

Jewelry Business

ONLINE JEWELRY BUSINESS

The internet has unleashed a whole new spectrum of business ideas and opportunities; and the Online Jewelry Business is one such venture. Creativity and passion to make beautiful jewelry combined with simple business rules can pave the way to the establishment and running of a successful Online Jewelry Business.

OBJECTIVE

This E-book aims at providing you with three simple objectives:

- Starting your own Online Jewelry Business
- Establishing and succeeding in a highly Competitive market
- Ensuring increasing profits and a healthy customer base

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MODULE ONE - STARTING OUT

Planning your Online Jewelry Business

- Why Online Jewelry Business is an excellent business venture for creatively inclined “stay at home” parents.
- Planning your Online Jewelry Business, creating a business plan.
- Market Research - defining your Target Audience, looking out for trends and changes.

Bizymoms
Career kit

Most likely you're already in the Jewelry business, you probably have gifted your family and friends with little bits of jewelry every now and then. And in all likelihood, someone really liked your creations and advised you to take it up as a profession. Although the thought may have crossed your mind a hundred times already, hearing someone say it out loud can be the stimulant that most of us look forward to when it comes to pursuing our dreams and ambitions.

And why not? Imagine selling your creations and designs, and reaching out to those millions of prospective customers worldwide. Great Idea! However, the road ahead seems blurred, leading up to too many forked roads, making it imperative for quick decisions to be made on which is the right path to choose.

Once you're past the euphoria and excitement of starting and heading your own business, reality sets in. A hundred questions zip past, and you are left wondering if you made the correct decision.

Specifically, some questions you may be mulling over are... how do I go about getting my jewelry business online? What are the costs? How can I get people to see my website? How will they place orders and pay for it?

Don't worry; this is something that happens to all of us...the period of uncertainty. However a few things that you can do to clear that uncertainty is to ask yourself a few basic questions:

- Is this something that I absolutely love doing?
- Can I put in the effort and time required to make this a success?
- Do I have the initial motivation and resources to take those first few baby steps?
- And lastly, can I make this my long-term career choice?

If you have come up with a yes for these questions then I say, go for it with all you have got.

To help you get past those questions and initial uncertainties, we have compiled an Online Jewelry Business E-book for you.

The aim of this manual is to answer some of those questions and help you get started... It's a step-by-step guidebook with a store of information. When you're done with this book, I'm sure you would have a broad and detailed idea of how you can go about setting up your own Online Jewelry Business.

Assuming you have a general know-how about the business, it would help to dig into and brush up on the details. This is one business where the competition is rife and styles and trends change in the blink of any eye and most importantly, the customer is extremely choosy.

But then again, that is what adds that "zing thing" to this industry. And let's face it, as a jewelry designer; it is but natural that you will want to experiment with styles and colors and themes. Creativity is something that can be restricted only by the artist's imagination.

Why Online Jewelry Business is an excellent business venture

When I first started out researching the online jewelry business, the first thing that struck me was that almost everyone in the jewelry business started creating and designing jewelry as a hobby. A simple passion for creating something beautiful and elegant. I say passion because; any artistic ability is backed by a passion to be creative.

It's funny how the word passion keeps coming up, but there is a reason to it. If anything, the Jewelry business requires you to be passionate about your creations and designs and colors. People love it when they see creations that showcase the personality and passion of an artist.

Add a little story to your creations and viola, you will have a sale!

Sale...the first reason why you even considered taking this up as a business venture. To be honest with you, the Jewelry business is a very volatile sector, volatile because it is marked by constant changes. And if you are to succeed as a jewelry designer then you need to keep abreast with any and all of these changes.

However looking beyond the changes and the challenges of breaking out into a highly competitive market, lets look at why you should consider this as an excellent business venture.

Jewelry business combines the best of two worlds, a platform for letting out and developing your creativity and offers you in return, the best incentive for it...money.

Running your own online jewelry business means now you are not bound by; when you work, how your work, how much you put in, what you earn; you get to decide.

More time and energy for family and friends and yes for yourself as well. You save so much time on commuting, getting dressed, planning breakfast, you know how irritating and frustrating those early morning rushes can be.

Did I mention you get to be the boss; you get to do something that you love doing and getting paid for it in return?

However the best part about being in the online jewelry business is that, since your website is accessible 24/7, customers can visit and look at your collection, maybe make a purchase or two, even as you sleep!

