



President's Corner

Last month I introduced you to some of David Pye's thinking about "Workmanship."

Specifically, the conclusion that "Handmade" can't really be defined in technical terms, and the differences between "workmanship of risk" and "workmanship of certainty."

As artists or craftsmen, workmanship of risk is where we are working. My reject pile for burning will bear this out.

Mr. Pye then writes about the "Quality of Workmanship." This is something he attempts to define in technical terms.

I have spent many hours looking at slides entered in the festival I used to direct. We would bring in "professionals" to grade these entries on a 1-5 scale. It became obvious that even these professionals were using their personal biases to make their evaluations.

We have, in our town, an artist that has gained a national reputation. She is often used as a judge at shows all over the country. A TV station in Florida made a documentary of her judging a show. They followed her around as she looked at the work, and then had her critique her selections.

It was apparent that she had no time for realistic painting. She would hardly give those pieces expressing that style a second look. In the end, this was even more evident as all her selections were of an abstract style.

Biased? Well, I'll let you decide. It was apparent that she wasn't using "quality" as her criteria. Well, maybe that's not a fair statement. It looked like she was only judging the quality of the style she preferred. I have to admit that I would have been guilty also, only in the reverse direction.

Mr. Pye attempts to look at quality in technical terms. He states that there are four things to think about when determining the quality of work. Good and bad. Precise and rough. He goes on to say that, "It is usual to equate 'good' with 'precise' and 'bad' with 'rough', to do so is false. Rough workmanship may be excellent, while precise may be bad." Grandma Moses's paintings immediately came to mind when I read that. I wonder what the first professional critic thought when first seeing her work?

He goes on to explain that, "Goodness or badness of workmanship is judged by two different criteria: soundness and comeliness. Soundness implies the ability to

transmit and resist forces as the designer intended; there must be no hidden flaws or weak places. Comeliness implies the ability to give that aesthetic expression which the designer intended, or add to it. Thus the quality of workmanship is judged in either case by reference to the designer's intention."

He points out that in many cases the craftsman/artist is also the designer, and in a later chapter he discusses the power of the designer to communicate his intentions - either to himself, or to others to excite.

He spends a lengthy chapter examining the intricacies of determining quality using the base laid out above, with many pictures of common things to exemplify his point. For example, a close up of the top of a beer can. Anyone that can discuss the quality of workmanship of the top of a can is a deep thinker indeed.

More next month.

John Croft

Croft_John@email.msn.com

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10 Ways To Make Your Web Site Work Harder For You

By Janet Attard

You bit the bullet. You set up a Web site because new prospects and existing customers kept asking you for your Web site address. Then, too, there were all those stories you kept hearing about small companies bringing in significant business through their Web sites. So, you paid a Web developer thousands of dollars to put your business on the Web, or spent countless hours of your own time learning enough about the Web and about html to put up the site yourself.

But your site's been up a couple of months and you haven't gotten a single sale you can trace to the Web site. What happened? What's wrong? What do you need to do to make your Web site start bringing you business? Here are several tips that will help you fine tune your site to make it a more effective marketing tool.

Make Sure Your Site Looks Professional

Take a hard, cold look at your site or ask a friend who will be brutally honest to look at the site. Does it look professional? Are the graphics professional-quality and clear? Are the fonts, font sizes, and font colors used in a consistent way?

Or does your site include design flaws like these that immediately mark it as an amateur production:

- Photos that are squeezed or stretched out of proportion
- Multiple elements on the page that are blinking, bouncing, scrolling or turning in circles
- Multiple styles of type used for headlines and body copy
- Colored background graphics or textures that make it difficult to read the type
- Background graphics that are inappropriate for the content of the site (eg.: bubbles on a site selling bookkeeping services)
- Text blocks that are out of alignment

First impressions matter on the Web, just as they do anywhere else. And, the first impression your site makes should be one of professionalism and appropriateness for the markets you serve.

Don't Use the Name of Your Company as the Web

page Title unless the name of your business includes a descriptive term that someone looking for your service/product would type into a search engine bar. The closer the text in the title bar matches the term a Web surfer is searching for, the higher your site will rank when the results of the search are displayed.

Don't Let Your Home Page Be a Flash Presentation

Flash is a technology that allows you to put animated presentations and demos on the Web. Flash presentations take time to load. Search engines don't pick them up, and they often annoy visitors who come to your site for product information or facts in a hurry, not entertainment.

Focus the Home Page & Product Pages on Your Customers' Interests, not Yours.

They're coming to your site to find out what you sell and how it will help them. The headline should make clear what you do and suggest a benefit.

