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## **SELF-PROMOTION ON A SHOESTRING**

Promoting your artistic talents

### **What can you do right now to promote and expose your talents?**

Start Somewhere.

Publicly display work.

Pitch an idea to local bookstores, restaurants, nonprofit organizations and retail shops.

Your art doesn't have to be shown at a traditional venue

Mail invitation

Have promotion material about your art to hand out (same as mailer)

Send press releases to local media

Promote your work or an exhibit online through art-related discussion forums

Contact area arts organization

Put up flyers

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### **Creation of Promotional Material**

Concept/Message/Theme

Description/Text/Content - who you are, what do you have to offer—in 10 words or less

When you get an editor, director, gallery manager or other important contact on the phone, he or she may very well ask, "So what exactly is it that you do?"

How will you respond?

Designing or Hand creating – collage, photos, illustration

Make a template that's easy to duplicate, yet different and creative

Printing, Folding, Binding

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### **Distribution**

Mailing

Envelopes

Creating Mailing List

Send every 2 or 3 months

E-mail marketing-Newsletters, postcards

Create Flyers and distribute at local establishments

Portfolios – make it different. Stay away from the 'black carry portfolio'

Website- Banners

Video or Flash presentations

**PR and Networking - Develop ideas for events where your work can be seen**

What could you give away to help promote yourself?  
Handing out free samples is a great way to create a promotional buzz.  
A short excerpt from your novel? A poem?  
Inexpensive prints of some of your best artwork?  
Free public performances of your theatre troupe's current production?  
Think about it.

Write press releases and send to local newspapers

Socialize and network with local establishment owners (Funk and Standards) Build relationships to broaden your circle of influence (people interested in your work)

**\*\*Combine your efforts with other creative people. There is power in numbers. Instead of thinking about being in competition with other creative people, start brainstorming on ways you can combine your talents and interests.\*\***

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***Know where you want to go with your education/career.*** Artists need to learn to set goals and figure out a path to reach them. Is it more important that your work is in a museum or that you make \$50,000 a year? Only you can decide what you want or what works for you.

***Follow up with people who express an interest in your work.*** An artist should follow up with a phone call or handwritten note within one week. Send promo cards/pieces to your potentially interested buyers every 2 – 3 mos.

***Don't neglect your contact lists.*** Artists must learn to become comfortable socializing and meeting more people. Start slow. Add people who you think will really make a difference in helping you with your career. Teachers, friends, mentors, clergy and family members are a good place to start. Add to your mailing lists constantly. A good, qualified mailing list is your number one asset.

***Being an artist is hard work and it takes persistence and consistency to become successful.*** Apart from your art, it's a business, whether you're negotiating with a museum, gallery owner, art directors, editors or an investor. It takes persistence and consistency to become successful.

***Present yourself in a professional manner.*** Artists need to show they care about visual presentation. Visual and written materials and websites need to reflect the direction the artist is going. Verbal skills go a long way when trying to sell one's art and ideas. Artists should pay special attention to photo reproductions of their work since it must stand in for the originals.

## Resources

[www.Vistaprint.com](http://www.Vistaprint.com) - free business cards

[www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com) - very cheap stock photos

[www.ibiblio.org](http://www.ibiblio.org) - global public library and digital archive

[www.aiga.org](http://www.aiga.org) - professional art, design and illustration association

[www.kidon.com/media-link/us-newjersey.shtml](http://www.kidon.com/media-link/us-newjersey.shtml) NJ media + newspaper sources