Sounds convincing for starters, doesn't it?

Planning your Online Jewelry Business, creating a business plan

Planning is the key to success. We plan road trips, anniversaries, birthday parties, weddings etc. Having a detailed plan is vital to any business and your online jewelry business is no exception.

The main objective of creating a business plan is simple

By creating a written evaluation of all the different aspects of your business, you are better placed at evaluating your business potential and projecting your profits and growth.

It helps to remember that a business will and does face unseen contingencies that can affect your business, for good or for worse. And it is for such times precisely that you should have a business plan outlined.

NOTE: A detailed description of a business plan is outlined in your ekwa “easy business guide” book.

Market Research defining your Target Audience, looking out for trends and changes

Market Research is essential on two counts:

- It helps you in defining what the current trends are and what your customers are expecting by way of products and services.
- More importantly it gives you a good idea of the kind of customers your business can profit the most from.

There are a few parameters you can adopt while looking out for and identifying your target audience. Age and sex of a person are two very important considerations.

Why? Because jewelry as a rule (well a majority rule) is something that interests women. I am not saying that men do not wear jewelry; however the jewelry market for men is exclusive and small. There are designers who do create special jewelry that can be worn by men, but they are far too few.

And if you are a beginner, it makes sense to target a customer base that you can be sure will like and buy your products.

Another important factor is age. Jewelry is popular with kids, school going teens, college students, working women, home makers. Everyone likes to accessorize; the question that you need to ask yourself is which age group do you think is most likely to buy your designs and creations.

For example: elegant and contemporary designs are mostly liked by women in the age group of say 20 45. Most of them are financially independent and are in tune with the latest trends and styles. They will make a good target audience, and if your designs and themes are something that will go well with them then you will have a healthy customer base.

The idea is to figure out which market section is best suited to your designs and ideas. However as a beginner it is best to start with a customer base that you can be sure about.

Once you are settled in your business, you can experiment with not just your styles and designs, but also shift focus to a different customer base.

What are the current trends?

When you are looking out for what's selling and the hottest trends, start with looking around you, at malls, parties, church gatherings, schools, movie theatres or places people frequent. By observing what they wear and how they accessorize will give you a fairly good idea about what are the latest trends.

Two very good sources of information are the internet and magazines. A search on any of the search engines (Google, Yahoo, AOL etc.) will draw out results on latest trends and designs.

You could also visit other jewelry websites with catalogues of designs and trends. Look out in particular for auction houses like e-bay, they feature good examples of what people are buying and selling.

Online jewelry galleries again are great places when looking out for latest styles and trends. Some of them invite designers to showcase your collection with them on a trial basis.

Offline, Magazines (women's) are an excellent option when it comes to finding out what's selling and why. They cater to specific audiences and you can get some really good ideas from magazines.

Other good places to visit are galleries, boutiques, retail outlets and jewelry stores that sell jewelry. Most of these places like to feature the works and designs of local designers. If you are someone who likes working on themes as a jewelry line, then these places will give you good ideas on what sells.

In conclusion, your jewelry design should be something that reflects your styles and ideas. The best way to work would be to couple your designs with some of the contemporary styles and come up with designs that can give the customer the best of both worlds.

MODULE TWO SETTING UP YOUR ONLINE JEWELRY BUSINESS

Simple guide to creating a website for your business

Some of the important aspects of creating a website are: -

- a) Good Domain Name**
- b) Classy, Professional Website**
- c) Reliable Web Host**
- d) E-Commerce Software**
- e) Merchant Account**

Overview

This could well be the hardest part. But it's a routine every one has to go through if they want to get started with a website. During this phase, a lot of homework has to be done before you make a decision.

a) A Good Domain Name

It's what you want others to call you by. Choice Domain names are far and few between. The good ones, the ones you really want, you've find taken. Bad luck! However take this as an opportunity to create something different. Some tips on selecting a domain name: -

- Not Necessarily Sweet but definitely Short
- Easy to pronounce
- Memorable
- Avoid Trade-market names
- Get a feel-around of what family and friends think of it
- Could carry your brand name in it
- Not necessarily generic
- Use .com instead of .net or .org

b) Classy, Professional Web Site

Anyone with a basic knowledge of web design can create a web page. And the urge is always there to sometimes Do it Yourself! However, for someone whose business involves a lot of money, creating one's own or leaving it to amateurs is simply not the best route. Enjoy the services of a professional. And you can make sure you site is as glittery as the jewelry you're selling. Visitors to your site need to be impressed big-time, by a well-designed site, before they start looking at your designs.

