

# 5 SUREFIRE WAYS TO ADVERTISE YOUR DECORATIVE PAINTING BUSINESS

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So you want to start your own decorative painting business but you're stumped on the best way to get clients fast? Keep reading for five ways to jumpstart your business *fast*.

### **1. Newspapers**

Advertising in the newspaper is a relatively inexpensive way to let people know about your business. Your budget will help you decide whether to place a display or classified ad. Classified ads are definitely cheaper.

Make sure that you're listed under "Work Wanted" or "Painters". Try to avoid the Penny saver types of newspapers as these papers have reputation of being "cheaper" which is not the image you'd like to convey.

### **2. Direct Mail**

Sending out letters, postcards or flyers to a particular neighborhood of 100 to 200 homes can generate a quick response. This is an inexpensive way to advertise your business.

You can even hire students (or your kids) to distribute them for you. Make sure you include an incentive for people to call you (such as a 10% discount for the first 5 people who respond.)

### **3. Business Referrals**

Get instant credibility by finding a local business professional with a solid reputation and offering to do a project for them at a discount.

In return, ask them to send a referral letter to everyone on their mailing list recommending your Faux Finish business. You should pay all the mailing costs for this and type out the referral letter for them.

#### **4. On the Job Signs**

Have a couple of signs made up for placement on the front steps or driveway of the home you are painting.

As a professional courtesy, you should make sure you get the owners permission to do this first. Have the sign state: “ABC Decorative Painting is here today. Call 555-1234.”

#### **5. Referrals**

A quick way to generate business is to get referrals from interior decorators / designers or contract painters. Once you’ve established yourself with these professionals you’ve set yourself up for a constant flow of sub-contracts.

To get your foot in the door you first need to send a letter outlining your skills. Don’t ever cold-call a decorator before you’ve introduced yourself in a letter because they’re busy people and appreciate professional courtesy (see page 35 of [\*\*“How to Start Your Own Decorative Wall Painting Business”\*\*](#) for a great sample letter to send to Interior Designers).

Make sure you state in the letter that you will follow up within a week with a phone call and then do so. When you call the Interior Designer remind them of the letter and politely request a meeting so you can show them your portfolio and samples.

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If you're serious about starting your own decorative painting business you need to pick up **[“How to Start Your Own Decorative Wall Painting Business”](#)**.

This must-have book is filled with all the information you're looking for while you're starting out. This e-book covers specific information on the decorative painting business, including:

- Pricing your work
- Providing estimates for your clients
- Using the bidding process to get you the job
- How to setup a winning portfolio
- How to get experience (for free!)
- A total of 13 ways to promote your business
- How to look professional while on the job-site

**[“How to Start Your Own Decorative Wall Painting Business”](#)** is your one-stop guide to take you through each step from naming your business to setting up your office and studio.

Along the way it breaks down the necessary business steps you need to take, such as:

- Writing your business plan (we show you the **easy** way!)
- Getting your business license
- Providing a warranty for your work
- Hiring employees
- Setting up your bookkeeping system

Here's what one of my customers had to say about this program:

*"This is so well-written. Very concise, to-the-point. Simplified explanations and samples of business terms, plans, money projections, etc. This is absolutely the best book I've ever read on starting a business of any kind!"*

*Jan Puckett  
Stevensville, MI, USA*

This e-book is filled with one-of-a-kind facts. This information can't be found anywhere else, either online or offline.

For a limited time, I'm offering this e-book for **\$37.00**. Pick up your copy today before the price goes up again!

Click on the image below:



## BONUS SECTION

### Four Surefire Ways to Price Your Decorative Painting Jobs

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Imagine this nightmare scenario...

You've spent considerable time and energy putting together what you consider to be a fair proposal for a decorative painting job that you really want to land. You're finally sitting in front of your client revealing each intricate detail of the finish that you want to create on their walls.

Your client seems excited and eager to get started. At last, you reveal the total estimated cost of the project. Your client is speechless and just gasps at you in wide-eyed astonishment muttering that this is a lot more than she'd hoped.

Are you left scratching your head wondering where you lost your client in your sales pitch? It's simple. You didn't get a feel for your client's budget during your initial consultation.

Most clients won't reveal their budget to you even if you ask them because they always want to get a lower price. So ultimately you need to know a couple different ways of discovering out how much money your client is willing to spend.

The first way is to come prepared with a sample price list of all the wall finishes you do. This is not a price list, per se, but a general list that breaks down the starting rate for a basic room that measures 12 x 12 feet with 8 foot ceilings.

So for instance, let's say your starting rate for a colorwash finish on a basic room size of 12 x 12 x 8 is \$500. You show your client this price on your list and tell them that this is your starting rate and that you still need to factor in windows, doors, actual measurements of the room. By doing this your client will have some indication of your prices when you do come up with your actual bid amount.

The second way to gauge your client's budget is by using your samples. After you've been decorative painting for awhile you'll have a good idea how long each finish takes you to accomplish from planning to completion. So if you take the total cost of the finish (including materials and labor costs) and divide by the square footage of the room you'll come up with an average cost per square foot. Take this amount and write it on the back of the sample of this finish in black marker.

