

Teaching your child business with Etsy

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My daughter has a young entrepreneurial mind. So much so, that I find myself trying to find ways to help her with small ideas now so she can expand on them when she's older.

Since I'm not that versed in business, I go with what I know. Selling items on Etsy.

By trade, I am an internet marketer. I know that the future, and potential, of sales and stores is online. Etsy provides an easy to use sales platform at low cost.

This is a perfect way to help your child have an online store with not a lot of start up cost.

For those of you not familiar with Etsy.com, it is a huge online presence of crafters. You could spend an entire day going through all the amazing store fronts on there.

The fantastic part of etsy is that there is no hosting required, no knowledge of html needed and no domain name needs paid for!

It's relatively easy to get started. I will cover how to get started with Etsy, Ideas on items for your child to see and marketing the store.

Teaching Business

The beauty of this simple model of online store creation is just that, it's simple. There are simple principles involved with managing costs and expenses with your profit.

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Choosing your product

First things first, you need a product to make and sell. This could be as simple as drawing or painting a picture.

My daughter and I choose to make necklaces. They are relatively easy and cost effective to make. She can be super creative with them. We have a lot of fun making them.

If you need ideas, check out your local library's craft books. There are so many resources there you will have trouble narrowing it down.

Remember to keep the item simple.

Another place to get ideas is the Family Fun magazine. I personally love this magazine and subscribe to it myself. The magazine has a ton of kid friendly craft ideas. You can also visit their website online at <http://familyfun.go.com>.

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Signing up for Etsy.com

Now you will have to sign up for your child. Esty needs a credit or debit card on file to charge for the store fees.

This is a cost your child should be reimbursing to you as part of their cost category.

For a full list of Etsy features, go here <http://www.etsy.com/fees.php>

Choose a name for your store. Let your child choose. It should be something memorable. Try not to have hyphens or more than two or three words.

For more on what you can sell on Etsy, go here http://www.etsy.com/how_selling_works.php

Register as a new user.

Your user name will be your store name. For instance, ours is my daughter's first name and last name initial. This can not be changed. So pick carefully.

Etsy does need an email address. You can use your email or I set up a gmail account for my daughter. This way she can email her friends as well.

Either email address you use, you will have to click on a confirmation link after the initial sign up page.

Sign in and click on Sell on the menu bar.

Now you will have to enter in your information for the billing.

Once the credit card is verified, you will have to put in the accepted form of payment. I simply use my paypal address.

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Setting up the Store

Under Shop Setup on the left hand column you'll see all the options to set up the actual store front.

This is the fun part for your child to do.

Pick a Store Name.

If you have Photoshop, Microsoft paint or other graphics program you can create a custom banner. You can also scan in pictures or whatever you like to do. Your child can create their own lettering and scan it in for a personal effect.

Shipping Policies set up

I use regular United States Postal Service. To get a guesstimate on shipping costs, go to <http://www.usps.com>. You can put in weight (use a food scale) and some zip codes and you should have a good idea at the cost you are looking at.

Make sure you clearly define your policies. These are the terms you stand on with your customers. Especially when it comes to your return policy.

Are you willing to accept a return and why. Will you refund the full payment or partial? Will you pay for shipping for an item to be returned? And so on.

Creating Sections

You can have up to 10 sections in your shop. This is like categories. If you are making multiple items, then this is where to set that up. If you are only making one item, like necklaces, and still want to break things down further, consider colors, sizes and other variations your product may have.

Alchemy

Alchemy is basically custom requests. This is totally up to you and your child. If you are open to custom needs you may find a niche within your product. This could lead to unwanted extra work as well.

Adding an Item

Title

Use descriptive words, like the color and items used. This is how people find your store. They are searching for keywords, use all that you can.

Description

In the description box make sure to include measurements, sizes or weight. If a chain, for a necklace is included, let them know. What's it shipped in and so on.

Materials Used

Again, here is a place to put in keywords. What did you use to make your product such as beads, yarn, acrylic paints and so on.

Categorizing your item

Try to get as close to your item as possible with this and use more than one tag. These are more keywords to help people find your within the Etsy search feature.

Pricing

As a rule of thumb craft items should be priced at least 3 times the cost of supplies. (unless it's a painting or original piece).

Have your child list the cost of the supplies to make each item.

If they have a full package of something - what percentage of that package goes into each piece.

Remember, besides physical supplies, there are etsy fees and paypal fees if you use the paypal feature.

Your shipping fees, as well as packaging, should be covered in your shipping costs.

Tally up that amount.

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Now have them come up with the final price.

You may also want to see what your competitors on Etsy are selling their items for as well.

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Uploading Images

One very important aspect of having an online store is quality pictures.

Tips for taking pictures for online display:

Use a white poster board for under the item

Use natural day light for best lighting

Use the macro setting on you digital camera to get close up shots

Take multiple photos

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For help or additional information regarding images go to http://www.etsy.com/faq_selling.php#photos_uploading

Marketing Your Etsy Store

So now you have items made and uploaded to your store.

You are ready to start marketing.

If your child is making an item that can be worn, the best form of marketing is to wear it themselves to school and wherever else they may go.

Create some simple business cards with the shop name and web address on it. You can do this through sites like vista print or even on your home computer.

Send an email to your family and friends letting them know your child's new venture.

Tell your coworkers of your child's items. Perhaps they are looking for gifts for friends and family members.

If you are feeling very adventurous, if you know of other people that have etsy accounts or crafts to see consider teaming up with them and do a home show. Invite people to your home to see the crafts for sale. I really enjoy going to shows like this where you can meet the artist.

Whatever you choose, many business lessons can be learned through your child having a shop on Etsy.com.

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Some helpful forms online:

[Business Card Templates](#)

[Expense Report](#)

[Inventory List](#)

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Other Ideas:

Zazzle.com or Cafepress.com - create designs for t-shirts, mugs, magnets and pillows

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More resources for ideas:

[Start Your Own Home Based Candy Bouquet Business](#) Easy Step-by-step 259 Page Illustrated Guide For Making Candy Bouquets For Crafts Or Profit.

[Real Home Business Ideas For Moms](#) Santa Letter Business, Start A Recipe Or Craft Blog. Virtual Assistant (va And Admin Work) And Transcriptionist (Typing). Be A Wahm And Make Money Online!

[Little Kid Craft ideas](#)

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