Start with looking for a Professional Web-Designing Company. Give them a Clear Brief on your business and your requirements. Get their own inputs on what they can offer by way of web design methodology and practices.

Not only should your website be able to catch and retain public attention, but it should always be on par and better than your competitors.

Things to consider: -

- Create quality content that is a virtual showroom of your jewelry
- Quick download time
- Most of your prospective customers are likely to be women. Let your web-design speak to them, with fonts and colors that are feminine.
- Upload professionally taken photographs of your products, complete with lighting and shadow
- Clear and easy navigation
- Make use of flash scrolls to carry updates

c) A Reliable Web Host

Choosing a web host should be done with the utmost care. They are the technical aspect of your business. They provide a dual-function of Service and Support. Imagine, your site is gong to be accessed 24x7, all year round, by people from all around the world.

NOTE: The ekwa “easy business guide” attached with the e-book holds a detailed description of what you need to look for in a web host.

d) E-Commerce Software

Overview

This is where you lay the concrete and mortar for your building. Your daily business is going to be taken care of by this software. So make sure your e-commerce software is capable of providing that Rolls-Royce functionality.

So what do you need it for?

- To run your store
- For product display
- For inventory management
- For checkout.

How do you select a good one? Where do you look?

It's never going to be easy for you to decide how to go about it. But it's worth the trouble. Again like selecting a web-host, make sure you have a reliable software provider. Changing boats mid-stream is inadvisable, and expensive. Most companies are eager to sell their product, and calling them up randomly is not going to help.

NOTE: The ekwa “easy business guide” attached with the e-book holds a detailed description of what you need with respect to E-commerce software.

e) Setting up a Merchant Account

Overview

Most business transacted online is by credit card or some other e-payment. To be able to get that money rolling in, you would need a Merchant Account. The cash that a customer spends of buying your product is first transferred into this account, and then into your standard account.

There are many types of Merchant accounts. Some are specific to a business need and functionality.

NOTE: The ekwa “easy business guide” attached with the e-book holds a detailed description of what you need to look out for while setting up your merchant account.

f) Accounting Packages

Overview

There are so many accounting packages to choose from. What determines your choice would be your requirement. Once you have identified what exactly you require then you would know which package to settle on.

There are integrated e-commerce platforms that come with its own accounts package and there are stand-alone programs. So which do you choose?

NOTE: When you choose your business with Ekwa, you get a built in accounting package that is most suited to your business needs. The ekwa “easy business guide” attached with the e-book holds a detailed description of what you need to know about accounting packages.

MODULE THREE LEARN HOW YOU CAN MARKET AND ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS

- **Spreading the word about your business.**
- **Using the internet as a marketing tool.**
- **Online and offline marketing ideas.**
- **Why blogs, forums and networks are a great marketing and advertising option.**

MARKETING YOUR ONLINE JEWELRY BUSINESS

Success is addictive. And who among us does not want it? Of course success can be viewed in many different ways when you are operating and running a business, but let's face it, at the end of the day we would like to think of and measure success as increasing profits. I certainly would!

However the online jewelry business is a highly competitive arena, and if you have to succeed, then learning how to market and selling your craft to potential and repeat customers becomes just as important as knowing how to make beautiful jewelry. After all, what good is a work of art without an appreciative audience?

Spreading the word about your business and expanding it

Marketing your website and spreading the word about your business is perhaps just as vital as selling your products, and in the absence of a physical site, this becomes all that more important.

I have come across so many people who spend a lot of time and not to mention money while setting up their online business websites, and are under the impression that this is all it takes to attract customers. Nothing is further away from the truth!

A website is like a retail store, if you don't tell people who you are, where you are and what you sell, how can you expect customers to show up? Agreed, the internet has millions of visitors, however if people don't know about your website, they are not going to come. It is as simple as that.

Using the internet as a marketing tool

What better way to market your website, than by using the internet itself? Some of the marketing tools that the internet offers are Search Engines and auction sites. Registering your business with search engines will not only put your site out there, it is also a sure shot way of ensuring that your website attracts visitors and potential clients.

NOTE: The easy start program guide attached with the e-book provides all the information on top search engines and auction sites such as e-bay.