Avoid a Cluttered Look

Don't try to squeeze dozens of images or product descriptions on a single page. The page will look cluttered and make it difficult for visitors to find the products or information they want. Instead, put small photos (thumbnails load fast) of a few of your best-sellers or most representative products on the home page, and then have links to your products.

Minimize Graphic Sizes to Make Sure Your Pages Load Quickly

Graphics make your pages look appealing and help illustrate what you sell. But don't let the size of graphics slow down your Web site. In most cases, images should be thumbnail size, no more than 1 to 1 1/2 inches in size. Have a "Click here to see a larger image" if necessary. That way big images that take a long time to display will only be displayed by people who really need to see a bigger picture.

Be Sure You've Included Important Supporting Information

To turn Web surfers into customers, you'll want to provide enough supporting information about what you sell to make them feel comfortable buying from you.

Continued on page 3



10 Ways.....continued from page 2.

Make Sure It's Easy to Place an Order

Imagine how annoyed you'd be if you ran into the supermarket to pick up a container of milk, and couldn't find the checkout counter? Web site visitors are no different. A good location is just below the text that describes any product or service.

Be Sure Your Contact Information is Easy to Find

Avoid losing sales by including your phone number, store location (if you have one) and phone number on every page, or make sure you have a Contact link on each page.

Share Links With Other Businesses in Your Community

The tips above will help you get found in search engines and help make your pages more appealing to potential customers. But even in the Internet age, business still has as much to do with who you know as what you do. So talk to business owners who sell different products and services than you do, but serve the same market. Help get each others' pages found by swapping links and giving each other referrals.

Janet's article had to be edited for space. The complete article can be read on her website www.businessknowhow.com under Feature Articles, then Internet Business Articles.

Janet Attard is the founder of the award-winning www.businessknowhow.com small business Web site and information resource. Janet is also the author of The Home Office And Small Business Answer Book and of Business Know-How: An Operational Guide For Home-Based and Micro-Sized Businesses with Limited Budgets.

SHOW REVIEWS FROM GUILD MEMBERS

1. Go to <http://www.cg-tinsmith.com/oacg/index.html>
2. Click on "Creative Ohio"
3. Click on Show Reviews
4. User Name=oacguser, Password=readoacg

GUILD PRESIDENT TO RETIRE

I have told the board that I am retiring at year end.

I have been President long past my allotted time. I have enjoyed every minute of it, however it's time to bring in new ideas. No one currently on the board desires to take over in my place. They have served the guild well for a long time, and want to move on also.

As you can see, the situation is very serious for the guild, however none of us will leave without making sure the guild is in good hands.

We want to add approximately ten to twelve new people to the board. We would like to get a good cross section from the state, say two from each corner of the state, and two from the center.

The plan is to get the new group together in time for several months of orientation with the existing board before year end. Consequently, your initial duties would be to observe, and get acquainted with the workings of the guild. Then this new group would elect officers from among themselves. Several from the existing board (my wife (Phyllis) and I included) would like to stay on in some sort of advisory capacity, however that would be up to the new board members.

One extremely important requirement is that you must have access to the Internet. All of our business is now conducted over the Internet, and if we are successful in getting some from each section of the state, the Internet would be the only way to communicate effectively.

While we try to have at least one face to face meeting each year that hasn't always been possible. Sometimes we go through spells where we communicate almost daily.

So, if you are interested please contact the office and give Linda your contact information. You will then be interviewed by phone to get some general information about you. You can also email me if you have any specific questions.

Then the board will review the list, and try to put together a good cross section, and we will go from there.

John Croft
Croft_John@email.msn.com



Classified

CLASSIFIED AD RATES: *Deadline is the 24th of the month. PLEASE NOTE we are on a 2 MONTH LAG. For example - ads submitted on June 24th will be printed in the August newsletter. 1x rate - \$7.50 for 25 words of less plus .40 per word over 25. 6x rate - \$5.00 plus .30. Copy must be typed or printed. OACG members are entitled to one free classified ad per year (MAXIMUM OF 25 WORDS). Email free ads to Creativeohio@aol.com Over 25 words subject to above rates. Name and address count as four (4) words, telephone as two (2) words. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ALL CLASSIFIED AD ORDERS. Mail copy and payment to classified ads, Creative Ohio, P O Box 3080, Lexington, OH 44904 or fax to 419-884-9641 and charge to your Visa/Mastercard.*

AUGUST 27-29. 5th Annual EASTON ART AFFAIR. Columbus, Ohio. Huff™s Promotions presents this Fine Art & Craft show in the beautiful Easton Town Center. The Easton Town Center features an upscale mix of more than 190 retail, entertainment, and dining establishments. Over 150 booths are available at this highly successful event. The Easton Art Affair offers a convenient set-up on clean, paved streets. Booth fee for a 10™ x 10™ space is \$250 and includes electric. Visit www.eastonartaffair.com, or call Huffâ™s Promotions: 330/493-4130.

