



TEENTREPRENEURS:

Helping high school teens learn about
entrepreneurship

A project of REACH Studio Art Center, in collaboration with Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Capital Region Community Foundation Youth Action Committee, and the National Endowment for the Arts

ENTREPRENEUR

en·tre·pre·neur (on'tre-pre-nûr', -noor')

n.

A person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/entrepreneur>



In the spring and summer of 2011, REACH Studio Art Center staff Alice Brinkman and Jeana-Dee Allen Rogers mentored 12 teens in creating small business with the help of nine volunteers and mentors. Teens created art objects for sale in four product areas: jewelry, ceramics, graphic arts, and textiles. They learned how to create objects for sale, develop business plans, market their products, sell their items in a retail setting and all aspects of conducting business in a professional manner. The students had three very successful sales and raised more than \$1,200 for themselves.

The following is a guide to help other organizations learn from the success of the program.

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RECRUITING MENTORS AND VOLUNTEERS



If your project has to do with youth development, especially for at-risk teens, it not difficult to recruit mentors or volunteers. **Local colleges and universities** (in our case Lansing Community College and Michigan State University) have a wealth of students looking for opportunities for service learning. The best appeal to students comes from **speaking to them directly** - whether at a volunteer fair or appealing to instructors to let you speak in their classes for 5-10 minutes.

Artist mentors can be found by calling **local** craft shops (especially artists' galleries/co-ops, etc) and asking them for assistance in recruiting some help. We were able to connect with a woman who taught our teens how to make jewelry out of soda can tabs (pictured at top right). The students thought it was really cool and we were able to engage a new community members at REACH.



TEACHING BUSINESS

Getting Help with the specifics

“ArtServe Michigan is the leading statewide arts and cultural advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening communities by positioning arts, culture and arts education as key contributors to the re-invention of Michigan’s economy.”

www.artservemichigan.org



Agencies like ArtServe exist to help foster programs like Teentrepreneurs. We had three separate days of business training from a staff member at ArtServe. He helped the students make business plans, toured galleries with the teens, and talked about conducting business professionally as artists.

Thank you to **Simon Perazza**, Director of Constituent Relations at ArtServe for his dedication to the teens.
simon@artservemichigan.org or 248.912.0760 ext. 4#

TEACHING BUSINESS: MAKING A PLAN

Worksheet for Students

1. What kinds of products are you going to sell? (circle)

Ceramics

Graphic Arts

(photos, drawings, posters, t-shirts, etc)

Textiles

Jewelry

2. Who is your market, which means who do you want to sell your items to?

(other teenagers, parents, or a niche market like people who collect owls or another specific item)

3. What kinds of materials do you need to make your products and how much are they?

Materials needed

Price

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

4. Considering the price of your materials and the time invested in making it, what would a fair price for your item be?

5. What similar products are being sold (in the mall, online, anywhere)? What can you learn from those? (How do they look? How are they packaged? What makes you want to buy them?)

6. What are some things you could do to market your products?

ONLINE RESOURCES: SELLING AND ADVERTISING



Free to use. Post videos, photos, slide shows, etc in a blog format. Features: Numerous themes, posting online or from phone or email, photo sets, etc **www.tumblr.com**



Free to sign up and share photos and videos. Purchase photos and photo related products (posters, books, cards) and pick them up at your local Meijer, Walmart, Walgreens, or have them shipped to you. **www.snapfish.com**



Free to use. Upload (from your computer, email, or cell phone) and share photos publicly or privately. Features: photo editing, product ordering (from snapfish), photo tagging (post into online maps or other sites), and storytelling with photo captions. **www.flickr.com**



Free to use. Sell vintage, handmade or 'supply' items online. You post your items with photos, descriptions and prices. Then, once the item is bought, you pack and ship it to the buyer. It's 20 cents to list an item and Etsy takes a 3.5% sales fee. There are special deals with companies like Fed Ex (discount on shipping) if you are an Etsy seller. **www.etsy.com**



Free to use. Post videos, photos, text, etc in a blog format. Features: Numerous themes (different from Tumblr, but similar), posting online or from phone or email, etc. **www.blogger.com**



Free to use. Post photos and descriptions of items you want to sell. Buyers respond to your email address (either personal or anonymous). You set the price and manage the sale and the buyer typically picks up the item. All deals should be done locally to avoid scams. **<http://lansing.craigslist.org>**



Free to use. Website for creative projects to advertise their ideas. Create and upload a video of your project. Anyone can log on and view your proposal and donate. Donors are given incentives like posters or t-shirts (made by you) to help fund your idea. Amazon.com processes the funding and takes a 5% fee only if the project is fully funded. **www.kickstarter.com**

ART MAKING

Learning about Professionalism

REACH students toured five local art galleries in Lansing.