Offline and online marketing ideas

Using both offline and online marketing ideas in conjunction is the ideal way of creating an awareness of your online business website. Here are a few ideas you can incorporate while marketing your online jewelry business:

- Add your website address to all business and personal correspondence. Your business cards, emails, letter heads, envelops, should hold your website URL.
- If you use an answering machine for your phone, you can add on information about your website at the end of your message.
- Print flyers and brochures about your online business and hand them over at popular hang outs like, shops, and department stores, schools or any public place which you know is frequented by public.
- If possible write an article or column for a local paper or magazine, and add your email and website URL at the end.
- Place your advertisements and all the relevant information about your online business with local directories or in the Yellow pages.
- Talk about your business to one and all. Be it parties, or family functions or your church meetings or even the PTA meets; go ahead and talk about your business. In all likelihood, you will have interested parties and clients who will want to give your jewelry a try.
- Just as you place your advertisements with local directories and the yellow pages, register with online directories.
- Add information about your website to your email signatures. This is an excellent way to promote your business online. People receiving your emails will pass on information about your business to their family and friends and other contacts.
- Join any home based business discussion group or forum and pass on information about your website.
- Another really good internet marketing option is networking. In particular look out for “work at home mom” sites that offer free link exchanges. Most of these sites also have what is known as banner rotation ads. This is a page which holds multiple messages and ads in a small area on the page. This way you can advertise your business on different sites and feature their business ads on yours.
- Print you website URL on jewelry tags, bags or packaging case of your jewelry.
- Who better to advice on jewelry care than the person who designs them? Have a section in your website which gives tips on “how to care for jewelry”. Every time you make a sale, ask your customer if he/she would like to be added to your mailing list of periodical tips on how to care for jewelry. Customers usually like this after sales attention. This is also another way to have your credentials and expertise advertised, as a happy customer will pass on information to other potential clients.

- Run a monthly contest for free jewelry, like a pair of earrings. Not only will they sign up to take part in the contest, this is also an excellent way of getting subscribers to your email notification.
- Warm up to the idea of giving something free a course, consultation, information, ideas or anything unique that you may have to offer. I always feel this is an excellent opportunity to showcase your expertise and talent.
- And while we are talking about freebies, how about adding “free shipping” as a gift. It may cost you a little extra, but hey...the good thing about jewelry is that it does not weigh too much. In fact, there are a lot of websites that do this to attract customers. Of course you cannot do this all the time, but exceptions to a rule, work at times.

Why blogs, forums and networks are a great marketing and advertising option

One of the best aspects of the internet is that it offers so many options to enhance and expand a business. And blogs, forums and network groups are excellent avenues of marketing and promoting a business. Forums and discussion groups are like market squares literally. People from all walks of life, from different places and backgrounds team up here and create a hub of information and ideas. You never know, you may just come across potential and new customers.

Another very powerful marketing tool is the blog. This is one place where you can talk about just any aspect of your business. Maybe use it to share information, or educate your customers and visitors, or talk about new ideas and jewelry lines. In short, this can be your personal platform to address people. And since blogs are an interactive tool, your customers can discuss their concerns or ideas and suggestions with you.

Another reason why blogs are so popular on a website is because this is any excellent PR (public relations) tool. Interacting with your customers is one of the most important aspects of a business. You can get a feel of what your customers like or are looking for and make changes or improve your craft accordingly. It would certainly save you a lot of time and resources if you knew what your customers are looking for and if you are able to deliver on their expectations, you not only can add to your customer base but also boost your sales.

Networking is another popular and effective marketing tool. There are so many sites and businesses out there on the internet that can literally open the doors to new customers for your business. Think of networking as a long advertising chain where the loops are all inter-connected.

Banner rotation ads, exchanging links, passing on information virtually and by way of mouth are some of the advantages of networking. In fact a good place to begin with would be any of the numerous “work from home mom” sites. The idea is to place ads and links to each others businesses on various similar websites, thereby effectively introducing each other's visitors to the linked sites and businesses.

Of course, the best aspect is that you get to meet some really wonderful people in the process. And as women, we just naturally know and are able to connect to each other so much more easily.

Imagine expanding your business, winning more customers, boosting your profits and on the way, make some real good friends from around the world. Business doesn't seem such a drag after all, does it now?

