Fortune 500 Strategies You Can Use to Grow Your Art Business

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Since Fortune 500 companies are the biggest in the United States by revenue, you probably picture them as big, powerful, faceless corporations. We think of artists, on the other hand, as humble bohemians who make just enough to get by on their own. Because it's all about the art, not the money.

What happens, though, if we set aside these two stereotypes? There's nothing wrong with finding success through your art. Why can't you use Fortune 500 tactics to grow your art business into something thriving and sustainable? Why can't Fortune 500 companies treat their business like art?

You can. And artists, as a whole, can learn quite a bit from some of the most profitable companies in the U.S.

Related: 5 Non-Negotiables When Building a Successful Art Business

Advanced planning

We artists are all about feeling the moment and embracing our creativity. So, left-brained activities like budgeting, planning ahead and doing taxes (kidding!) are a big snooze.

However, planning ahead is crucial for growing your art business. It's something that the top companies in the country all do. None of them are making up a social media strategy on

the fly or introducing a new product last minute. Can you just imagine the chaos?

Fortune 500 companies dedicate a lot of their time, resources and energy to their marketing strategy. They create a plan *well* in advance of any new releases or re-releases of their offers.

Take Nike, for example. They don't just launch a shoe next month and wait for sales to roll in. Everything else they do otherwise through marketing and branding supports their launches. They have a brand loyalty program, a consistent email newsletter and a strong social media presence. They run specific ads. They create an *experience* for their customers.

You can do this, too. To get started, all you have to do is look forward … and have a strategy in place.

Strategic planning

How can you plan ahead for a successful art event or new collection launch? By having a strategy in place.

Let's say you've already decided to plan ahead for the next year by breaking your calendar into quarters. Fill in all your important events on their respective dates. Next, you'll need to identify what your marketing campaign needs up to that date.

Take Apple, for example. No one can deny that they're a marketing powerhouse for their products. One strategy they often rely on is media buzz and hype for their new products.

Every commercial they produce for their new iPhone showcases how beautiful, minimal and functional their products are. The commercials are usually memorable with catchy beats, too. Do they linger on how much Apple products cost more than their competitors'? Nope! That's all part of their strategy.

To apply this strategy to your business, think about ways you can drum up excitement for your new collection launch. Think about what you offer to your customers that no other artist does.

Maybe you post teasers of new pieces on your Instagram or show behind-the-scenes videos of a work in progress on TikTok. Maybe you talk about what inspired your new pieces in a blog post or a YouTube video.

Use the power of others to help, too. Guest host podcasts, or get interviewed by other artists in your industry. Co-host a giveaway or a contest on social media. Share testimonials from happy customers.

Don’t forget to fill in all these ideas on your calendar. And then, execute them.

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Build excitement

As you can see, there are lots of creative ways to build buzz for new products or new releases. But be aware: A thin line exists between creating a buzz and being gimmicky, insensitive or seemingly desperate. This is a mistake that even top companies still make to this day.

We’ve all seen great Super Bowl ads and marketing campaigns that pack a punch. And then there are the rest.

One way to create excitement and avoid a marketing fail is to connect with your audience. Stay active on your other platforms in live time, answering questions via comments or DMs as they roll in. Host a Facebook Live or Instagram Live.

You could get even more involved by hosting a giveaway, asking poll questions or creating an easy game to generate excitement and keep your followers hooked.

Quite simply, be there for your audience! Don't just promote your new products and then leave. Show them *why* they should buy your work and support your artistry.

Serve your customer

How do top companies like Costco or IKEA serve their customers in more ways than just offering their services/products? It's one thing to sell. It's another thing to offer a top customer service experience that will ensure they come back again and refer more people to your business.

Let me be clear: "Outstanding customer service" doesn't just mean providing refunds, no questions asked. Many top companies do offer that type of customer service, but that's not the only way you can make your customers happy (as an artist, that would be pretty hard to do!)

Here's an example. Pharmacy company CVS had the Good Samaritan Van, where they help stranded customers with car troubles. All the customers have to do in return? Fill out a comment card.

Think outside the box when it comes to serving your customers through your art business. What can you offer along with or outside of your pieces that customers would love? It could be art courses, merchandise, exclusive content – the choice is yours.

Related: What a Famous Artist Taught Me About Business

Stick to your brand and values

Authenticity in your business is more important than ever. Inauthentic art or business practices won't get you far. Some key questions to consider for your art business:

The answers to these questions will help form your brand. A brand is more than just your visuals. It's more than your

artistic style and medium and more than the logo you create and the fonts you choose for your website.

It also has to do with your reputation, behavior, what you stand for and how you communicate with your audience. A brand shows what the goals and direction of your business are. It’s the first impression you give and the last one you leave.

Don’t forget about your values, either. Whatever is important to you in your personal and professional life should reflect in your business. Like:

With values, you need to be able to talk the talk and back up your words with thoughtful actions. Your values and the actions based upon them will set your art business apart from the rest and spark genuine connections with your audience.

Remember what your values are, the brand you’ve built around them and your mission. Whenever you feel lost or unsure if you’re doing the right thing for your business, look back at your foundations, the core of what you’ve built.

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