



ESSENTIALS

for Shows & Sales

Quick Start and Orientation

Welcome to a new season!

First, you worked your way through **your Action Plan for Shows & Sales planning workshop**. This got you thinking, expanding your ideas, and, above all, prioritizing what you need to focus on now.

There are tools you discovered in that workshop that you will refer to repeatedly as you're thinking about what to add to your calendar. In particular, I'm talking about:

1. *Strategies & Tactics
2. Venue Analysis
3. Opportunities Tracker

If you haven't done this yet, don't worry. It's in the learning center waiting for you whenever you can make time to do the work.

You're *always* working toward more and better shows and increasing sales. This is not new.

What we're about to do is fill in some blanks. Add to or finesse what you're already doing so you can get better results. What you pick up this season will be used repeatedly throughout your long art career.

RHYTHM of this Season

Just so you know, we have 2 brand new learning modules: Collection Releases and Pop-ups. There are also 2 new resource pages for show submissions and insurance.

And ... Old bonus material that has been enhanced with documents that can help you get organized around those ideas. Information about showing in restaurants, using fundraisers for your art, working with interior designers, and hosting an open studio is more robust.

Let's review the new season in the learning center. *We have a fun holiday theme to the season, but don't let it fool you. The learning modules within each lesson are serious and fundamental to your art business knowledge.

They might appear under a clever title, but the information applies regardless of the time of year.

I wanted to start with some modules that you might use if you really wanted to **ramp up sales around the holidays**, so the first modules for October are about events you could schedule and implement: collection releases, open studios, restaurants and fundraisers.

November is more about future planning—for getting creative with alternative venues, and perhaps looking into gallery representation and writing exhibition proposals.

And **December is for picking up extra skills** you can use to next-level future results. Collaboration is key among these skills.

Now, a little challenge for you.

Commit to a Solo Show

I lay down this challenge every time I talk about exhibition venues because **solo exhibitions of your art will help you rapidly grow your career**.

They are the pinnacle of an artist's career, but in most artists' dreams they usually take place at fine galleries and museums.

These prestigious venues will happen for those who persevere. In the beginning, however, you will need to curate your solo shows for less lofty places, like those mentioned in the module titled Alternative Venues.

The location doesn't matter too much. What does matter is that it's only your work and that you have an opening or event to invite people to.

Solo shows stretch all of your professional muscles.

In sponsored group shows, you follow the rules. Someone else sets the dates and deadlines while dictating the exact formatting and timing of everything. You don't have to do much thinking. Just follow the directions.

Easy! But ... When you're part of a group show, you never know whose work is going to be next to yours. You can't be assured of the quality and consistency. You are given a spot for one, perhaps two, pieces that can easily get lost amid all the other artists in the show.

When you put together a show of only your work, you make the rules. This forces you to be organized and proactive. You realize that you are in charge of your destiny.

For your own show, you know precisely what to expect from your work. This means you have (almost) 100% control and 100% responsibility. I say “almost” because the venue certainly retains some control.

A solo exhibition forces you to consider a body of work, not just 2 or 3 pieces that you will submit to a jury. You must make the body of work, think about what ties the work together, and how others will interpret it.

The entire process develops your critical thinking. You decide what to include, which pieces to put next to one another, and how to interpret the work for your audience.

For a solo show, you must come up with language for your statement, for your publicity, and for talking with the public about your art. It's fairly easy to do this with a single piece. It's harder, yet necessary, to do for a complete body of work.

But you can do it. Ready to stretch your courage muscle? The actions around this are:

1. **Commit to scheduling one solo show within the next 12 months.** The exhibition doesn't have to happen during that time. You only need to get it on the books. Up for the challenge? 🙌 Tell us you've accepted the solo show challenge in your progress report for the week.
2. **Add potential venues to your Opportunities Tracker** (planning workshop). Continue adding them as we go throughout the season—using the venue analysis procedures.
3. **Assess your studio practice.** Are you producing work consistently so that you will have a cohesive body of work? If not, something needs to change in your schedule. You must prioritize the work in the studio before you can pull off a solo show or an art business for that matter.

I had planned to cover Attracting Venues today, but I think that's more relevant down the line. What's most relevant now is to be aware of your mindset and the impact it has on your actions and way of being in the world.

MINDSET

In particular I want you to think of the ways you define yourself in the negative.

I am not ...

I am bad at ...

Some of the things I hear are:

I am not a salesperson.
I am not outgoing.
I am terrible at marketing.
I am bad at following up.

These are self-fulfilling prophecies. You can't say, "I'm terrible at marketing" without being terrible at marketing. You're giving up!

Whenever you find you're defining yourself in the negative, remember that you have the power to shape your story. How you choose to define yourself will influence how others look at you and think of you.

Will you define yourself in terms of limitations and failings? or ...
Will you define yourself in terms hopes and aspirations?

I am *truly* one of the last people who will pontificate about the power of positive thinking. It's just not my thing. But I do know this . . .