MODULE FOUR PRICING AND SALES

- **Pricing your jewelry.**
- **How to sell your jewelry, creating a winning sales pitch.**
- **Where to sell your jewelry markets and ideas to increase sales.**
- **Displaying and packaging.**

Pricing your jewelry

So you have set up your website, identified your target audience, advertised your business, created a jewelry line, now all you have to do is sell and rake in the profits. But wait; have you decided how you are going to price your jewelry?

Considering price is one of the biggest decided factors when we buy something, it automatically becomes one of the most important aspects that will make or break your business. Not to mention, confusing as well. Priced low, people might question the quality of your jewelry, priced too high, and they might just decide to try one of your competitors.

Although the best person to assess what your jewelry is worth.... is you, however there are a few standards that you might want to consider before you put a price tag on your hard work.

Jewelry Pricing Formula

One of the first rules to consider while pricing your jewelry is that it should not fall below the base price. The base price includes the following three considerations:

- The price of your supplies and resources plus packaging.
- Over head expenses (light, electricity, lease etc.)
- Time spent in creating a particular piece of jewelry (single item, kits)

What you arrive at is the base figure. If you fall below this line, then you will be dealing in losses.

The second aspect of arriving at a price figure that ensures you of a decent profit (after covering your costs) are the following:

- The final quality and look of the jewelry.
- The price you think your target audience will be willing to pay.
- Availability of supplies for a similar item.

Whatever figure you choose to add to your base figure will translate into a profit. While the common retail price fixing formula is doubling the base profits, some people even choose to triple that figure. Wholesalers and discount houses base profits on volume sales, hence can afford to price their items at lower rates.

However when you are starting out, it is advisable to consider several other factors that directly or indirectly effect pricing. For example if the availability of resources for your particular line of jewelry are costly (particular beads or metal) then it makes sense to naturally price your jewelry a little higher, since there will be hardly any competition.

On the other hand, if you are using supplies and goods that are easily available, and there are others who deal with a similar line, then you may want to price your jewelry a little lower.

Checking out competition is another way of arriving at the correct figure. Look up similar online jewelry business websites, auctions sites, and stores with jewelry websites. This should give you a fair idea of what are the going rates and how best you can reach a price figure that will offer you the best profits. Again, that price figure should be above your base price.

Another important factor you should not fail to consider is that what ever be your final price, it should allow you the flexibility of future expansion, incase you decide to take on hired help as your business grows. The last thing you want to do is, let salaries and overheads eat into your profits.

Selling your jewelry

Perhaps the part that most people find difficult, especially a home business entrepreneur is the actual selling. Whether you choose to sell only over the internet or from home, you have to contend with the fact that markets, trends and styles, clients are subject to change. And to cope up with that change you will also need to constantly keep evolving your selling strategies.

Here are a few ideas on how to improve sales and keep the business running:

Define your jewelry style - In the bid to earn profits and increase their customer bases, most people end up designing a wide range of jewelry collection. Their reasoning is that, a wider collection means a wider and bigger customer base. While it may work in some instances, what is most likely to happen is that you are going to get stuck with a large inventory of unsold goods and confused customers.

Today, most people prefer specialty stores, both offline and online as this is a sure sign that quality and style will not be comprised. When starting out, it is advisable that you pick out a style and collection that you are an expert with. Once you identify yourself with a particular style, it becomes your signature and once contented customers are likely to come back for more and in the process pass on a good word.

Stay up to date with the latest trends - One of the most important aspects of running any business is the need to stay in touch with the latest trends and styles that hit the market. Magazines, movies, the internet are the best places to go when you are scouting for the latest trends in jewelry designs.

A good business wo (man) knows what that the customer wants and will create styles and designs that reflects that choice. Although there are a few customers who will prefer a particular style or jewelry design even if it's outdated, such customers are far too few.

So it is vital that you learn to keep up with the latest offerings in the world of jewelry.

Target niche markets - incorporate your styles and creativity with a niche market like religious jewelry (different religions), crystal jewelry, bracelets with names, school spirit jewelry, awareness jewelry (aids, breast cancer etc.) , birthstone jewelry (something that I personally like collecting), body jewelry, jewelry for weddings etc.

This is a great option if you don't like sticking to just one particular designing style. Once you establish yourself in any of these markets, it becomes easier to build a client base and take on multiple orders.

