



START & RUN AN ART TEACHING BUSINESS

Tanya Freedman

Self-Counsel Press
(a division of)
International Self-Counsel Press Ltd.
USA Canada



CONTENTS

FOREWORD	xiv
INTRODUCTION	xvii
1 GETTING YOUR BUSINESS STARTED	1
The Conception of Jolly Good Art	1
Creative Visualization	2
Setting goals	4
Identifying Your Experiences and Transferable Skills	4
How you can turn your creativity into a business	6
Look, Listen, and Learn	7
Apprenticing or teaching, and continuing your education	10
Learning from children	10
Contacting other artists and entrepreneurs	10

Home-Based Studio Versus Rented Studio	11
Home-based studio	11
Renting studio space	12
Zoning	14
Consider your neighbors	14
Your Business Name	16
Conducting a business name search	16
Searching the Internet for your proposed business name	18
Making Your Business Legal	18
Incorporation and other business structures	18
Sales tax registration	19
Liability insurance	19
Police check	20
2 BECOMING A MULTIFACETED ENTREPRENEUR	21
Characteristics of an Entrepreneur	21
Your Strengths and Challenges at the Beginning	27
Personal Skills Development	27
Public speaking	30
Shyness and fear of rejection	32
Learning to delegate	32
Learning Styles	35
Other Things to Consider	39
3 ORGANIZING YOUR CLASSES	45
Finding Inspiration for Your Services	45
Visit the competition	45
Arts and crafts stores	47
Take an Artist's Day	47
Other areas of inspiration	47
Number of Students per Class and Student/Teacher Ratio	48
Dividing Your Classes by Age	48
Younger age groups	48
Classes for teenagers and pre-teens	49

Overlapping ages	50
Adult classes	50
Portfolio Preparation	52
Private Art Classes	52
Parent-and-Child Classes	52
Teaching Students with Special Needs	53
Cerebral palsy	54
Autism	54
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	55
Art therapy	56
Seasonal Programs	56
Projects for seasonal camps	58
Food for summer campers	61
Special Occasion Parties	64
Birthdays	64
4 CLASS PRICES AND MATERIALS	67
Pricing	67
Calculating your price	68
Captive product pricing	69
Offering discounts	69
Last word on pricing: Intangible value	69
Materials and Supplies	69
Costs	70
Materials for classes	70
Canvas	71
Paper	71
Materials for special effects projects	71
5 YOUR BUSINESS PLAN	73
What Is a Business Plan?	73
Types of Business Plans	74
Business Plan Layout	75
Summary	75

Your history	75
Description of your business	76
Operations and management team	76
Market analysis and research	76
Technological strategy	76
Forecasts and projections	76
Reality Check	78
Revisiting Your Business Plan	78
Second draft of the business plan	80
Bookkeeping	80
What is bookkeeping and why keep up-to-date records?	80
Bookkeeping: How simple or how complicated?	86
Personal cash flow chart	86
6 IDENTIFYING AND TARGETING YOUR MARKET	89
What Is Marketing?	89
Direct and indirect marketing	90
The Marketing Mix	90
Place: Location of Your Target Audience	91
People: Customers, Competition, and Networking	92
Customers	94
Competition	95
Networking	97
Promotion: Advertising, Brand Awareness, and Reputation	99
Advertising	100
Brand awareness	107
Marketing Plan	109
7 CREATING YOUR WEB PRESENCE	111
The Importance of Being on the Web	111
Important Information to Include on Your Website	113
Including your prices and registration forms on the website	115
Should You Design Your Website?	115

Should You Hire a Professional Web Designer?	116
An Example of a Great Website	117
8 INTERVIEWING AND HIRING EMPLOYEES	119
Hiring Suitable Staff	119
Assistants	120
Teachers	120
Training Your Staff	122
Payment	122
Staff Incentives	122
Interviewing	123
Employee Contract	125
Safety for Employees and Students	126
9 NETWORKING	127
What Is Networking?	127
Why Network?	128
Ask for What You Need	128
Networking Is a Two-Way Street	129
Volunteering	130
Reputation	131
Finding or Creating a Networking Group	131
Combining Forces	133
Creating a contract for partnership programs and events	133
Mentoring and Coaching	135
Benefits of hiring a mentor or coach	136
Finding a coach or mentor	137
You as a mentor and coach	137
10 GET ORGANIZED AND STAY ORGANIZED	141
Getting Organized	141
Organizational styles	142
The bigger picture	144