The minute you decide you have limitations, you will be forever bound by those constraints.

Next time you catch yourself saying "I'm bad at X" or "I am not Y," turn it around. Make it a positive to help improve your mindset:

I get a kick out of sharing my art with others.
I enjoy meeting interesting people.
I can only improve when I give myself new challenges.
I am getting better at following up on opportunities that are important to me.

You're only as good as you allow yourself to be.

[See: Affirmations, Rejection Framework]

Estimating Your TIME COMMITMENT to Essentials

The truth is, anything takes as much time as you allow. We always expand time to fit the time we think we have, so be careful about that. Put a cap on your learning and implementation time.

I estimate you will need the following time commitment each week:

- About 60-90 minutes to attend lesson briefs and consume learning modules. They're usually quite short, but what you learn could lead you to other modules or further research.

- **Lesson briefs are short LIVE video (Zoom) introductions to a new learning module.** I do them this way instead of pre-recording so that we can have more live interaction, which makes it more fun for me! You'll find the details about them and the Zoom link in our gatherings. Recordings are posted with the lesson modules themselves.
- About 30 minutes to conduct a weekly review and post your progress report.
- About 1 hour a week to participate in live gatherings, including Essentials Labs.
 - **Labs are a time for us to discuss the homework you were given for that specific date** (the posted learning modules) and for me to answer any questions that came up for you. They rely on what I hear from you. ** LABS ARE THE BEST TIME to get your questions about content answered. **
- About 1 hour a week to connect with other artists in the Art Biz Connection community. You never know where a new connection might lead!
- At least 3 hours a week implementing. If this sounds like a lot, don't worry! You're probably already doing some of this. And it will be related to your challenge goal, so it's something you have identified as wanting to achieve. You need time to see that it happens.

At the same time, you must **maintain your studio practice**. Without the art, you are not an artist and have no reason to spend *any* time marketing. This program cannot be used as an excuse for avoiding work in the studio.

Our Live Gatherings calendar for the next *30ish* days looks like this.

Wednesday, September 25 :: Lesson brief on collection releases with Alyson
 Wednesday, October 2 :: Lesson brief on open studios with Alyson
 Wednesday, October 9 :: Lesson brief on restaurants and fundraisers with Alyson
 Thursday, October 10 :: Studio Talk with Suzanne
 Tuesday, October 16 :: Lab with Alyson
 Thursday, October 24 :: Get It Done DONE Day with Suzanne

The Labs are most relevant to the learning and implementing you're doing, but you might want to make connections in Studio Talk or use a Coworking or Get It Done Day for planning or tackling something you might be procrastinating.

Yes! I'm glad you asked. Almost everything is recorded. The exception is whenever we have breakout groups, which can't be recorded.

TO DO Now

- ✓ Add our live gatherings to your calendar. Show up when you can!
- ✓ Review learning modules with October 16. Prioritize the ones that are right for you now—knowing the others will be there later. Post any questions with the October 16 gathering or make a separate post if you need the answer earlier. Don't ever hesitate to post questions!
- ✓ Keep an eye out for my posts, updates, questions, and challenges.
- ✓ Read your Monday bulletins.
- ✓ Complete and post your progress reports on Fridays.

5 Ways to Find ACCOUNTABILITY

Many of our members stay with us for years because they appreciate the accountability they receive as part of a structured community with leaders. There's something motivating about being with our members. Truly, just being here with us will provide a good amount of accountability.

In case you need more accountability (and not everyone does), here are 5 ways to get it.

1. Complete your weekly reviews just for yourself. This is a worksheet under #5 on the First Steps (Start here) page in the learning center.
2. Post your Friday Progress Reports every week for community accountability. (The most recent one will always be on the top within the Progress Reports space, but not necessarily in Your Feed.) I set aside time to read these on Monday mornings.
3. Make a Zoom coffee date around a special topic and invite other members to attend.
4. Show up for the labs. Because they're based on the learning modules homework, this gives you a deadline to get some work done. Other live gatherings (like Studio Talks) can also provide soft deadlines for you.
5. Ask for an accountability partner within our network.

Our TEAM

We're so lucky to have **artist mentor Suzanne Gibbs** help care for our members. Suzanne is an artist, zine publisher, yoga practitioner, and so much more.

She leads Studio Talks and ... Get It Done Days, Coworking, and Member Mixers (alternating months)

I lead the learning labs and lesson briefs for Essentials.

Kristyn Brigance is our crack admin help. Email her when you are having problems logging in, finding things, or need to update your account.

Please come directly to me with questions about the content, your goals, and coaching.

Need HELP?

We are here for you!

For login problems, tech help, your account, and general information, please email Kristyn: hello@artbizsuccess.com

For tech woes, we always suggest you reboot everything and try again before contacting us, but do reach out before you get frustrated. (We can tell when you're frustrated and have been there ourselves.)

For questions or suggestions about content, your goals, or coaching, please email Alyson: alyson@artbizsuccess.com