Schools, hospitals and various institutions these days endorse awareness campaigns and are always on the look out for designers who can provide bulk orders and are reasonable. Bulk orders work out cheaper plus if your customer is happy, he will prefer coming back to you.

Double up or versatile jewelry styles - A customer is always willing to pay a better price if he or she thinks it can double up as an accessory for another body part or if it can be adjusted a little to suit their styles and liking.

One of my personal favorites are neck chains that can be worn on the wrist (wound several times) as well. Adjustable finger rings, or neck chains, watches that can be worn with different bands (a favorite with kids), interchangeable pendants etc. are some of the things that you may want to try your hand out with.

Ask your customers what they want - The best way to avoid unsold inventory is to interact with your customers and find out just what they want. This option works out best when you have established yourself or can afford personal styles for your customers. Call it designer jewelry, because it is custom made and to the liking of a particular customer. Also a great way of retaining old customers, who will love the fact that the jewelry you design will be only for them. Such customers are also more likely to agree to higher pricing as they are assured that their jewelry styles will be distinct.

Grab bags - No matter how good the designer or just how good your business may be going, you will have a few pieces that will not sell. So what do you do with these pieces? Offer them as free gifts or gift it to family and friends? Well you could do any of these or you could make a grab bag.

A grab bag simply holds on expensive bit of jewelry and two or three other low priced jewelry pieces. The idea is to clear away your "not selling inventory" while making your customers happy. And who does not like a good bargain? These sell like hot cakes and work best around festival or holiday season.

Where to sell your jewelry markets

The one thing that we can be thankful for in the jewelry business is that, while the styles and designs may change with time, the human need to adorn and beautify our bodies with jewelry and other ornaments will never fade. While newer styles and designs ensure a continuing market for jewelry designers, in addition to selling jewelry over the net, let us take a look at some alternative markets.

Once again as a first market option, consider looking out for online jewelry galleries. You can showcase your best designs and since these online galleries already have an established reputation, the chances of you selling your jewelry are relatively high. An example of one such online gallery is <http://www.beadiest.com/>.

Auction houses such as e-bay are just as popular when it comes to selling jewelry online. In fact a majority of jewelry designers prefer e-bay because they rake in good profits with very little effort.

Creating a photo gallery on your website showcasing your own collection is an excellent idea, provided you have a good number of visitors.

Boutiques and Galleries are constantly on the look out for new and upcoming jewelry designers. Although approaching them is not really as difficult as you may think, however getting appointments can be.

The best way possible is to make a list of galleries and boutiques that are on the look out for new designers. Again you can use the internet, magazines to search out these places. It is always advisable to fix an appointment with them first.

Don't be pushy and over enthusiastic, a professional and a polite attitude can go a long way in getting you that order. When approaching a gallery or boutique, it is important that you keep your price list up to date, be it with retail or wholesale pricing. Galleries in particular require a wholesale price list.

Another thing to bear in mind is that it is always best to go with a full line of jewelry as opposed to a few items, and that gallery and boutiques owners prefer items that their competitors don't have.

Retail and specialty store owners welcome works of local and upcoming jewelry designers. One sure shot way of creating a long term relationship with retail and specialty store owners is by constantly coming up with new designs and fast selling designs. You need to be constantly in touch with what's selling and come up with ideas that suit such styles and trends while blending in with the theme of their goods and store. Little descriptions along with a piece of jewelry are a big hit.

Again as with galleries, retail store owners expect professionalism and prefer meeting designers with appointments. Carry your samples, price lists and any other information you think is important along with you.

Selling jewelry locally the list of markets to sell your jewelry is only limited by your imagination. There are a plethora of places where you can sell your jewelry. The following is a list of just some of the places that you can begin with

- Craft galleries
- Art galleries
- Beauty salons
- Bridal shops
- Gift shops
- Clothing stores
- Coffee shops
- Christmas stores
- Hospital, museum gift stores
- Hotel lobbies
- Pet shops
- Shoe stores
- Book stores

These are just some of the markets that are available to you; however parties, family gatherings or any such occasion and place where people would be interested in buying jewelry are just as good.

Packaging and displaying jewelry

Packaging jewelry

Although the saying “don't judge a book by its cover” is rather popular, the exact holds true when it comes to packaging your jewelry! Customers are just as interested in the packaging and displaying of your jewelry as they are in the actual jewelry itself.

