

From: John Iverson [john@jiverson.com]
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Welcome to another issue of the E-zine. If I can ever get organized, perhaps they will arrive in your inbox more often. However, reality has a habit of intruding when I'm thinking about putting one out.

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1. OTHER DIMENSIONS OF PRICING
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Your craft widget's price is only one -- and perhaps not even the most important -- aspect that is considered by your prospective customer in his/her buying decision. Most buyers will pay a higher price in return for ancillary benefits associated with either the product itself or the seller, which they perceive as being valuable.

These benefits can be either tangible or intangible. A not-so-exhaustive list includes the shipping terms of the sale (who pays for freight?), the credit terms offered, pre- and post-sale customer service considerations, your returns policy, warranties, packaging, delivery times, your reputation, and customer loyalty. These issues and more are weighed by your customer(s) at all levels of the distribution chain before they hand over their money.

For a more detailed discussion, go to the FAQ of the same name on the website.

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2. WEB SITE REVAMPED, CONTENT ADDED
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Speaking of which, I've completely revamped the website. The navigation has been changed to make it easier to find what you are looking for, and I've added a slew of new content. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS), where you'll find the answers to all the business questions you wanted to know but were afraid to ask, has been radically expanded -- not only with new topics, but extensive revision of many current topics. Several of these new topics address the pricing problem, as well as the profitability of your craft business. An example of the latter is a discussion of the behavior of costs in the typical studio.

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3. THE LOVE BUG
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Did you get bit by the I LOVE YOU worm? I did, and I can tell you that (a) it was not much fun, and (b) I shouldn't have. It was delivered to me by a friend in California who is always sending me screwy attachments. As a trusted pen pal, I didn't even think twice about opening it. Once I got control of it, I inspected it with my newly-updated virus software, and the attachment got a clean bill of health. So, this worm -- not virus -- that swept the entire world in two hours doing \$20 billion in damages at last count, got by my anti-virus folks and my local Internet Service Provider -- and probably yours, too. The really scary thing is that within a day there were upwards of a couple of dozen

copycats floating around! All of us should take this as a serious wakeup call. Sometimes this Brave New World can bite you.

How does one protect oneself from those inevitable future viruses? Without resorting to complete paranoia, do these four things: (1) keep your anti-virus software updated regularly by going to the maker's site and downloading the latest version (it's free!); (2) make regular backups of your important data an ingrained habit (I lost more than 22,000 picture files and java scripts to the beast, but was able to restore all but a handful from a tape backup); (3) place your browser and email settings on high security; and (4) be a little less trusting of email attachments. If you don't delete them outright, at least save them to file and then inspect them with your anti-virus software before you open them. Most likely you'll still be infected at one time or another, but these steps will go a long way towards minimizing the damage.

Of course, there are other steps you can take, too. Both McAfee and Norton anti-virus software is designed to scan for viruses, and they aren't that good at picking out trojans like the I LOVE YOU worm. You can add this protection with additional security software, such as Moosoft's The Cleaner. Then, if you are still paranoid, you can pick up some intrusion software, such as BlackICE Defender, that will keep hackers out of your computer (the Information Highway is a two way street, folks!). I'm not shilling for these guys, so if you want further information send me an email (no attachments, please!).

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4. WHY BOTHER WITH THE SUMMER SHOWS?
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Unless you've sold out your capacity for the entire year, and aren't in a position to increase your volume, you should always do the summer shows. Sure, they aren't as profitable as the winter ones, but they do fill a niche, and the dynamics are completely different than they are in the winter -- as in, at the summer shows you actually have a chance to spend some quality time with your buyers because they aren't as frenetic about cruising the aisles of a show almost twice as big. There's also less competition for the buyers' budget in the summer. Think about it, then (this is another plug) go to the website and read the FAQ of the same name, which explains in more detail why your participation in the summer shows makes good economic sense.

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5. CODA SURVEY REMINDER
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Have you completed the CODA survey yet? This is the first ever rigorous economic impact study of the arts and crafts community, and I urge you to fill it out and send it in. Distribution of the survey form is massive in the industry -- you can even find it (plug) on the website under TIPS. If you haven't seen it yet, you'd best get yourself to a doctor because you probably can't even fog a mirror right now.

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That's it for the latest E-zine. If you don't want to receive any more of these, you know how to get hold of me. I hope that you're busy stocking up those summer tourist traps and building all those new craft widgets to introduce at the summer shows.

Cordially,

John