

The ~~Starving~~ Artist Enterprising Survey

Summary of Results

The Enterprising Artist Survey was hosted by
[Right Brain Rockstar](#) and [Artonomy](#).

<http://rightbrainrockstar.com/uncategorized/survey-roundup/>

Objectives & Methodology

The main objectives of the survey were to better understand artists' online habits and practices, and to find out what areas the creative community struggles with, in order to better meet the needs of our readers.

The survey was conducted entirely online on rightbrainrockstar.com between 20th February and 1st March 2012.

A total of 954 people completed the survey.

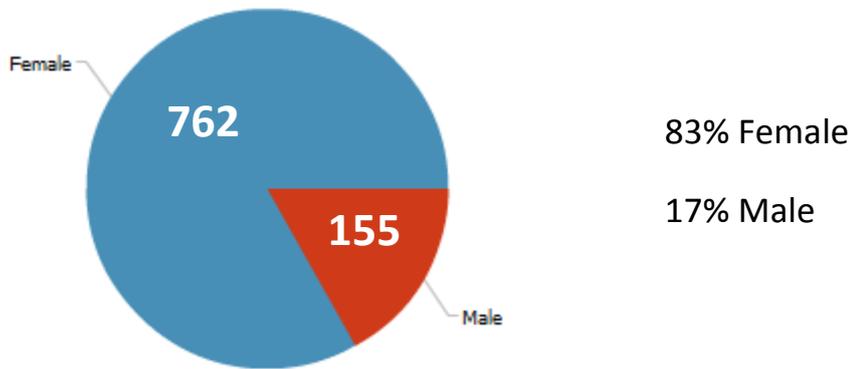
In addition to Right Brain Rockstar, 20 other blogs participated in spreading the word about the survey to their readers:

Participating blogs:

- [Artonomy](#)
- [Artist Career Training](#)
- [Skinny Artist](#)
- [Purple Panda](#)
- [Cult Status Creative Studio](#)
- [Michele Fawcett](#)
- [Artsy Shark](#)
- [The Abundant Artist](#)
- [Art Palaver](#)
- [The Paint Box](#)
- [Fine Art Tips](#)
- [Art Blog Action](#)
- [Meylah](#)
- [Art Biz Blog](#)
- [Melissa Dinwiddie](#)
- [The Creative Entrepreneur](#)
- [Roerie Studio](#)
- [Lisa Sonora Beam](#)
- [Right Brain Business Plan](#)
- [The Mindful Artist](#)

The Results

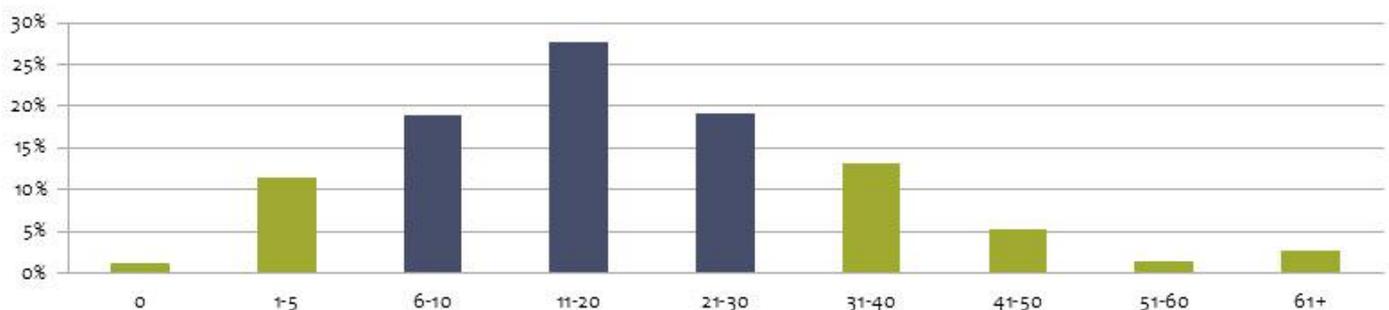
Readers are mostly women who classify themselves as full-time artists. They paint and spend 6-30 hours per week doing art.



Primary medium

Choices	Percentage	Count
Painting	63.00%	601
Drawing	24.32%	232
Other	17.40%	166
Photography	12.68%	121
Digital Media	11.64%	111
Literature / writing	8.39%	80
Textiles	8.07%	77
Other		
Total Entries		954
<i>Unanswered</i>		<i>7</i>

Hours Per week spent doing art



They are mostly middle-aged and almost all (91%) are college educated.