Finding the right system	144
Time Management	145
Organize, prioritize, and delegate	146
Get control of your time	147
Creating Good Habits	149
Organizing your files	149
Action lists	151
Calendars and program plans	153
Electronic management	153
Prioritize Work and Play	155
Schedule leisure time	156
Schedule family time	156
Risks and Signs of Burnout	157
11 GROWING YOUR BUSINESS	159
Branching into the Next Phase of Your Business	159
Organize artist's retreats	159
Create additional programs	160
Sell art supplies	160
Collaborate	160
Franchise	161
How Fast Should You Expand Your Business?	161
APPENDIX	165

EXERCISES

1	Creative Visualization	3
2	Setting Your Goals	5
3	Conceptualizing Your Art-Related Business	8
4	Are You Ready to Begin?	9
5	Where Will You Start Your Business?	15
6	Choosing Your Business Name	17
7	Are You an Entrepreneur?	24
8	Personality Strengths and Challenges	28
9	Shyness and Assertiveness	33
10	Learning Styles	36
11	Do You Have What It Takes?	41
12	Researching Your Competition	46
13	Seasonal Programs	57
14	Visualize Your Action Plan	85
15	Targeting Your Market	93
16	Know Your Clients	96
17	Your Competitors	98
18	Researching and Writing Articles	103
19	Preparing for a Website	118
20	Finding a Networking Group	134
21	Should You Hire a Coach or Mentor?	138
22	Time Management	150

FORMS

1	Release Form for Field Trips	51
2	Registration Form	59
3	Summer Camp Confirmation	60
4	Seasonal Camp Survey	62
5	Birthday Party Planning	65
6	Personal Cash Flow Statement	87
7	Interview Questions	124
8	Time Log	148

SAMPLES

1	SCOT Analysis for Jolly Good Art Home-Based Studio	13
2	Author's Personality SCOT Analysis	30
3	Projected Income and Operating Costs	79
4	SCOT Analysis: Revisiting Jolly Good Art Business Plan	81
5	Start-Up Action Plan A	82
6	Start-Up Action Plan B	84
7	Research in the Conception Stages	92
8	Letter Seeking Permission to Distribute Art Leaflets in Schools	108
9	Assistant's Job Description	121
10	Categorizing My Tasks	147
11	Jolly Good Art Filing System	152
12	A Typical Action List	154



1

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS STARTED

I don't care how much power, brilliance, or energy you have, if you don't harness it and focus it on a specific target and hold it there you're never going to accomplish as much as your ability warrants.

— ZIG ZIGLAR

The Conception of Jolly Good Art

My first business involved importing English antique furniture. Because of my love of antiques, and my knowledge of good quality furniture, it seemed a natural path to follow. I enjoyed what I did, but after three years of frequent traveling, my family obligations overtook the burgeoning success of my company.

I took a long, hard look at what it was I really wanted to do that would not end up compromising my marriage or motherhood. My husband and I analyzed my options. What did I really want to do and what could I do that wouldn't necessitate traveling? The

answer was art. I loved art, and an opportunity, by way of invitation to demonstrate my watercolor skills at a local ladies' social group, planted the seed of the Jolly Good Art Studio and School.

I wrote down a tentative plan for what I needed to do to earn a minimum monthly income. Rather than pressuring myself to start big, which would have made me feel overwhelmed, I decided to ease my way into the new venture. I researched and talked to people who I thought could give me advice. I talked to my friends with entrepreneurial backgrounds and the parents of my daughter's friends. I contacted other artists and anyone I respected to give me their honest opinions.

I began with small classes of four or five students, in after-school programs in my own home-based studio in my basement as well as off-site. I calculated the earnings potential and seriously considered what I wanted to achieve. Would it be worth it?

My mathematical equation was a basic one:

$$\text{Number of children} \times \text{fee per child per month} - \text{costs (e.g., supplies, rent, and eventually staff)} = \text{monthly profit}$$

Within a few months, using my marketing and networking skills, I took my home business to the next level. Registering my sole-ownership name of Jolly Good Art and insuring for maximum liability, I started with small classes for children and for stay-at-home or self-employed parents.

Before long I was also running various after-school (and after-work) and weekend programs in my home studio. The classes included painting and glass painting workshops for adults and weekend art classes for children of different ages and experience levels.

During that time, a parent of one of my students had asked me if I offered summer camp programs. It was March so I thought, "Why not?" It seemed right to expand my business. I took the initiative to plan and prepare a unique summer camp program. I had plenty of committed campers interested in joining and could therefore cover the costs of additional staff.

The last day of camp coincided with a seven-year-old boy's birthday. With a little extra planning, having selected special balloons and games to celebrate the official

end of summer as well as his special day, the celebration was a success, and I was complimented for being able to organize such an event. Everyone could see I was a skilled professional. Could I organize another birthday party for the younger sibling, too? From there I added custom birthday parties to my menu of programs.

