



ARTCHIEVE

Art Business Quick-Start Checklist

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FROM PASSION TO PROFESSION

INTRODUCTION



Creating beautiful art is one thing. Building a sustainable business around your creativity is another challenge entirely. Many talented artists struggle with the transition from making art to making a living from art.

This checklist distills a decade of art business experience into an actionable roadmap. Whether you're just starting out or ready to take your existing practice to the next level, these steps will help you build a foundation for long-term creative and financial success.

The Mindset Shift: Artist to Art-repreneur

Before diving into practical steps, recognize that building an art business requires a HUGE mindset shift:

- ☒ Accept that selling your art doesn't compromise your integrity
- ☒ Recognize that organization and systems enhance creativity rather than limit it
- ☒ Understand that business skills are learnable, just like artistic techniques
- ☒ Commit to consistent action, even when inspiration fluctuates

Phase 1: Foundation (First 30 Days)

Legal Structure & Administration

- ☒ Choose a business structure (Sole proprietorship, LLC, etc.)
- ☒ Register your business name (DBA or formal business registration)
- ☒ Open a separate business bank account
- ☒ Set up a simple bookkeeping system (Spreadsheet or basic accounting software– Wave is a great one!)
- ☒ Establish a dedicated workspace, even if small

Brand

- ☒ Define your artistic identity in one clear paragraph
- ☒ Create a simple logo or wordmark
- ☒ Select consistent brand colors and fonts
- ☒ Write your artist statement (1–2 paragraphs)
- ☒ Develop a brief artist biography (250–500 words)

Online Presence

- ☒ Secure your domain name (namecheap is a great website to purchase one)
- ☒ Create a simple website with these essential pages:
 - Home (featuring 3–5 signature works)
 - About (your story and credentials)
 - Portfolio (organized by series or medium)
 - Contact information

Phase 2: Art Business Operations (Days 31-60)

Inventory & Documentation

- ☒ Photograph all available work professionally
- ☒ Create an inventory system (Artwork Archive is phenomenal!) including:
 - Title, year, medium, dimensions
 - Edition information (if applicable)
 - Location/status (available, sold, on consignment)
 - Creation date
 - Cost of materials
 - Pricing information
 - Associated stories or inspiration
- ☒ Organize digital files with consistent naming conventions

Pricing Strategy

- ☒ Research comparable artists in your market
- ☒ Calculate your materials costs per piece
- ☒ Determine your value-based rate
- ☒ Develop pricing tiers for different markets/platforms (ie original art vs limited edition prints vs open edition prints)

Sales Channels

- ☒ Identify 3-5 potential sales channels from:
 - Direct studio sales
 - Online marketplace (Etsy, Saatchi, etc.)
 - Gallery representation
 - Art fairs
 - Commissions
 - Licensing
 - Print-on-demand
- Research requirements for each channel
- ☒ Prioritize channels based on your goals and capacity
- ☒ Activate your first sales channel

Phase 3: Growth & Marketing (Days 61-90)

Marketing

- ☒ Build an email list starting with friends and supporters
- ☒ Create a simple lead magnet to attract subscribers
- ☒ Establish a contact management system
- ☒ Develop a 3-month content calendar
- ☒ Write 5-10 story frameworks about your work or process

Networking

- ☒ Identify 10 potential collaborative partners
- ☒ Join 2-3 professional organizations or online communities
- ☒ Schedule 1 coffee/virtual meeting weekly with industry contacts
- ☒ Create a system to track relationships
- ☒ Prepare a simple introduction package for galleries or partners

Financial Planning

- ☒ Set specific 3-month, 6-month, and 1-year income goals
- ☒ Calculate your monthly business expenses
- ☒ Determine your break-even point
- ☒ Create a cash flow projection for the next 6 months
- ☒ Research potential funding sources (grants, loans, investors)
- ☒ Build a relationship with a financial advisor and invest in their services



Once you've digested and EXECUTED this checklist, you'll have a functioning art business foundation. To accelerate your growth:

1. Visit www.Artchieve.org to access our comprehensive Art Business Toolkit, including:

- Customizable contract templates
- Ready-to-use inventory systems
- Price calculator spreadsheets
- Marketing email templates
- Gallery approach scripts

2. Download our full Ultimate Funding Opportunities Excel Database, representing over 5 years of research, containing regularly updated grant opportunities for artists. Available for a small fee that will pay for itself with your first successful application!

3. Consider applying for Artchieve's Art-reprenuership Program, a 12-week bootcamp for artists ready to scale their creative enterprises.

Want more resources to build your art business?

Visit Artchieve.com for our complete library of courses, templates, and mentorship programs designed specifically for artists ready to transform their creative passion into a thriving business.

Artchieve.org