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Stow, OH
Krpeters_2000@yahoo.com
Acrylic
Painting/drawing/printing
Fairy Wood Creatures

Brannon Enterprises
Albany, OH
Fabric-accessories
Nursery at Onion
Creek/Brannon Enterprises

Marcia Shute
Columbus, OH
m.k.shute@att.net
Wood
Shute™s Decoy Collection

Jerry Keller
Cleveland, OH
Jerry_keller@sbcglobal.net
Stained or Leaded
Etched/Sandblasted
Keller Art Glass

Jessica Van Epps
Ashtabula, OH
Sales@occasionallyyours crafts.com
Occasionally Yours Crafts

Don Pedicini
Hubbard, OH
Don@donpedicini.com
Watercolor



Treasures for the Tree 2004

\$200. AWARD TO EACH FIRST PLACE REGIONAL WINNER

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Treasures for the Tree project is to showcase the works of current Ohio artists and craftspeople by decorating the Governor's Residence official holiday tree with a maximum of 50 juried ornaments.

WHO MAY ENTER? All Ohio artists and craftspeople are welcome to submit one original holiday ornament art for the juried selection.

HOW CAN I ENTER? You may mail or drop off one entry to the appropriate regional center between October 1 - 15:

REGIONAL CENTERS:

Southeast:

The Dairy Barn
Contact: Lee Gray
8000 Dairy Lane
Athens, OH 45701
740-592-4981

Northeast:

The Art House
Contact: Sheryl Hoffman
3119 Denison Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44109
216-398-8556

Southwest:

Fitton Center for Creative Arts
Contact: Emily O'Dell
101 S. Monument Ave.
Hamilton, OH 45011
513-863-8873

Northwest:

Arts Council of
Lake Erie-West
Contact: Martin Nagy
1700 N. Reynolds Rd.
Toledo, OH 43615
419-531-2046

Central:

Ohio Designer Craftsman
Contact: Betty Talbott
1665 W. Fifth Ave.
Columbus, OH 43212
614-486-4402

ORNAMENT SPECIFICATIONS

- All work must be an original design and the work of the artist.
- All art and craft media are eligible.
- Ornament must be equipped to hang.
- Ornaments shall be between 3 - 5 inches in any one dimension.
- Ornaments shall not weigh more than 8 ounces.

CRITERIA

- Entries will be juried in five regional areas in October 2004.
- Entries will be accepted between October 1 and October 15.
- **Entries will:**
 - be packaged to ship
 - be tagged with a 3 x 5 card listing name, address and phone number of artist
 - be accompanied with an official entry blank
- Selected ornaments will be added to the Governor's Residence official permanent holiday decoration collection.
- Non-selected ornaments will be available for pick-up from the regional center at which they were dropped off.
- Official winners will be notified with a letter from Mrs. Taft in early November and invited to attend a reception at the Governor's Residence to celebrate Ohio's artists.

ENTRY BLANK (TO ACCOMPANY ENTRY WHEN SUBMITTED) PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

Name _____ E-Mail _____

Street _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ County _____

Medium _____ Region _____

How did you learn about this? _____

Title of work _____ Local Media contact _____

I certify that my entry is my original and agree not to publicize any winning entry until I receive a letter from Mrs. Taft.

Signature _____ Date _____

Creative Ohio

P.O. BOX 3080, LEXINGTON, OH 44904

www.cg-tinsmith.com/oacg/index.html

Web Mistress - Marcia Giordano

Linda Rebman, Office Manager

OHIOACG@aol.com

Guild Office Hours: M-W-F 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

419-884-9622 FAX: 419-884-9641

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John Croft, President,

Croft_John@email.msn.com

Diane Elliott Bruckner, Advisor

661-252-8416, dianebruckner@aol.com

Treasurer, to be appointed

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Diane Elliott Bruckner, Editor, CreativeOhio@aol.com

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Phyllis Croft, 740-432-3847, 75214.1242@compuserve.com

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Marcia Giordano, 330-336-7270, tinsnip@cg-tinsmith.com

Marje Shook, 440-298-1428, mordiford@hotmail.com

SCHOLARSHIPS

Don Earnest, 937-667-2871, EarnieDoandRo@aol.com

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