Creative Visualization

If you are ready to conceptualize your business from an exciting idea to a living, breathing enterprise, start by using creative visualization. Some call it affirmation, while others see it as becoming attuned to the collective unconscious in which we are all connected to one another somehow.

Although I did not realize that what I was doing was called "creative visualization," I found this exercise to be of immense benefit while I was starting my business. It gave me the certainty and courage to forge ahead.

Going hand in hand with goal setting, Exercise 1 will assist you in forming a clearer picture of your future. (All the exercises in this book are also contained in the CD-ROM accompanying this book.) Beyond writing down goals that may at the beginning be uncertain, creative visualization can help you see deeply into your new future.

You may be skeptical and view this as a waste of your precious time, or you may see this as a chance for meditation. Think of it as creating your ideal painting on a virgin canvas, as opening yourself up to a realm of new possibilities. This exercise should only take you half an hour to an hour. At the price of some of your time and effort you may gain peace of mind and fire yourself up

EXERCISE 1

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

For this exercise you will need a quiet place, a pen or pencil, and paper.

Go somewhere where there will be no interruptions or distractions (e.g., music or background sounds) for half an hour to an hour. Make sure your spot is away from people. For example, you could take a bubble bath or go to your garden or bedroom. You might also want to turn off your telephone ringer.

Now close your eyes and completely relax. Think about every part of your body relaxing from head to toe. It may take a while (e.g., 15 to 20 minutes) before you can totally relax and find the silence within you. Be patient and pay attention to your breathing, and the calming of your body and mind.

Now let your imagination soar and allow visions to enter your psyche. Imagine where you would like to be in your business in a few months, one year, three years, and five years. Stay with it, keeping your thoughts flowing in a constant positive direction. Block out any negative or critical thoughts. Also ignore anything negative or critical that other people may have said to you about your plans and ideas.

Reach for your pen and paper only when you are absolutely ready to leave the futurist world without losing the amazing images. Capture the whole dream in words — all the ideas, no matter how far-fetched they may seem — and write a date on the document. No one else needs to see the notes about your creative visualization exercise, so be as creative and wacky as your mind will allow.

You can choose to file this document away and revisit it in a few years or reread it often. Doing this exercise and saving it in writing will serve a greater purpose than you may first imagine.

to achieve those dreams. Behind every successful business, there's a tenacious entrepreneur who did not quit or give up on his or her vision.

Setting goals

In order to get to the place you strive toward, you have to set realistic and achievable goals and write them down. This makes them real and tangible. Your action list should include only those actions that take you a step closer to your goals. Eliminate everything else. Stay on track and avoid being diverted from your goals, being distracted, or making excuses.

I experienced a great sense of accomplishment when I came across a list of goals I had prepared in my business school years. Despite the fact that some of the goals had seemed unattainable at the time, I was proud to see that I had achieved many of them. I was able to check off the following from my list:

- Found and run a successful art school
- Exhibit and sell my artwork internationally
- Be published in fiction and nonfiction
- Write how-to books
- Promote and teach business techniques
- Mentor others
- Participate in professional speaking forums and seminars
- Run workshops
- Interview people and be interviewed

Even though I had not referred to the long-forgotten list in years, the actual process of writing down the goals had engraved them into my psyche. But like everything in life, my list has evolved and has factored in the reality of juggling family and business life.

Years ago my ideal goals may have seemed unachievable, but within the first year or two of founding Jolly Good Art I was able to achieve many of them. So I know that far-fetched dreams can come true, but my current list of goals does take into account the reality of my life, priorities, and choices.

When you are setting your goals, include enough details to show you a clear way forward, who your market and target audience is, and a reasonable time line. Exercise 2 will help you with this.

Identifying Your Experiences and Transferable Skills

"If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail." This adage stresses the importance of laying the strongest foundation possible for your business idea so it can develop into reality and succeed despite all the odds.

Conceptualizing, conducting market research, and preparing a business plan go together. You are preparing a canvas or a clod of clay. You are projecting a vision in your mind, and planning what you want to achieve in the short and long term. An artist may start with a small idea that grows into a series of artwork, or an inspired sketch that results in a wall-to-wall masterpiece. You are cutting your teeth, making the most

EXERCISE 2

SETTING YOUR GOALS

No matter how unrealistic or out of reach your goals may appear, write down as many goals as you would like to achieve over the next few weeks, months, and years. Be specific and set realistic dates for completing each projected task.