Age Range

Choices	Percentage	Count
45 - 54	 27.93%	260
55 - 64	 25.78%	240
35 - 44	 19.12%	178
25 - 34	 14.29%	133
65 or older	 7.41%	69
Prefer not to say	 2.79%	26
18 - 24	 2.58%	24
Other	 0.11%	1
Total		931
<i>Unanswered</i>		<i>23</i>

Education

Choices	Percentage	Count
Bachelors	 40.71%	379
Masters	 19.33%	180
Some college	 17.19%	160
Associates	 7.41%	69
High school / GED	 4.73%	44
Professional degree	 3.97%	37
Technical certificate	 3.22%	30
Other	 3.44%	32
Total		931
<i>Unanswered</i>		<i>23</i>

The most often cited fears about being an artist include...

Finances / Lack of sales

- *I won't be able to make enough to support myself.*
- *I will put a lot of effort into something and it won't sell.*
- *Storing a houseful of art that nobody wants.*

Rejection or lack of recognition

- *My work won't make a difference in the world or no one will care.*
- *People will think my work is pointless and trite.*
- *Don't know how to start when I don't have any awards or work in any galleries or publications.*
- *Not becoming well-known until after death.*

Internal Conflict

- *Work/life balance.*
- *Becoming stagnant. Losing faith in my creative being. Creative blocks.*
- *Selling out. Being stuck having to produce something over and over because it sells and that is what people want from me. Losing my integrity in order to mass produce.*

Physical limitations

- *Losing my physical ability to do the work such as going blind or getting arthritis.*

The most mentioned rewards of being an artist include...

Personal journey and expression

- *Making art is personally healing and fulfilling. I make art because I have to, it makes me feel well and good. I feel empowered as a human being.*
- *Art takes me to a world where everything is beautiful, safe and sincere.*

Connection with others

- *Sharing a part of yourself and your word view with others in a creative way.*
- *When someone truly connects with one of my pieces. Having someone buy my work and take it to live with them, whether in their home or office.*
- *Inspiring and enlightening others through my art and teaching.*

Freedom and flexibility

- *Living life on my own terms doing what I absolutely love to do.*
- *Not having to work 9-5 and/or for someone else.*

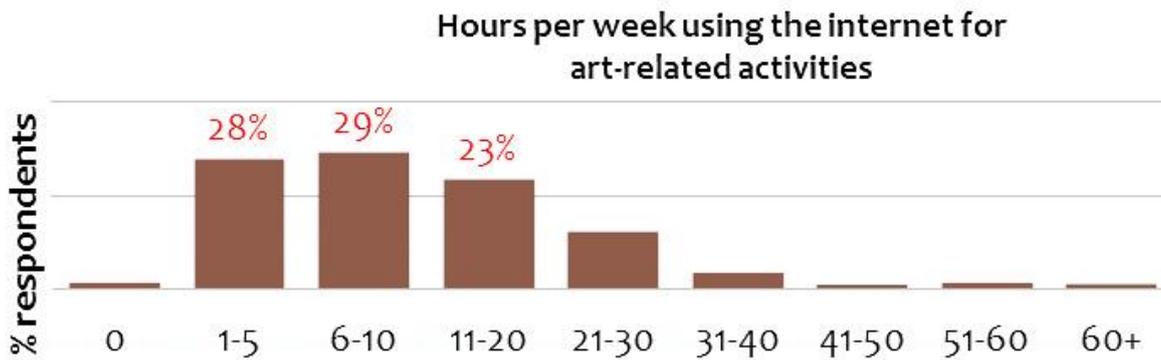
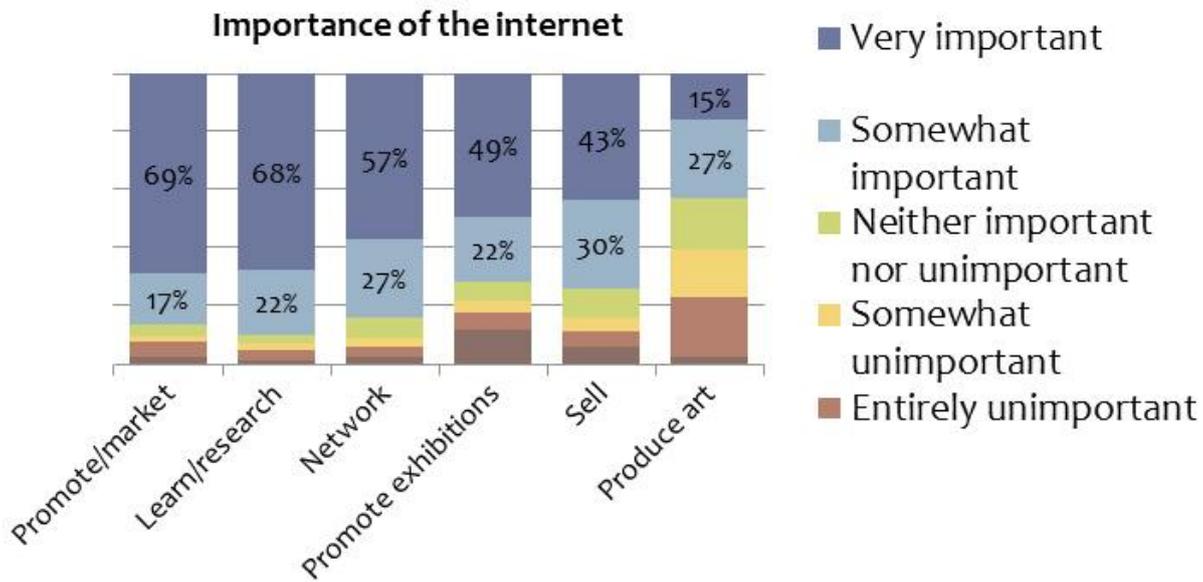
Acceptance and recognition