Whether you choose to sell your jewelry in designer bags or delicate wrappings, it is the end look that makes a lot of difference when it comes to keeping a customer coming back.

Most people expect elegant packaging when it comes to any kind of jewelry. And if you can offer free packaging, that both is simple and elegant...well you can be sure your customers will love it. Not only are you offering them an assurance of quality and style, but also saving them valuable time. Something a majority of customers look for especially when they are interested in buying jewelry as gifts.

I prefer going to small local gifts store myself only because their packaging is so elegant and pretty.

Jewelry gift wrappings do not have to be necessarily expensive or elaborate. What they need to be is elegantly simple. Whether you choose to package your jewelry in velvet boxes or bags, lame' bag, mini jars and tin boxes, satin purses, or colored cardboard jewelry boxes, it is important that the end result looks just as beautiful as the piece of jewelry it holds.

You can look up and order you're any of these jewelry cases and boxes from any of the jewelry packaging and supply catalogs and websites. You can also make your own packaging if you prefer, of course provided you have the time.

Also it is an excellent idea if you could provide gift tags along with the purchase. Most customers will ask for one, and it really makes it so much easier for them if they are gifting the jewelry. You can get custom made gift tags from an office supply store.

Important tip always ensure that any jewelry you sell is enclosed in a zip lock jewelry bag. You can buy them at any jewelry packaging supplier stores.

Displaying jewelry

An artful jewelry display speaks volumes about the quality and class of a jewelry piece. If your choice of display is drab or shabby, no matter how beautiful your jewelry, it will miss the eye of a potential customer.

People expect to find an item such as a jewelry displayed in an equally elegant and stylish surrounding.

The best way to catch the attention of your customer is to display jewelry in a manner that enhances it. A photo gallery on your website is important if you want your customers to get a look at your style and design. You can get a professional to do it or you can do it yourself with a good quality digital camera at home.

Two points to keep in mind while taking pictures of your jewelry are

- Make sure the lighting is good.
- Some simple yet elegant looking jewelry displays items.

All you need to do is take some good pictures of your jewelry and then load them onto your website. Adding a description about the jewelry especially about its color, designing, material used and its weight is another way of giving your customer a good idea of how the jewelry looks.

What you need to remember at all times is that, your online customer is totally depending on pictures and your description of how a particular piece of jewelry looks like.

Focus on providing the customer with the best possible view of your jewelry line. Dark back drops works good when displaying pictures of your jewelry on your website.

You could also ask a friend or family member to sport the jewelry and take a picture. This way your customer will get a better idea of how the jewelry is going to look when worn as opposed to just displaying it in a jewelry case.

MODULE FIVE RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT TIPS

- Build relationships with existing clients and learn how you can win potential clients. Relationship Marketing Tips for Your Jewelry Business.
- Handling indecisive customers.

Relationship management

The secret to any successful business lies in creating long term relationships and friendships with your customers. Placing the customer and his wants and expectations is the best way to pave way to an association that can be both pleasurable and profitable.

Relationship management is not just vital to the business from a profit point of view but also an important marketing tool. A happy customer will definitely spread the word about your business, which in turn will ensure that new clients approach you.

The prominence and importance of relationship management comes into play mostly because it is easy and inexpensive to hold on to an existing customer. Easy because both your customer and you know and understand each other well. The familiarity of dealing with someone you already know makes it easier to understand his/her needs and requirements. The initial stages of building a rapport and building that connection with your customer is eliminated.

Of course this does not mean that you stop looking for new customers!

The advantages of relationship building are manifold and as follows

- The time, money and resources spent on marketing the business reduces.
- The good will of your business increases as your existing customers spread the word about your business among their contacts, family and friends. You can build an impressive referral page, which in turn reflects an assurance of quality on your credentials and expertise.
- Ensure that your sales and profits are not affected very much even during a period when business moves slow.
- Get information on the latest market trends and expectations from your existing customer base or niche market.
- Expand your business while taking care of your customers need and requirements as they start trusting you with creating jewelry that is specific to their needs and place orders with you.
- Your profits will increase as more and more customers come to you as they are assured of quality and style.

Tips on building a good relationship with your clients -

The keyword to building a good relationship with your clients is “listening.” Every customer has a specific need and requirement, and if you can tap into that then half your work is done. Not only will you understand what he/she is looking for but you will also be able to deliver just what they need. And if you want to build a lasting relationship with your client, then what better way to keep them coming back than by giving them just what they need.

