + environmental abuse. So naturally I created a brand that celebrated exclusivity + handmade culture + love for nature + care. What does your brand rebel against?

4. **Innovate + Evolve.**

The world is ever changing + so must our brands if we want them to survive. It’s hard, I know because innovation involves letting go of our comfort zones + evolution requires a constant pushing of boundaries. Talk about destabilization, right? The good news is that one thing always remains the same + that is our essence. So throughout every transformations remember always who you are + where you are coming from + never whitewash what makes your unique.
5. **Provoke.**

Strong brands aren’t apologetic + subtle or shy. They don’t ask permission or beg for your love. These brands kick butt precisely because they are controversial + fascinating in their ability to challenge status quo + move a nerve inside us + create lasting impressions + turn up the volume + stand for something real + say to the world “you’ll either love me or hate me + I’m cool with both”. Actually, if you think about it for a second, if everybody likes you, you are probably not doing something amazing. Make them pay attention by provoking.

In a nutshell, it all boils down to: **making the decision to be remarkable.** And all it takes is a simple choice to break from the crowd + tune in to you, to stop looking outwards to start searching inwards. You are your best brand ever, all other brands are already taken. Give it a try, I’m sure you won’t be disappointed!

xo, Mayi
“Marketing” is one of the most misunderstood words in the business lexicon. I bet that if I asked 20 people what marketing is, I’d get 20 different answers.

A lot of people think marketing is advertising. They think it is business cards. They think it’s customer service. And sure, marketing encompasses all of those things. But the essence of marketing is this:

**Marketing is the stuff you do that makes people buy your products.**

In other words, it’s finding the people who want to buy your products. It’s helping those people find you. And it’s helping your customers feel excited about supporting your indie business.

The foundation of any marketing plan is to know your market, or in other words, your customers. The better you know your customers, the better you can speak to their wants and needs.

Successfully marketing your indie biz requires a clear understanding of your target customers: who they are, what they like, and where you can find them. You can gain an understanding of your market through demographic data. Or you can get the cold hard facts about your target market through customer surveys and people-watching.
The next step is to create your marketing message with your “perfect customers” in mind. Make your shop stand out above the competition by emphasizing the benefits of your products in your item descriptions, instead of just listing the features.

By spelling out the benefits of your products in your item descriptions, you can better demonstrate their unique value to potential customers.

Once you’ve crafted a benefit-driven message that appeals to your target audience, communicate that message with uncompromising consistency. Carry that message throughout your advertising, blog posts, banner image, item descriptions, and emails.

**Here are three tips to help you create a successful marketing plan.**

1. **Make a Marketing Calendar**

Marketing is such a fundamental component of your business that it must be practiced daily. The surest way to successful marketing is to schedule marketing tasks as you would appointments with your best customers. The simple truth is, you must take the time to attract customers who will buy your products. And I think you’ll be pleasantly surprised with the growth of your business if you devote an hour per day to marketing.

2. **Keep in Touch**

Keeping in touch with clients and customers on a regular basis is critical to a successful marketing plan. Maybe you stay connected through a regularly updated blog. Maybe you send weekly email newsletters. Whatever method you choose to employ, the goal is to
remind your customers that you still exist — and that you still sell awesome products. The point is, don’t let your customers forget about you.

3. **Spend your money where it counts.**

Like most small business owners, your marketing budget is tinier than you’d like. Spend your money where it matters. What’s important? For my money, a professional tops the list. Why? Your website is the one place you’ll be directing all of your customers. It needs to look good because it drives your business.

**On the flip side, here are 3 marketing mistakes to avoid.**

1. **Spreading your marketing budget too thin.**

The problem with splitting a small marketing budget between multiple blogs and magazines is that you’ll end up with a tiny ad presence in each media venue. As a result, your smaller ads are more easily overlooked. When it comes to advertising, bigger is better. So, consider narrowing your media choices, especially if it means you are more likely to be noticed.

2. **Being nearsighted.**

Our businesses can become nearsighted when we fail to see our products from the perspective of the larger market. Sometimes we get so focused on product development and
taking great item photos that we don’t remember our customer. The fact is, though, we are not in the goods-producing business, but in the customer-satisfying business. The solution? Instead of telling your story, show your customers your place in their story.

3. **Failing to start.**

My biggest tip, though, is to actually DO something. You can read all of the marketing advice on the internet, but it won’t help you if you don’t implement it in your own life. The step you take today doesn’t have to be earth-shatteringly huge, and it doesn’t have to be right this minute, but plan to start taking some action in your marketing.
5 Tips to Marketing Your Creative Products with Social Media

The internet has completely changed the everyday person’s ability to sell her handmade products. You can inexpensively set up an online shop and market your products for free through blogging, Twitter, and Facebook.

