



J'net Smith
MARKETING & LICENSING

J'net News

J'net News - A Creator's Art Marketing & Licensing Resource

Upcoming Events

Ask J'net Free Fridays - Q & A Session Send in your questions NOW and register to attend
Date: Friday, August 28th, 2009
Time: 9:00 am - 10:00 am PDT
(12 noon - 1:00 pm EDT)

Ask J'net Free Fridays - Q & A Session Send in your questions NOW and register to attend
Date: Friday, Sept 25th, 2009
Time: 9:00 am - 10:00 am PDT
(12 noon - 1:00 pm EDT)

Character Licensing
Date: Tues, Sept 29, 2009
Time: 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm PDT
(3:00 pm - 5:00 pm EDT)
REGISTER NOW!!

Legal Ease—Simplifying Copyrights, Trademarks & Contracts for Artists
With Attorney, Elizabeth Russell
Date: Wed, Oct 14th, 2009
Time: 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm PDT
(6:30 pm - 8:30 pm EDT)

To Register for classes and get more information please use link on last page or go to www.jnetSmith.com and click on "schedule"

Newsletter Volume 1, Issue 7 August 25, 2009

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Dear Readers:

I hope you have enjoyed your summer and will remember it fondly as this season come to a close. As you think more seriously again about your business and clients, and want to gain some headway this fall, we really encourage you to join us for Ask J'net Free Fridays each month to ask your important questions. We are only a few days away from this month's Free Friday, on August 28th at 9:00 am (PDT) noon (EDT), so send an email to info@jnetSmith.com to register and send your questions in that same email (please put "Free Friday" in the subject line). You know, for each question you have there are hundreds of other artists learning the art licensing business with the same question. We also have a great line up of classes for the fall, including some new intermediate level courses. Watch here for more details to come and check our online schedule for details.

Sincerely J'net

How to Succeed or Fail in Licensing Part 2—Sending Materials & Making Follow-up Calls by: Jeanette Smith

In our last newsletter, we began the discussion of "how to succeed or fail in licensing." We discussed the first two steps of the four step process:

1. Create or Update the Lead List
2. Create Sales Letters
3. Send Materials to Relevant Leads
4. Call to Follow-up

So let's continue to dissect the process with a discussion of the elements of Step 3 and 4. Once the art collections are created, the lead lists developed for one or more product categories and you have drafted your sales letter, it's now time to get things off your desk and out the door.

I have always recommended sending emails to your prospects. It is much more economical and efficient. Of course, if any manufacturer requires a package when sending unsolicited licensing materials, you should follow their exact instructions. I haven't found too many that request that yet. However, in these tougher economic times, some may simply want to save money by not having to print up copies. Definitely read any requirements on a manufacturer's web site and take a note, so you send your presentation in the way they desire.

In your email, or printed letter, make sure you include your business logo, as well as your phone number, web site link and a small representative art sample. The art sample is important, as we hope it will entice the manufacturer to open the attachments and go to your web site. And these are all in addition to your sales letter, in the body of the email, and the pdf or jpeg attachments, of the sample collections you are sending.

Licensing Presentation Will Include:

<u>Via Email</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>Mailed Package</u>
Logo on email		Letterhead w/logo
Letter in email		Letter printed
Name/address/phone		Name/address/phone
Web site address		Web site address
PDF or JPEG attachments		Printed on 8.5 x 11
2-5Collections		2-5Collections
Mock-ups		Mock-ups

You can send the same art collections to many manufacturers in the same product category. As we discussed in our last newsletter, it is best to make sure that every letter sent to manufacturers is personalized, at least by the recipient's name, if not also in the first sentence or two.

Send from two to five collections attached to a single email. If you are using low resolution art and attaching in a PDF or JPEG format, you should have no problem sending the email and most will have no problem receiving it. You should avoid using services such as 'Pando' or 'You Send It' (*which allows you to send larger emails, but requires the recipient to download software before opening your email*). That would be a turnoff and a sure way to have your email left unopened. If your collections are too big, compress them more, or simply send less. Keep it simple.

For each email sent, make sure you have attached only collections that are relevant to their product mix. The product mock-ups in the attachment should include several products they actually make. Perhaps you are starting with a prospect list of 10 stationery and 10 tabletop manufacturers. You may be sending 4 collections, two of which are the same. Even if the collection design elements (icons, borders and patterns) are the same, you will only send samples of the art mocked-up on stationery items to the stationery companies, and similarly only tabletop design samples to the tabletop companies.

Don't send too many attachments if you are just starting out and don't have many collections that are appropriate for each company. It is best to just send a few, and then refer them to your web site or private online portfolio to preview more. The true goal is to get them to show interest through a personal email or phone call.

Once you have created your email to send, and personalized each as much as you can for the recipient, please make sure you proof it before sending it out. Nothing will compensate for inaccuracies, glaring mistakes or information omitted, once you hit the send button.

Since your letter indicated when you will follow up with a phone call, you know exactly when to schedule the next step on your calendar. Maybe you'll be lucky and a couple of your prospects will respond before you are to call them.

Schedule time to make your phone calls and follow-up. Be prepared to leave a message on their voicemail which tells them exactly why you are calling, and ask them to return your call. But don't leave it there. Call as many as six or eight times before moving on. You want them to know you are serious and persistent as well as nice.

When calling and leaving a message, it's essential to attract their attention, just as if you caught them on the phone. Here is where the thought you put into your sales letter can become even more valuable. If you found a great connection between you and a manufacturer, and worded it nicely in your letter, don't hesitate to paraphrase it in your voicemail message. The same rules go for voicemails, so that means do NOT to tell them how great your art is and what it looks like.