- *Recognition at national shows, awards.*
- *I don't think I will ever get tired of the good comments I receive. I'm addicted to checking the counter of how many people have clicked on my online gallery.*

Financial rewards

- *I love seeing the messages from PayPal telling me I have a sale. It's exciting.*
- *Making a living from my greatest passion.*

The Internet is valuable to these artists. 82% use it up to 20 hours per week for art-related tasks



Artists typically have websites, but find it difficult to understand and choose online marketing options

Percentage of artists with their own dedicated website (e.g. www.yourname.com)

Choices	Percentage	Count
Yes - it is relevant and up to date	 58.51%	550
Yes - but it is not relevant and up to date	 17.87%	168
No - but I would like to have one at some point in the future	 8.40%	79
No - but I will have one within 6 months (by September 2012)	 6.06%	57
No - but I will have one within 12 months (by March 2013)	 1.91%	18
No - I have no plans to have one in the future	 1.60%	15
Other (please specify)	 0.32%	3
Other	 5.32%	50
	Total	940
	<i>Unanswered</i>	<i>14</i>

Challenges in using the Internet to promote or sell art

Choices	Percentage	Count
Understanding and choosing the right Internet marketing options	 56.60%	540
Keeping on top of tasks to be done	 51.36%	490
Lack of time	 37.63%	359
Lack of technical knowledge	 35.64%	340
Preparing artwork for online display	 26.00%	248
Cost	 23.79%	227
Access to required equipment, hardware or software	 10.27%	98
Other		
	Total Entries	954
	<i>Unanswered</i>	<i>17</i>

More than 40% of readers have purchased information products online

The most popular topics of purchased materials are about making a living as an artist. Others include self-motivation and licensing.

They are *slightly less* likely to pay for online art instruction, but often buy books on these subjects.

Primary reasons for not purchasing online content include:

- Lack of finances
- Preference for books
- Confidence in own experience or skills
- Availability of free content
- Unaware of options

Content was purchased from more than 70 sources

A few websites stand out as clear leaders:

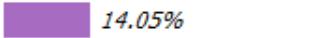
- artbizcoach.com
- artizencoaching.com
- smartist.com

Other multiple mentions include:

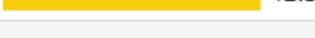
- artempowers.me
- chrisguillebeau.com
- ittybiz.com
- kellyraeroberts.com
- lisasonorabeam.com
- taragentile.com
- artlicensinginfo.com
- theabundantartist.com
- thethrivingartist.com
- xanadugallery.com

Marketing is the most significant challenge to earning an income as an artist regardless of channels used to sell their art