But, it’s not really that simple. To market your creative products using social media, you have to put in hard work, build a loyal following, and know how to attract your ideal market.

Fortunately, those things are all based on how much you want it. If you really want to have a successful online shop and you’ve got outstanding products, you just have to work for it. And, social media can play a role in increasing your success.

1. Market to your ideal customer.

The first step to succeeding with social media is figuring out who your ideal market is and catering to those people. For example, if you sell knitted baby sweaters, you want to cater to pregnant women and new parents who buy handmade products. Your blog posts, tweets, and Facebook page should attract that market.
2. **Forget about the numbers.**

It doesn’t matter how many followers you have, so don’t pay attention to any of those “get 1,000 followers in one day” traps. You might get followers through those services—but they’re not going to be followers who care about your business or buy your stuff.

It’s much better to have 50 loyal followers who all fit your ideal market criteria than it is to have 4,000 followers who don’t. Why would you want 4,000 followers if none of them buy your stuff or care about what you have to say?

3. **Give your ideal market something to care about.**

If you want more blog comments and interaction on social media, you need to give your ideal market something to care about. Write posts that will solve problems for your ideal market, tweet links that you think your ideal market will enjoy, and post things on your Facebook page that gives your readers a reason to participate and come back.

4. **Interact.**

If you just join Twitter to tweet links to your products each time you upload a new one on Etsy, you’re just wasting your time. Most people aren’t going to follow you, and I doubt you’ll have many sales, if any, from it.
Instead, you should focus on building relationships.

5. **Practice patience.**

You can’t expect to start a blog, get hundreds of readers in the first week, and have lots of sales by the end of your first month. You have to build trust with your readers and followers before they’ll be willing to buy from you.

You have to give them reasons to get know, like, and trust you. You do this by consistently interacting on social media, writing entertaining and informative blog posts, and building up a newsletter list that you can touch base with on a regular basis.

Even though it takes lots of time, in my opinion, it’s well worth it. That’s how I’ve built my business—so I know it works.
Part Four

Acknowledgments
Thank You!

A HUGE “Thank You” to all of the wonderful ladies that helped contribute to this blog series! Your knowledge is invaluable & I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with you on a fun project. Again, “Thank you so much”!

About the Contributors

**Affie**
Affie is a Canadian expat mummy living in Italy. She loves to make things, talk to interesting people, & travel the world. She’s a seeker of simplicity, a cultivator of love, & lives to create. She creates things for her Etsy shop, Crafty Bird Creations, which keeps her sane. Her friends always call her “Crafty Afty”, & this is where her shop name came from! Her inspiration comes from her family, the world around her, & her background in Art & Interior Design. Connect with her on Etsy & on Facebook.

**Alex**
Alex is the lady behind Terrain Designs. Based in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, Terrain offers simple & organic accessories inspired by the colors & textures of nature. She is a self-taught jewelry designer with a background in architecture & design. You can visit her on Etsy or check out her work in her Flickr photostream.
Amber
Amber is an engineer turned stay-at-home mom to two beautiful little girls, ages six & three. She worked full-time as a manufacturing engineer & supervisor until she had children, & that hectic schedule didn’t work well for her family any longer. She started out making bows & hair accessories for her girls, & her little hobby grew to a full-blown business. She loves creating new bows & headbands and trying out different ideas. Fabric & ribbon are her weaknesses! Her goal for her shop is to make cute hair accessories that little girls will beg to wear. She offers things for babies, toddlers, & on up to tweens & adults. Connect with her on Etsy & on Facebook.

Annie
Annie is a mom to two children, a 10 yr. old daughter & a 3 yr. old son. She works full time, & loves to craft. She has lots of different projects going on at a time. When she sees something interesting, she has to make it! ”I think that’s half the fun for me ~ trying to figure out how something is made & doing it my way. I have my very own crafting blog to chronicle my projects & hopefully motivate me to finish them...”. Connect with her on Etsy, on her blog, on Twitter, & on Facebook.

April
April Bowles-Olin helps creative entrepreneurs turn their dreams into reality through her website, Blacksburg Belle, where she writes about marketing, blogging, & increasing business success. She’s been creating ever since her mother handed her a box of brightly colored crayons, but she quit her day job almost two years ago to pursue her creative passions.
Christine
Christine is an art historian that has a passion for creating works of art in her jewelry. She lives in Alberta, Canada. She is an at-home mom of two energetic & imaginative kids. When she’s not chasing after her family, she tries to get in a little (grown-up) creative time. Christine has an inquisitive mind & loves to explore different mediums just to see what can happen- which sometimes brings some surprising, & curious results! Outside of her Etsy shop, her interests include art history, textile arts, historical novels & the oddities of modern culture. Connect with her on Etsy & on her blog!

