

Case Study

Winking Lizard Pottery Fairview, PA

Winking Lizard Pottery, a home-based pottery business, has built a reputable clientele and has found success via word-of-mouth and a variety of online avenues.

Profile

Winking Lizard Pottery began as hobby several decades ago for owner and designer Lisa Salvia. After 30 years in sales and marketing, Lisa decided it was time to turn her hobby into a business. Lisa creates functional stoneware products in a studio inside her home. Most pieces she creates are for everyday use such as casserole dishes, cups and mugs. Winking Lizard Pottery can be found online at <http://www.winkinglizardpottery.com>.

Winking Lizard Pottery has recently developed a logo to help with brand recognition. The new logo, a green and yellow lizard, is now starting to be recognized by customers. Lisa has her work displayed in six art galleries in the Erie area and also frequently participates in art shows. Lisa tailors her pieces to fit the setting and clientele of each gallery. For example, a gallery near the water typically receives pieces that are inspired by the beach and sand.

Lisa is often faced with the fortunate problem of not being able to get the work to the galleries fast enough, proving a successful following for her business. The company's clientele are often looking for custom work, with many repeat customers looking for other pieces of a set to match previously purchased items.

Role of Ecommerce

Lisa launched a website for Winking Lizard in February of 2010. The site was set up locally and is hosted externally. Since Winking Lizard Pottery is owned and operated by Lisa, not only does she design and create all of her pieces, but she handles all marketing and website updates herself. Accordingly, she makes weekly changes to the site, adding new photos and product descriptions.

In addition to the company's website, nearly a year ago, Lisa signed up for an online store on Etsy.com, a national site designed for artists of handmade items to connect with buyers. Winking Lizard's Etsy store has been very successful, providing a national reach to customers, rather than the local demographic that typically responds to the Winking Lizard website and the reach of galleries and art shows.

Etsy is inexpensive, costing only 20-30 cents per post and, most of all, user friendly. Purchases are managed through PayPal and shipping is previously figured in by the seller before a purchase is made by a buyer. All of these aspects make Etsy a more economical and time saving solution for Lisa, rather than running her own e-store through her own website.

Etsy, similar to any search engine, uses keywords to lead customers to relevant searches. Lisa has determined her keywords selectively in order to generate the most possible leads for her business. She has found

Case Study Winking Lizard Pottery Fairview, PA

through Etsy that customers contact her directly to make requests for specialty work rather than ordering right from her Etsy store.

Winking Lizard actively participates in email marketing. With a current subscriber list of over 100 customers, they are emailed quarterly to become aware of a new product line, a new show or any updates to the website. Lisa tracks all emails sent and notices a distinct peak in website traffic after an email blast is sent. Each quarter she promotes a drawing for a giveaway to build the email list and draw people back to the website by notifying winners online rather than via phone or email. This also encourages visitors to re-register for the next month's prize so that they are continually being drawn to the site.

Social Networking

Winking Lizard has acknowledged the presence of social media in marketing and has integrated her Facebook profile. She integrates the giveaway and announcements on her Facebook profile page. She is considering creating a page for Winking Lizard Pottery. Direct mail is also used, as Lisa feels that some of her clientele may not actively engage with the Internet and doesn't want to ignore this demographic that is a large part of her business.



Old fashioned word of mouth has been one of the highest contributors to Winking Lizard's success. Customers who have a positive experience have relayed this to their friends and is building Winking Lizard's customer base. With the help of community groups, such as the Arts Council of Erie, Lisa has been able to tell people about her company. It also helps her e-marketing efforts that organizations such as these often have a direct link on their webpage to hers.

Challenges and Lessons

- As an artist working from home, creating pottery and running my business there are many balls to juggle.
- The online tools are free or very affordable and allow me opportunities to do more with less.