3 Tips for Creatives Looking to Break Into the NFT Industry

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Disclaimer: The writer is personal friends of JN Silva and ThankYouX and used this relationship to source insights for this article. This article is educational and does not represent financial advice. Please consult your financial advisor before investing in any digital assets.

The latest trend in blockchain is the rise of Non-fungible tokens (NFTs), which are cryptographic tokens that represent digital ownership of unique items such as art, music, gaming skins and more. In the past 30 days, more than $100 million worth of NFTs have been sold, with notable celebrities such as Grimes, Steve Aoiki and 3LAU raking in millions of dollars in sales. Since last year, the industry has grown in excess of 300%, sparking a frenzy between creatives, collectors and speculators looking to share their talent and showcase their collections.



Image credit: JN Silva and ThankYouX

While celebrity launches are making headlines (see: Kings of Leon's recent, innovative release), the industry was born from a niche sector of creators with an appreciation for emerging technology. In this case, blockchain technology provides an immutable and scaleable way of selling and authenticating art for fans around the world. Still, while anyone can create and sell an NFT, it's important to first understand the industry landscape, as well as which avenues provide the best opportunities for emerging artists to connect with new fans.

To learn more, I spoke with award-winning photographer JN Silva (whose client roster include Sony, Nike and Spotify) and fine artist ThankYouX (whose art has been collected by Elon Musk, Zedd and Paul McCartney, to name a few). Together, the duo formed a collaboration and successfully launched their first NFT drop titled "Thank You New York" on the popular NFT platform NiftyGateway. This campaign marked the first collaboration between a photographer and fine artist, proving the versatility of NFTs when it comes to executing a creative vision.

After a successful first campaign, JN Silva and ThankYouX just released second NFT drop on NiftyGateway earlier today. Their goals as early pioneers of the industry are to help educate new entrants and inclusion for all artists around the world. Here are three of their foremost tips.

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1. Leverage the NFT community

When starting out, there is no better place to go than directly to the NFT artist community. Between dozens of daily Clubhouse chats (often hosted by Silva and ThankYouX) to a vibrant Twitter community, aspiring NFT artists can connect and get advice with artists that are already semi-established in the industry.

Silva explains, “Given the industry is so nascent, the educational journey is often fragmented. It’s much easier to jump in and start following artists you enjoy and watching how the community engages with each other. The best part is the community is relatively small so everyone is typically willing to help each other out. If you need something, you can simply DM an artist and you are more than likely going to find an inbox full of helpful advice.”

ThankYouX adds, “JN and I actually met through an introduction by a mutual friend. The ethos of the early NFT community is very much built on relationships and helping each other. We are all crossing into a new realm of entrepreneurial and artistic possibilities and that can oftentimes be intimidating. My advice is to engage the community.”

2. Stay authentic with what you have to offer

As with any booming market, temptations could arise to launch an NFT that mirrors the latest hype narrative. One thing to remember is that on the creator side, the industry is bringing out some of the most talented discovered and undiscovered artists around the world. As the industry grows, it will inevitably become more competitive.

ThankYouX explains, “My best piece of advice is don’t get discouraged if you do not hear back from a certain NFT launchpad. Chances are, it was not reflective of your art, but rather reflective of the mad scramble most companies and artists are experiencing during this period of hyper-growth. There are democratized platforms that will allow you to list art instantly and more competitive ones that help with the promotion of the drop. Each offers different pros and cons.”

Silva says, “ThankYouX and I were successful in our first drop because we were authentic in both our artistic strengths and

our shared vision. While I encourage pushing boundaries to any new NFT artist, it is important to stay authentic to yourself and your desired message."

3. Market yourself

Many of the most prominent NFT artists, such as Beeple, are constantly engaging with their fans on Twitter and other social media platforms. When making a personal connection, it becomes easier to sell art as part of that purchasing process is not only appreciating a work of art, but also appreciating the artist behind the work. If you are just starting out, take time to market yourself, even if that means keeping your connections up to date with your journey.

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ThankYouX says, "Things like word of mouth and social momentum can really help jumpstart an artist's career in the NFT market. The beauty of the market is that anyone can purchase a work of art. This means your supporters can be friends, family, part of the NFT community or even part of the greater crypto community. Think about your narrative, story, and how you want to portray yourself, even if you are semi-anonymous."

Silva adds, "Many artists in the space are introverts and not natural marketers. That is completely fine. There are ways to market yourself that do not require too much personal exposure. Look to make genuine connections with a handful of people that can end up marketing for you by sharing your message. The community is very supportive. The first step is making your presence known and making a consistent effort to grow."

So, what are you waiting for?

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