Date: _____

Goal	Subtasks	Time frame/Projected completion date
1.	a)	
	b)	
	c)	
2.	a)	
	b)	
	c)	
3.	a)	
	b)	
	c)	

List all your responsibilities — including financial, personal, and family obligations — that may influence your business plans.

of your strengths and transferable skills, and feeling your way toward the start line. Be a sponge: Get exposed to different concepts and become inspired by those you admire. Be flexible and prepare to go with the flow of where your creativity and new ideas lead you.

Some people gain experience in their desired field of art before starting up their own art business. Some buy a business or franchise, or hatch a brand new business. Some either achieve moderate or fantastic success — or fold within the first three to five years. They may not have planned thoroughly, utilized all of their strengths, or enlisted expert help during the crucial start-up phase.

At the conception phase of Jolly Good Art I took the time to list my experiences and transferable skills. I was also determined to concentrate on what I absolutely loved to do.

Identifying your experiences and transferable skills is an important step to finding the area of business that you will excel at. For example, my friend Elizabeth began her business by teaching her children how to sew. Eventually parents of her children's friends were asking Elizabeth to teach their children. She now has six stores and is sponsored by a major sewing machine company.

What can you glean from your past and present? Which passions burn brightly? If you picked up this book and are anything like me, you probably get lots of inspiration from anything connected with art, such as TV programs, instructional videos, and books about the art masters. This is a significant clue that you might consider becoming an art teacher.

How you can turn your creativity into a business

Self-expression through visual art and through the written word are my parallel loves. My own art career started when I opened myself up to new and uncharted territories. A local minister's wife loved my custom thank-you card, which I had produced from one of my original paintings, and she asked if I taught art. Could I do a watercolor demonstration at the next ladies' social? Absolutely. I prepared for it, got all the materials ready, and did my best. It was well received; I even inspired some of the ladies to return to their long-forgotten interest in creating art. (One of these ladies now sells her artwork nationally!)

Next, I was asked if I could run classes at the local community center. Through these community contacts my database of interested clients grew larger. That is how simply it started for me. Word spread, and my students' siblings, friends, and school classmates wanted to create their own artwork to be proud of. Within seven months of registering my business I seriously contemplated expanding to an even larger studio.

Being open to opportunities and suggestions, and trying something new outside of your comfort zone may pay dividends. Pay close attention to the situations in which you thrive. If you find yourself constantly returning to your passion for art or other creative activities connected to it, and this passion feeds your soul despite its lack of feasible profitability, then pay attention to what your subconscious is telling you. Maybe you have been told repeatedly to pursue a "real" career — to be professional and

practical — when you spend hours of your time immersed in your art, experimenting and creating pieces everyone adores. Take serious stock of how you can combine your passion for art with the reality of earning a living. Find opportunities to start using your creativity to bring in money.

Exercise 3 will help you explore what you want to do creatively with your business.

Do you feel that you are not quite ready yet? You may think that you have too many responsibilities that prevent you from starting the ball rolling. Do not let your dreams wither, however. You can still plan for the medium and long term at your own manageable pace. This will give you time to absorb new ideas and help you elevate your comfort level while plodding through life's realities and earning a living at your regular day job. Your goals are in your hands. You have to be prepared to take great strides and climb up that rocky mountain of business success. No one will make it happen for you. Whether or not you achieve your goals depends on the extent to which you are willing to —

- delve into your psyche;
- capitalize on your strengths;
- sacrifice spare time — which means less time for watching TV, engaging in hobbies, and having a busy social life, especially at the beginning;
- learn to balance family and business time;
- face your shortfalls and improve on them;
- learn from others around you; and
- believe in yourself.

Exercise 4 will take you to the next stage of turning your vision into reality. Your answers to this exercise will help you gain insight into some important areas you will need to consider when conducting market research and creating your business plan, which is discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

Having completed Exercise 4, where do your discoveries lead you? Are you hesitant, ready to forge ahead, or actually practicing some of these steps?

If you are hesitant and not quite sure where and how to start, consider doing business on a small scale. Combine forces with another business or start working with a partner. By reading this book you are on your way to starting your business. Pay attention to the exercises and advice in this book, talk to respected advisers, and network. Clarify in your mind the best place for starting your business.

Maybe you are ready and you know you have a good idea and great potential. As long as you have done your preliminary homework and are not going to start your business by trial and error with a “hope for the best” attitude, then go for it. If you have any reservations, however, take some more time to prepare yourself.

Look, Listen, and Learn

Sometimes eager entrepreneurs may skip seemingly unimportant steps in the planning, marketing, and strategizing stages at the start. Mistakes are inevitable, but if we are equipped with the right knowledge, and we prioritize and remind ourselves to be patient, we are halfway down the road to success.