We asked the students:

What made the art you saw in the galleries look professional?
What did you notice about prices?
How was the art packaged... Framed? Boxed? Labeled? What else?
What was something you wanted to purchase? Why?
How could you make your art look like it belonged in the galleries?
Was there anything you didn't like about the art in the galleries?



Taking time for art

Many of our teens said they were surprised at how much hard work was involved with making art to sell. Not only did students have to make time for creating art, but they had to consider time for inventory, pricing, labeling, framing, matting, setting up their displays, and managing sales. Every 2-3 of students were mentored by a professional artist to help them increase the quality and professionalism of their work.



MARKETING: LOGOS

<http://justcreativedesign.com/2009/07/27/what-makes-a-good-logo> ...Has a great "How to" on logos. I've copied one of their tips here. Everything you need to teach a quick logo lesson is on this site.

5 Principles of Effective Logo Design

Simple



Memorable



Timeless



Versatile



Appropriate



We asked the students:

- What do you want people to remember about you/your art?
- What are some symbols that represent you/your art?
- How can you draw these symbols in 5-10 different ways?
- What do other students think about what you've drawn?
- How does what you've drawn apply to the five principles of effective logo design?

An example... (at right)

After making 5-10 logo examples students chose one design. The final logos were selected by having all the students vote on the design that represented the individual artist's work the best. Imani's medium was ceramic beaded jewelry. She and the rest of the teens selected a logo that both illustrated jewelry (the heart pendant) and her name (so her work would have a noticeable artist's mark).



MARKETING: ARTIST STATEMENTS

Buyers want to identify with their purchases and feel as though they are getting not just a product, but a piece of a story. An artist statement helps them feel connected to their purchase.

We asked our students to answer these questions: Why do you make art? What have you learned from the entrepreneur project? What do you want people to feel about your art? Why is art important to Michigan?

MARKETING: POSTERS

Teens make great graphic artists because they love bold designs and contrasting colors. Give them the challenge to come up with a poster design on their own.

Help them make sure the important facts are there: **time, date, place (and address), sponsors, contact information, and event name.** We were so proud of what they came up with for our three sales events.

Getting posters printed

Check with your public school system and see if they have a print shop or ask other nonprofits where they get the best deal on posters. Lansing Public Schools have a print shop that is about half the price of any other printer.



ART MEANS BUSINESS

a REACH studio art center exhibition through May 31

featuring teen entrepreneur projects

art alley - 1133 south washington



jewelry



ceramics



drawings



textiles

---all proceeds go to students



SALES: A PERSONAL STORY

One of our most successful students, Cale, 17, sold hand painted shoes. He took orders and gave people receipts for the sale. Then, he wrote down people's information and shipped their shoes to their homes. He made beautiful products. His work was recognized through his online promotions and is now being sold at a gallery in San Francisco.

He learned some valuable lessons along the way.



Organization

Taking orders online would have been much easier than on paper. It was often difficult to sort through the paperwork, especially since his work was in high demand. We recommended Cale use a site like Etsy in the future to streamline his process.

Price

When pricing a product you need to consider paying yourself by the hour and the cost of your materials. Cale charged about \$35/pair of shoes. It took him more than 17 hours to complete a pair. This is not a fair price for his labor.

View his work at:
(<http://picturesbycale.blogspot.com>)



"I definitely did not have the right price. I didn't know what to expect and wanted to test the waters."

CONCLUSION



Teentrenepreneurs project ended with the students' final sale on September 24, 2011. Some of the lessons they learned were:

- "When you start off selling something, you have to make a fair price."**
- "Unless you're REALLY good, sellable art is useable art."**
- "Remember price for materials."**
- "I've learned that with hard work and practice,
you can improve your skills and be an accomplished person."**
- "Art is important to Michigan because
it helps people express themselves by doing what they love."**

The project was successful thanks to the help of dedicated volunteers and artist mentors that spent 3-6 hours every week for more than nine months with the teens. It would not have been possible without their assistance. Thank you.

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