DO:

- Introduce yourself "Hi, I'm _____, a designer/artist (or whatever).
- Let them know you sent him/her an email or package and what day it arrived.
- Be clear that you are following-up to the information you sent to see if there is a possibility of working together.
- Refer to anything you know about them that creates a connection, (i.e.—why you targeted them—how your art fits their style or corporate philosophy—how your experience in the industry relates to their needs—or pointing out that you have a common friend/colleague, etc.)
- Ask them to review your email/package and get back to you at their earliest convenience.
- Make sure you ask them to also respond if they didn't receive it. Let them know you will continue to try and reach them until you have spoken.
- Try to make your voicemails different each time. When you call in the future you can mention that:—you have called several times—you hope that you can connect to see if they agree there is potential or not—you are very interested in their opinion of your art and design to meet their companies needs.
- Leave your name again, your phone number again, plus your web site.
- Be considerate of their schedules, and acknowledge that you can work within their time frames.

When it is clear that you are in the long stretch of trying to get hold of the person you know is in charge of making art licensing decisions, or at least, coordinating the group of decision-makers, I think it's really good to intersperse phone messages and emails.

Ask J'net

Sample follow-up message: "Hi, I'm Jeanette Smith and I am calling to make sure you received the art licensing presentation I sent via email on Tuesday this week. I carefully selected three collections that I believe would be a great design match for your _____ division (or line) and I hope we can connect soon. Please give me a call back to let me know you received them and to let me know when you will be ready to review and discuss my art, so that we can choose a time to talk."

And if you sent an email with a similar message, you can also attach your original presentation. Be sure to leave your name and number twice and if its simple, your web address and/or email address.

So the bottom line is that, if you are choosing to do your own licensing sales work, you need to be professional and considerate, while being relentless in approaching manufacturers. Remember, the ultimate goals always remains the same, whether you sent an email or full blown presentation via the mail or Fed Ex: Licensing deals get done when you are able to connect with the manufacturers and find ways to fill their specific needs.

The final results of a presentation being sent, and a string of follow-up phone calls is designated to be the following:

1. If you can send presentations and an art style or solution that meets their needs, especially if the timing is right, more than likely you will just need to work out the details and come to terms on a licensing agreement. (It's a yes)
2. If your artistic style is a match, but the timing isn't right, then you at least want to know this positive information and keep them on your lead list for future collections and communication. Maybe they will give you some guidance as to topics, themes, when to send your creative art and when to call in the future. (It's a maybe)
3. If they believe your style is in NO WAY a match for their company EVER; it's clear you either didn't do your homework or their objectives have changed. Well that's okay; you are now officially off the hook and never have to call or follow-up again! (It's a no)

So remember your goal of calling: To have a discussion and learn if they are a hot prospect, a warm prospect or not a prospect at all. That's it. And with this information you will continue to evolve your list, adding new prospects while keeping your hot prospects moving closer to a confirmed offer or deal. The more you call the more deals you'll get. With those hot and warm prospects, you need to keep finding new reasons to be in touch, sending new designs or creating something just for them, if you believe it's warranted.

In closing, I want to remind you to not make your lists so long you can't get through them when required to follow-up with phone calls to each and every one of them. And at the same time don't keep the same lead lists season to season, if you do you haven't accomplished anything. I once had a client who never added anyone new to their prospect list. While the company was thorough about following-up, they hounded the same companies over and over rather than moving on and expanding. This is a clear case of truly listening and not taking "no" for an answer. I think they even thought "maybe's" were hot prospects. I encourage you to listen and learn from each conversation with manufacturers, and always move forward.

Q. Really, can any agent "guarantee" anything?

A. Nope; an agent may try to estimate or project sales and royalties, but it's probably a gross generalization. This is especially true for artists who are new to the licensing world, since there is really no basis for making those projections. Now, if you are a brand with equity, you might find an agent willing to actually sign a deal with a guarantee, but for those starting out that would never be the case.

Q. What do you believe is the best way to present art/display at Surtex? Some artists put out samples and banners, others print their own photos, and yet other artists put out products that have already been manufactured to show that they have design experience with manufacturers. What's your opinion?

A. I have never been an advocate of having your own product samples made. If you have samples of products from your existing licensees, I think those or photos of the product are very relevant and important.

Now the real question was how to present your art in a booth. This, of course, depends on the size booth you rent and how much art you need to present. I think it doesn't really matter whether you use banners, prints on the walls, or photos. Just make sure they are high quality and your layout is consistent. Most of all, make sure you don't over crowd it with art that the booth becomes a blur to those walking by. It's most important to make your images large and give peoples' eyes a rest (visual space) in between each piece and collection. I see too many artists putting too much in the booth...it leaves less for their portfolio and they lose any impact that some special pieces might provide.

I believe that if you have samples of product, you should include a few pieces in the booth. If you have tons of existing product, you still should include a few pieces in the booth. If you have only product mock-ups to show your design skills, definitely include some, since product design is more important than ever!

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www.youtube.com/thelicensingcoach

Audio Downloads Available

Hot Trends in Art Licensing

<http://www.jnetSmith.com/schedule.cfm?ald=7E61E414-C29B-57E0-8E30DFED83C04343>

Surtex & Licensing Show Top 10 Follow-up Techniques

<http://www.jnetSmith.com/schedule.cfm?ald=F9CD230A-C29B-57E0-842416D8D9E203DC>

Ask J'net Free Fridays- Q&A (June)

<http://www.jnetSmith.com/schedule.cfm?ald=0F14D202-C29B-57E0-82356C85B09747C2>