EXERCISE 3

CONCEPTUALIZING YOUR ART-RELATED BUSINESS

1. Can you visualize yourself in your own art-related business? If so, describe your vision. If not, list the hurdles you see.
2. Describe the ideal situation in which you would conduct your business.
3. What would you ideally like to spend all your time doing if you didn't have money, time, or other constraints in your life right now?
4. What have you got to lose by trying the above-mentioned activity?
5. In your artwork, do you love a particular medium or do you like to explore all sorts of media (glass or silk painting, mosaics, clay, scrapbooking, etc.)? Are there any other lesser-known materials you enjoy working with?
6. What would you ideally like to do with your particular artistic talents? Would you combine them with other skills or expertise? (Think outside the box. Be as quirky and free-spirited as you possibly can.)
7. Can you foresee yourself doing this activity as a business venture in the future?

Research how others have gone about starting up their art schools and art businesses. Conceptualize your ideas and then start to achieve your goals by taking action.

EXERCISE 4**ARE YOU READY TO BEGIN?**

1. Will you be a sole teacher who starts out by teaching small classes?
2. Will you employ the services of specialist teachers? When? How many?
3. Are you prepared to supervise your staff and assistants?
4. What are your personal time constraints? (For example, if you are a parent of small children, what contingency plans do you have for looking after your own children in the case of an emergency?)
5. How much money will you need to start your business?
6. How big do you want your business to be when you start?
7. When do you plan to expand the business?
8. Where do you plan to start the business (for example, in a studio outside your home or in your own residence)?

You may find that reading this book will prepare you for or confirm your ideas about your impending venture. I cannot overstate the importance of doing the preliminary homework and, if necessary, delaying your dream by a few months or even a year or two. Always keep your long-term success in focus. You are building a stronger foothold for your business to flourish and last. Adopt the sure and methodical approach of the tortoise over that of the erratic and risky hare. The latter may bring fast apparent success, but quickly leads to burnout.

No one but you can do the work of researching into what is right for you — not even your spouse or partner, unless you plan to work together. You know yourself better than anyone else, and I hope this book can help you gain more insight into starting and running a successful art teaching business, whether you plan to do it alone or with the support of others.

Apprenticing or teaching, and continuing your education

Before starting out on your own, and depending on your confidence and experience, you may want to become a part-time or full-time apprentice or take a teaching job. There is no better way to learn the ropes than by witnessing trade secrets while working alongside other teachers or an art school owner.

You will become aware of how much work goes into all the programs and the smooth workings of a school, and the many hats an owner has to wear. You will see what types of pitfalls could be in store for you in your own enterprise later on. It may prove to be an invaluable experience.

And of course, you can go back to school yourself, as a student, if only to take a short course or workshop. Your local colleges, business resource centers, and libraries can provide you with a list of programs, whether they are business related, or related to theories of teaching and instruction. This is also a great way to form a social network.

Learning from children

I have come up with the best ideas for projects, study subjects, and programs with the help of my young daughter. She taught me to listen intently to my students. As a teacher, you must encourage the vibrant freshness children possess and help them capture it in their art. Children are naturally curious; have them share and explore. Listen to them and learn from them. You may find that they invigorate your own creative spirit.

Contacting other artists and entrepreneurs

Another way for you to connect is to contact artists and creative entrepreneurs to find out how they began. Research the backgrounds of artists and creative entrepreneurs that you respect most. Find out how they went about making and shaping their careers. If possible, contact some of these artists or entrepreneurs directly and ask them for advice. Create a list of questions to ask these people before you talk to them.

The best way to initiate contact is to email them your questions. Email eliminates geographical distance and time differences and gives people time to consider your questions, which means that they may answer the questions more thoroughly

when you finally talk to them on the telephone.

Ask open-ended questions that will encourage your interviewees to trust you. If they are in a different state, province, or country, they probably won't see you as competition and you may be able to ask specific questions about their pricing and business strategies. Gauge their comfort level from the length and content of their replies.

Remember to always be professional. For example, if you ask for a certain amount of their time, keep your promise, and arrange another meeting or phone conversation if you need more time. After your interview is completed, thank them for their time with a personal note or by email. Keep the channels open and friendly. By the same token, remember to be there for other people who may approach you for your expertise later in your career.

Home-Based Studio Versus Rented Studio

You will need to decide if your home is big enough for a home-based studio. If it is not, then you will need to consider renting space for a studio.

Home-based studio

Using an area of your home (or maybe a building on your property) for your studio can have many benefits. For starters, you are in control of your own environment and have no one but your family to answer to about what goes on in your studio; for example, your students can smash tiles to make mosaics and not worry about being too loud when working on their art projects.