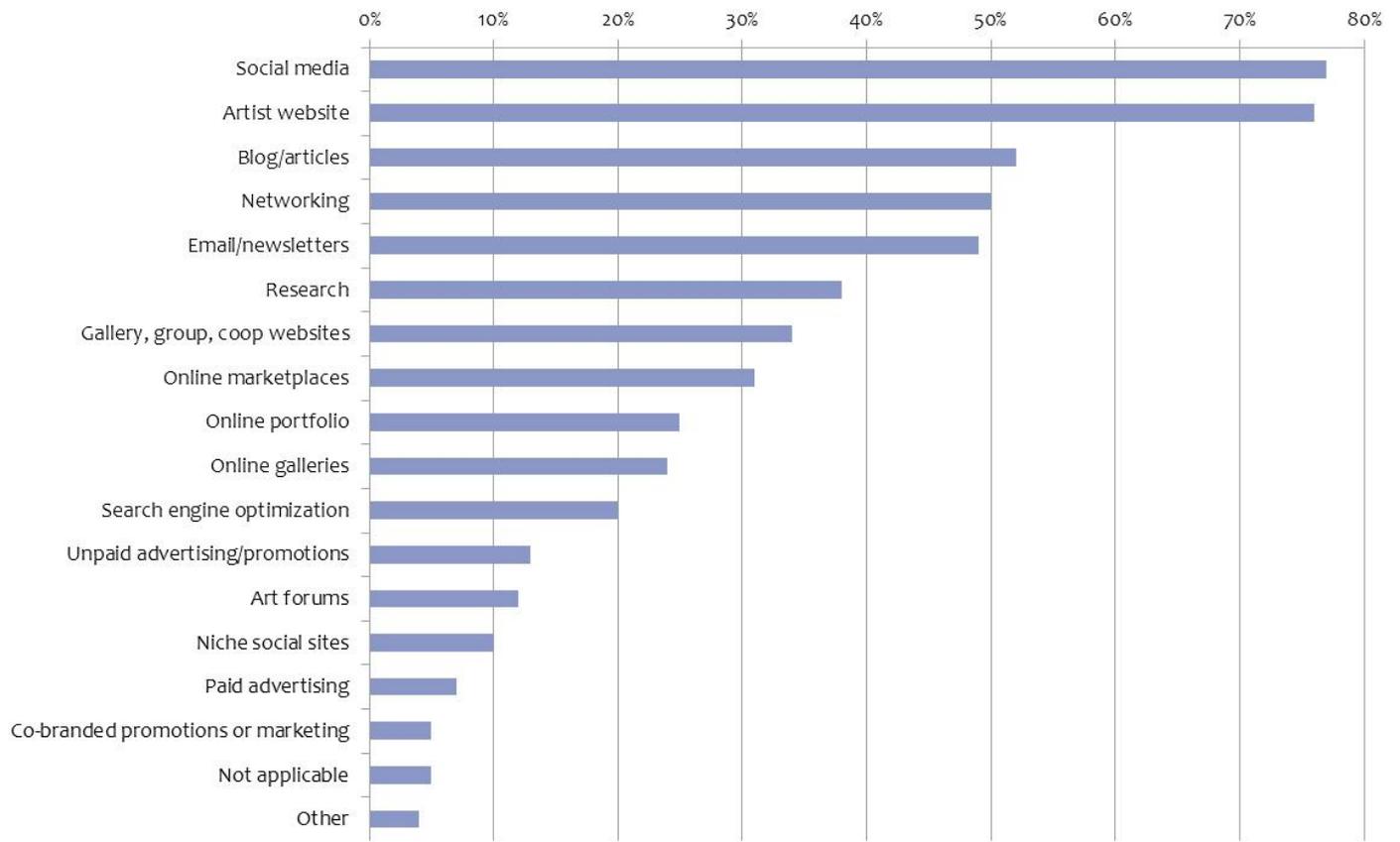
Percentage of respondents generating income from various channels

Choices	Percentage	Count
Commissions	 51.57%	492
Offline sales	 50.63%	483
Online sales	 46.96%	448
Gallery sales	 44.76%	427
Teaching / coaching	 35.64%	340
Freelance work	 32.49%	310
Other	 14.05%	134
Other		
Total Entries		954
<i>Unanswered</i>		<i>28</i>

Challenges to earning income as an artist

Choices	Percentage	Count
Promotion and/or marketing	 63.52%	606
Finances	 49.90%	476
Feelings of insecurity or doubt / lack of confidence	 48.22%	460
Time management	 47.17%	450
Setting prices, fees or rates	 42.35%	404
Business-related tasks such as accounting or taxes	 35.32%	337
Artistic skills and/or direction	 20.44%	195
Other		
Total Entries		954
<i>Unanswered</i>		<i>31</i>

Social media and websites are most used by artists to promote their art online. Paid advertising is one of the least



In 2011, over half generated less than 10% of personal income from art, but expect an increase in 2012

Percentage of income from art in 2011 and (expected) 2012