Donna
Donna is the mother of three beautiful children. After years in the professional world & the birth of her third child (who was quite the little surprise), she was fortunate to be able to stay at home with them. However, as she soon learned, she needed an outlet to retain her sanity! As a result, she creates & designs as a way to have a separate identity from the mommy world! She has always had a love for creating & now she seems to have a love for accumulating lots & lots of wonderful fabric! Her Etsy shop is simply a way to feed her addiction! Connect with her at her shop: Zoe Girl Designs.

Harriete
Harriete Estel Berman is a metalsmith who uses recycled tin cans to construct her artwork ranging from jewelry & teacups to entire lawns of social commentary. Her work has been shown throughout the United States, & in Europe and Africa. It’s included in the permanent collections of eleven museums including: The Jewish Museum, NY, Jüdisches Museum in Berlin, Germany, the Detroit Institute of Art, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, the Smithsonian Institution, & the Columbus Museum of Art. Harriete lives in California where
she fills many roles as a mother, daughter, wife, gardener, exercise instructor, indentured servant to many volunteer activities & domestic goddess, just kidding. Connect with her on her website, on Facebook & on Etsy.

**Kimberly**
Kimberly is married to her “dream come true” husband & is mommy to 3 beautiful children. She left a 15 year career with the government to stay home with her kids 7 along the way started her paper crafting business! As a little girl she used to proudly present family members with little handmade paper cakes on birthdays. Who knew all these years later, those same skills would turn her slight obsession with all things paper into a career! Her Etsy shop has blessed her with many intangible benefits, such as allowing her to work with incredibly talented Moms & paper crafters worldwide and to become involved in planning major fundraisers for the Special Olympics. Connect with Kimberly on Etsy & on her blog.

**Lisa**
Lisa Topps is a C.A. in the Greater Toronto Area of Canada. Her Etsy shop, Fairy Cardmaker, offers handmade cards which often feature her own original paper die cut designs. Some of her items proceeds benefit the Southern Ontario Animal Rescue (SOAR) which is a registered Canandian charity that arranges for the rescue, foster care, & adoption of dogs. Lisa also teaches small paper crafting classes to family & friends as regular fundraisers for the charity. Connect with her on Etsy & on her blog.
Mayí
Mayi Carles is a super passionate artist + avid eco-friendly designer + editor of Heartmade with big dreams + messy ideas + a severe cupcake addiction + a funny Panamanian accent. Mayi’s on a mission to empower creative hearts to dream bigger + imagine better + achieve more + embrace all the beautiful messiness in-between. To connect with Mayi, follow her tweets at @mayicarles.

Meagan
Meagan Visser is a wife, mother, & creative entrepreneur living in the Southern Appalachian Mountains of East Tennessee. She combines creative business coaching with motherhood on her website MeaganVisser.com & she offers fashionable & eco-friendly products for babies & toddlers in her Etsy shop, Baby Swank. Connect with her on Etsy, her blog, her website, Facebook & Twitter.

Missie
Missie, mother of two, opened her first etsy shop in Spring of 2008. She currently runs an Etsy shop, a blog, & 2 websites. She enjoys photography, graphic design, & creating jewelry. Her biggest inspirations (apart from family) are music & books. Currently, she is fascinated with European Royal History, devouring book after book about kings, queens, court life, love, & tragedy. Her next goal is to learn how to knit. Connect with Missie on Etsy & on her website.
Rachael
Rachael is the owner of Little Birdie Baby Shop, & a first time stay at home mom to a 7 month old daughter. She loves to create- whether it be drawing, painting, crafting, sewing, or cooking; there’s not much she won’t try! Of course, projects are not nearly as fun unless you share them, which she loves doing through her blog & Facebook. However, even when the projects are piling up & there’s laundry to be done, family always comes first! Connect with her on Etsy, on her blog, & on Facebook.

Sarah
In addition to writing a fantastic small business blog, Makery, Sarah Sterns is a marketing coach & web designer based in the great city of Louisville. She works with small businesses to build their brand, engage their customers, & increase their bottom line. Sarah enjoys playing Frisbee, eating chocolate chips, & encouraging small business success stories. You can connect with Sarah via her blog or on Twitter at @sarah_stearns.

Stacie
By day, Stacie is an editor/writer in the video game industry, by night & weekend she’s mommy, wife, crafter & Etsy shop business owner, house cleaner, accountant, personal shopper, chauffer, & chef. She’s enjoyed many different creative endeavors in her life but her love affair with hair accessories began when she decided to make & give some as gifts to her girlfriends. Since then, what was once a little hobby has blossomed into a growing business. Stacie & her family live in the Pacific Northwest, where she spends eight months of the year cursing the rain & the other four remembering it’s that rain that makes her part of the country so breathtaking. Connect with Stacie at her Etsy shop: Sparrow Blu.