Another benefit is that you can have as few classes as you like without having to worry about the studio earning its keep, increasing rental costs, and other unexpected expenses, especially in the beginning. (The period it takes to build up a client base and awareness and trust from your neighborhood and community can be between one to three years, depending on the activity and profile of the school and the effectiveness of your marketing strategy.)

Your hours can be flexible according to your schedule or other responsibilities, such as a part-time job in the mornings. You could concentrate on teaching art classes in the afternoons, evenings, and weekends. On the other hand, if you rented a studio space, your hours might possibly be dictated by the owner of the building or the district in which your studio is located.

The best part of having a home-based studio is that you will not have to commute to work nor will you have the additional expenses of gas and car maintenance.

However, before you leap into transforming a space in your home into a studio, you should consider the disadvantages. First of all be aware that having a studio in your home gives it a "hobby" and "passion for the arts" feel, rather than seeming like a dynamic business that is constantly looking for more students. As well, some people find it harder to stop working for the day when their work is in their own home. It becomes tricky to set boundaries between personal life and business life. Your family may become upset when dinner or family time is interrupted by phone calls or when your attempt to accommodate your students' busy schedules for classes and other programs interferes. It may also cause problems when

students show up unexpectedly to discuss a project or drop off a late assignment.

You must also consider the fact that your neighbors may not like having their parking spaces used, even for quick pickups and drop-offs of students. In fact, zoning restrictions may not allow you to have a home-based business (discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

You may also need to do some renovations to provide for adequate ventilation and lighting. This could be costly, but you may decide that the costs for redesigning a space are cheaper than renting.

When making any major decisions about my business I start by creating a “SCOT analysis” to understand all my strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats. Sample 1 is an example of the SCOT analysis I created as I contemplated offering art classes from my first home studio.

Renting studio space

You may feel that your home is not a suitable place for your business because of space constraints or family concerns. If this is the case, you will need to look for a suitable place outside of your home, in an area that will encourage clients to come to your business.

There are benefits to leasing a space for your studio and the location can be one of them. You may be able to acquire a space in an area that attracts lots of students from surrounding schools and colleges, or a busy retail area that attracts walk-by traffic. There may also be more parking spaces for your clients.

Another great advantage to renting is that when you leave your studio at the end of the day, your workday is done. No one will interrupt you at home in regard to business, because your business telephone number and address are different from that of your home. And this business address can go on all of your promotional material, such as your business cards and website. With a home-based studio, you wouldn't freely give out your personal contact information, as you would want to protect your family and neighbors from strangers making surprise visits to your home to see the studio.

The studio may already be set up with appropriate lighting and ventilation for your business, and you may have fewer costs when it comes to designing the space than you would in a home-based studio. However, you will have to consider whether or not your landlord will allow you to make any significant improvements to the studio; for example, painting the walls or adding appropriate flooring. You may also have restrictions in your lease regarding the size and placement of your advertising signs. (Always seek legal advice before signing a lease agreement.)

There are other disadvantages to renting. Safety can be an issue for you and your clients. Is the area safe at night? Are the parking area and bus stop well lit?

You will need to consider transportation as well. Since many of your students may be younger and unable drive, you will need to make sure there is a bus stop close by.

The biggest disadvantage of a rented studio is the costs, which include rent and

SAMPLE 1
SCOT ANALYSIS FOR JOLLY GOOD ART HOME-BASED STUDIO

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In control of hours; able to work part-time or for as many hours as I choose • Home for my daughter after school • Neighborhood is a great location next to a reputable large school and a family-oriented population • No pressure to pay rent and extra expenses associated with renting retail space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbors may not like added traffic outside my home — check zoning bylaws and parking regulations • Lack of privacy: clients in home space even if it is in the basement; phone rings at all hours seven days a week • No address on promotional leaflets and on website, giving only the phone number and geographical area of where classes are being offered • Not being taken as seriously as the established competition with their business premises, campsites, and galleries in more prominent commercial locations • Family sees me but cannot have the quality of attention they are used to
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because of money saved by not paying rent and other retail site expenses, more profits can be injected toward improved programs, more art materials, and additional staff, which in turn will increase the number of programs offered • Design or upgrade website to better market the business and bring brand awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning restrictions may not allow services or expansion • Longevity; physical and Internet presence — I must keep up with trends and needs to stay on community's mind: regular art classes, seasonal programs, and unique parties • Difficulty leaving work issues behind outside of working hours

utilities. You may also have to lock into a year's lease or longer, which can be a problem when you are just starting out and you realize after a few months that you are not making enough money to pay for the space.

Complete Exercise 5, which will help you decide where you want to start your business.