Add that personal touch Whenever you meet with a new or existing client, focus on giving them what they want while imparting valuable information and advice on what they want and are looking for. For instance if a customer is looking for a particular accessory for a specific occasion or dress, advice them not with the intention on making a sale, but with the intention on genuinely helping them.

Once a customer knows that you're offering advice not with the intention to sell him/her anything, but are genuinely interested in helping them resolve their dilemma, they will open up and be more trusting of you. Again, you can only gain as your happy customer will not only come back, but will also bring in other clients.

One of the most important aspects to building your credentials is by offering the name of another vendor if you are not able to supply what he/she is looking for. They will appreciate your help and in future when they know you can offer them what they need, will come back to you.

A good way of building on your customer base is by holding "customer discounts," or offering freebies to your special customers. You can add them on your mailing list and send them periodic information about a sale or clearing or offer information by way of advice on cleaning and maintaining jewelry, and or accessorizing.

Customizing jewelry to fit your customer's needs, free of cost is an excellent option. For instance, If a particular piece of jewelry needs to be adjusted (bracelets or finger rings) doing it free of cost will make them loyal to your business.

These are just some examples of how you can build a relationship with your customer's. As and when you gain experience, all you need to do is look for occasions where you can offer that something extra to your customer.

Handling indecisive customers

Most of us know that feeling when we have given into the urge of buying something that did not really want, but went ahead and bought it anyway. Those moments of indecisiveness usually last a few moments, till we reach a decision. However there are people who find it really difficult or are unable to reach a resolution for whatever reason. And if you are on the other end of the customer, it can really get on your nerves.

So how can you avoid such a situation, and if you can't is it possible to maybe diffuse it? Can you help a customer reach a decision?

Recognizing an indecisive customer More often than not, a customer will project his or her state of mind through body language. Touching the lip with a finger, biting nails, scratching the head, looking about while staying at the same place, are just some of the indications that a customer is having problems deciding.

If this has been your particular problem, and or if you are just starting out, it can be something that you will have to face at one time or the other. While there can a number of reasons why a potential customer is unable to decide on whether he wants to or does not want to make a purchase, here are a few tips on how you can handle such a situation without losing your calm:

- Don't decide for the customer/don't assume you know what the customer is thinking. It's never a correct thing to decide for the customer or assume you know what he/she is thinking. A sales person usually deals with this situation in one of the three ways; he/she starts pointing out the advantages of that particular product, second starts offering the customer more choices and third leaves the customer to muse alone for a few minutes.
- Helping a potential customer reach a decision is an important step in building a relationship. If you can understand the reason of his/her indecisiveness, then you can help eliminate the confusion and in the process make a sale. If not, at least both the customer and you are not left in a state of not knowing.
- Ask the customer if he is undecided When you do this, it can be an enormous relief to the customer as he/she knows you are aware of their mind set. The simple step forward would be to ask the customer why and what is it about that particular purchase that is causing the indecision. If you can learn what your customer is thinking then you will be able to learn the reason behind the indecision.
- Acknowledge and clarify the source of indecision Many a times, just having your problems worded out by another person can help you reach a decision. It brings a certain amount of clarity to your thoughts. You can do the same with your customer. If he/she has a problem, saying it out loud or reflecting it out loud can really help.
- Understand why the customer is having a hard time deciding The first rule to understanding your customer is to accept the fact that all this trouble may not necessarily lead to a sale. The whole purpose of this exercise is to help out an indecisive customer and although you might not profit from this, you will establish yourself as someone who understands the customer. And the best way to do that is to find out the real reason behind that which is preventing the customer from make a purchase.
- Providing a solution to the customer The last step of this exercise involves providing your customer with an effective solution or options of clearing away the barriers to making a decision. One of the most effective techniques is to offer a full refund on a purchase made if the customer is not happy with a particular item. The risk factor if any is eliminated and the customer will feel a little more secure about making a purchase.
- Another option is to refer the customer to another vendor if you are unable to provide the customer with an effective solution. This way, you will earn the customers trust and respect and will have helped him make a purchase he will be happy about.

A few moments spent understanding your customer's problems will go a long way when faced with an indecisive customer. Of course all of this takes a lot of practice, however over a period of time not only will you gain confidence in your selling abilities, you will also have gained a loyal customer.