Zoning

Various rules apply in the different regions of the US and Canada when it comes to home-based businesses. Before going further and doing any in-depth research for the proposed business, check the zoning by-laws with your municipality. In some areas you may not be allowed to undertake a home-based business at all — especially in a congested city or neighborhood in which parking is a significant issue. Do not tempt trouble by overlooking this important point at the beginning. Stay on the safe side to eliminate unnecessary stress.

Because zoning laws differ from city to city, contact your local municipality for exact rules and restrictions for your type of business. If you are renting a studio, get the relevant information and find out about regulations before committing to or signing a contract. Telephone or go to your local municipal office or visit its website for specific zoning laws.

If, in the beginning, you have not taken proper measures and researched the potential area, and if a neighbor complains to the authorities, you may incur fines and be closed down. Do not take any chances; confirm everything at the outset. Also confirm

matters regarding signage on or around your rented space. Make sure you have up-to-date details from your zoning and regulations office about the types of signs you are allowed to display for promotion.

Contact your local city hall or your county clerk for the specific requirements regarding your business, as well as your local Chamber of Commerce for any legal advice on permits or licenses.

Consider your neighbors

If you respect your neighbors, then they should respect you, and you should feel confident in letting them know what your services are, and even what these services can do for their children and the community. I did not encounter any problems with my neighbors. I was lucky to have a large driveway in which small groups of students could be dropped off and picked up by their parents.

Make the outside of your home as appealing as you can: Trim the lawn and get rid of weeds in your garden beds. For a minimum amount of money and effort I planted annuals in pots, which brightened up the pathways and made the front and foyer of my home look inviting. First impressions count to your clients, and your neighbors will appreciate your effort as well.

With a rented studio you must consider what retail neighbors you have. You don't want to set up your business in an area with lots of bars or big warehouses. You want to be in an area in which your clients and your retail neighbors will respect your business.

EXERCISE 5**WHERE WILL YOU START YOUR BUSINESS?**

Once you have made sure you are not breaking any laws, you should answer the following questions:

1. How feasible is it for you to have a home-based business?
2. How much space do you need to allocate for classes and other services?
3. What do you want your studio to say about you and your services?
4. Are you opening a small or large studio? Do a SCOT analysis (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats).
5. Will you rent or own an art studio? Do a SCOT analysis on the advantages and disadvantages of each.
6. Do a SCOT analysis of your readiness to offer classes.

Your Business Name

I came up with the name “Jolly Good Art” when I was thinking about what set me apart from the rest of the local art establishments. People remembered me because of my British accent, so I wanted my name to be associated with England. The business name is a powerful marketing tool, and at this point I was already branding both myself and my art studio.

When I asked the students in one of my regular classes what they thought of the slogan “Love of Art Is a Very Good Start,” Rashad, a studious nine-year-old artist, suggested I change it to “Love of Art Is a Jolly Good Start” — to echo the name of the school. I promptly did, greatly appreciating my student’s input.

I hoped that the slogan went hand in hand with my mission statement. My school was to be a place of self-discovery and personal attention, dedicated to all aspects of art, including art appreciation and an understanding of what one can do with various media. I created a simple computer-generated logo of an easel to reflect the informal, fun, and educational nature of the services available.

Start offering your classes after registering your business’s name, but do not rush into creating a logo before you have had a chance to try the name on for size. It may come to you immediately, or it may come to you in the middle of the night like it did to me. Exercise 6 will help you generate ideas relevant to naming your business.

The perfect name is an important branding and marketing tool. It is a potential

client’s first point of contact. When you have thought up a few names that you like, I suggest you conduct a business name search in the government databases as well as on the Internet.

Conducting a business name search

Keep your name short and simple. The shorter the name, the easier it is for potential and current clients to remember. The following list includes some business names I like because they are fun and show what the business is about:

- Movement from Within — a yoga school
- Throwing a Fit — a pottery school
- Your Fired — pottery painting and firing (in a kiln) services
- Gordon of Eden — gardener and tree doctor
- Sew What? — sewing-related services
- Alice Beads — costume-jewelry-making services

Make sure to keep the future in mind if you plan to use your own name as part of the company name. This may make it difficult to sell the business as a franchise. Also some clients may expect you to always be there, rather than having your staff teach them.

When you have come up with your company name, if you are in the US you should make a trip to the local courthouse and file for a DBA (Doing Business As). It costs around \$50 and is a simple application to complete.

EXERCISE 6
CHOOSING YOUR BUSINESS NAME

1. What do you want the name of your classes or art school to convey to prospective students, their parents, your suppliers, and people in the community?
2. What sets you apart that you can incorporate into your business name and image?
3. Write down as many business names as you can brainstorm and ask other people — including children — for ideas.
4. How much of your start-up budget can you allocate for a designer to create a professional logo for your business?
5. If paying for a company slogan and logo is not feasible, can you suggest a bartering arrangement with anyone who has these skills? What services can you offer in exchange?

The government website www.usa.gov will help you get started on all aspects of starting and registering your business in the US. The Small Business Administration (SBA) website (www.sba.gov) will also give you information and tips for registering your business.

In Canada, if you are incorporating your business, you will need to do a name search. In some provinces you can go online and do a search through the NUANS system (Newly Updated Automated Name Search), while in others you will need to complete a name reservation or approval request form through your local government registry. For more information you can go the government's Canada Business website at www.cbcs.org.

Make sure you research your state or province's requirements for business, including name registration, permits, and licenses. In the US, you will need to contact the IRS to acquire an employer identification number (EIN), which is similar to a social security number for businesses. In Canada, you will need to contact the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to acquire a business number (BN).

Searching the Internet for your proposed business name

Search for your proposed business name on the Internet and find out if such a company already exists. I am a strong believer that Internet presence is essential to reaching a wider audience in your immediate community and beyond. Having a unique name can only help you in this regard.

Go to such sites as www.godaddy.com, www.networksolutions.com, or many others

on the market and buy the domain name you are interested in now even if you do not plan to create a website yet. It can be as cheap as \$8 through some companies. (A large part of Chapter 7 is dedicated to why a website is important, and what work goes into the building and design of websites, particularly for an art school business.)

Do a search with various key words to see what other websites there are of companies that may have names that are similar to your own. You would not want to break any copyright, trademark, or other laws. Also, look at the results of possible search words your prospective clients or their children might use.

Making Your Business Legal

Do some research and speak with professionals such as your accountant, your lawyer, or businesspeople in your social network to find out what you need to do to make your business legal. Get the appropriate licenses and liability insurance for your business before going any further.

Incorporation and other business structures

Incorporating a business can help protect you personally from lawsuits and creditors. You will need to research this carefully, and you may want to hire a business lawyer to help you set up your business properly. You may also want to contact a certified accountant to help you with any tax issues that may arise from your company.

In the US, you can either create your business as an S corporation ("Inc.") or limited liability company ("LLC"). Creating an

S corporation or an LLC can shield you personally from lawsuits and creditors. For more information, go to www.sba.gov as well as www.ccr.gov (the Central Contractor Registration website).

In Canada, you can either incorporate your business or create a sole proprietorship. If you incorporate your business you will have limited liability, which means that you will be protected from creditors and lawsuits. If you choose to start out as a sole proprietorship, you will have lower start-up costs, but you must be aware that your company will have unlimited liability, that is, you will *not* be protected from creditors and lawsuits. You can always start as a sole proprietor and choose to incorporate your business as your company evolves.

In Canada you can also register as a partnership, which means you and your partner will share all the profits and losses of the business. If you decide to take on a partner, carefully consider all the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. Many small companies and businesses have people who run things internally but who may not have the capacity or desire to sell, market, promote, or be the front person, and vice versa. Make sure you and your partner have skills that complement each other's, and that the business is a good fit for both of your personalities.

Sales tax registration

If you plan to sell art supplies, obtain accurate information regarding relevant taxes for buying and reselling goods, and make sure your zoning permit allows you to be selling products from your premises.

You will have to register for a sales tax number in advance. This applies in all states and provinces that have sales tax. Take the time to learn about record keeping of all incoming and outgoing documents, and how often you must file tax returns. With assistance from your accountant, you should be able to form an organized system, and maintain it with the least amount of disruption to your day.

To find out more information about sales taxes, go to your local government office or visit its website. There are also many good books at your local library or bookstore that cover the topics of collection and remittance of sales taxes. When in doubt, contact an accountant, who will be aware of the latest tax regulations.

Liability insurance

Have an in-depth discussion with a home or business insurance agent in your area. Shop around for the best plans and figure out exactly what type of coverage your business needs. Give the insurance agent all the details, making it clear exactly what you plan to do in the business and at the premises. You will find that there are precise safety regulations. Also ask a seasoned business associate for advice based on what he or she had to go through.

I made sure that I obtained the highest-liability insurance coverage available, and I advise you to do the same. The premiums are not costly, and it is essential that your school be completely insured against liability, in case of any student or staff injuries. This is particularly true if you are not a limited liability company.

Police check

A large number of your students will probably be children. To help alleviate some of the valid concerns parents and school boards may have, you should undergo a criminal record check. For more information, contact your local police department. There is a cost for the service, which varies depending on your location.

You should also request your prospective employees to do the same. I recommend that you always verify their references as well. These people are coming in under the umbrella of your school. Do your homework at the beginning. Keep the children in your care as safe as you possibly can.