As you're reviewing your samples with the client you can either casually point out the cost per square foot or let them see it as they're flipping the pieces over. You can guarantee they'll be sitting there doing some quick calculations in their head as they're looking at the square footage cost for each finish.

If you're worried about whether your bid is too high which is causing your client to now flinch at the price, there are a couple of things you can do to prepare yourself to bid fairly.

First, do your homework in regard to the going hourly or square footage rate in your area. Call around to some other faux finishers or decorative painters to find out what they're charging. When you're speaking to them pretend you're a buyer and ask for their basic rates. Now you're armed with comparative prices.

Should you bid high or low on a project? I've always gone by the rule that if there are a lot of obstacles that will be a nuisance such as high ceilings, lots of windows, children or pets that'll be running around, or if the client will be difficult to work with, that I can justifiably charge more for the contract.

Sometimes, when you're first starting out and you're really hungry for the job you may find yourself bidding low just to land the contract. On the other hand just make sure that you're not bidding so low that you're working for minimum wage.

Also, when contractor's bid low they skew the value of the work within the market unfairly for other decorative painters, which is unfair to the industry as a whole. Remember what they say: "if you get all your bids, you probably are not charging enough".

As you can see, there's a lot to consider when you price out a painting job. But with a little preparation you can win more painting contracts and prepare your client for your proposal.

## Save 10 Hours a Week by Setting up Your Own Faux Finish Website

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Have you been losing faux finishing jobs to other contractors because you don't have a website of your sample faux finishes yet? Did you know that having samples of your finishes online could actually save you up to 10 hours a week that you could be spending on other tasks?

By setting up a presence on the Internet, your potential customers could look through all your samples at their own leisure before they pick up the phone to meet with you. They would know, for instance, before they call that you are the faux finisher they want for that special "Old World Stone" finish.

In addition, your customers would be able to read testimonials from past clients to discover how talented you are. They would also be able to read about your skills and training to get to know you as a professional artist. You could, in essence, pre-sell your client before you ever meet them!

Your website should reflect the mood, style and design you've used in all your marketing pieces. So make sure before you begin that you chart out exactly how you'd like it to look and the information you want to include.

Depending upon your website skills, you can either setup your website yourself or hire a website designer to do it for you. If you have the expertise you can use website development software such as FrontPage or Dreamweaver to create your site. There are also templates available through sites such as [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com) and [www.bigstep.com](http://www.bigstep.com) that offer quick and easy methods of setting up a website.

Shop around online for a website designer if you're looking for someone to design an especially creative website for you. Just be sure to look at other sites the designer has created to make certain that they're the perfect person to design your site.

If you're on a tight budget, another option is to use an online photo site such as [www.picturetrail.com](http://www.picturetrail.com) to create a unique portfolio of your photos.

This site only costs \$19.95 per year to use and is very easy to use; simply upload your photos, select an album and you're pretty much ready to go.

Whichever method you decide to use, make sure you include your web address on all your advertising pieces. Therefore every display ad, sales letter and business card should show your domain name so that people can check out your work.

You could also send out a press release to your local paper announcing something new about your business and mention the website along with your phone number in the resource section at the end. This would generate a lot of hits to your site.

I don't recommend you waste money promoting your business online using pay per clicks, online classifieds or other such advertising as you don't want to promote your business globally. Your advertising money would be better spent getting listed in local business directories or chamber of commerce listings, both online and offline. However, it wouldn't hurt to submit your URL to the free search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

As you can see, setting up a website for your faux finish business doesn't have to be a complicated endeavor and there's an online solution for every budget.

## **How to Improve Client Goodwill & Referrals by Doing One Simple Thing**

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Have you been "leaving money on the table" by not thanking your clients properly when your decorative painting job is complete?

Most professional decorative painters agonize at one time or another whether they should give their clients a thank you gift.

Some feel that since they are the professional artisan, that their clients should be giving them gifts for all their hard work. No question, it's a good feeling when you receive an unexpected gift from your client.

Everyone likes to feel appreciated.

However, in order to build goodwill with your clients and have them referring others to you, it's important that you leave a positive lasting impression that goes beyond the finish you left on their walls.

While their visitors will be raving over their new wall finish, your client will be saying how wonderful you are to work with and that you even left a thoughtful gift for them. You want to leave an ongoing sense that, not only are you a great decorative painter, but that you genuinely appreciate your clients. That will generate the referrals you're looking for.

Some decorative painters only send thank you gifts for projects over a certain dollar value (such as a \$10,000 contract, for instance) and simply leave thank you notes for clients under this amount.

While others feel that a small token of goodwill is vital to showing appreciation for the contract at completion. Typically most decorative painters will show their appreciation at least once a year by acknowledging their clients during the holiday season with a small token of their appreciation.

Giving thank you gifts can sometimes be tricky because if you spend too much money the client can get offended. They may think you factored the thank you gift into their estimate.

Similarly, if you spend too little you come off looking cheap. Let the keyword here be a "thoughtful" gift that appears you were thinking of the client's personality and needs. However, your ultimate guide will obviously be your own budget.

There are countless types of gifts you could give to your client. Much will depend upon your own individual style and your client's personality. Food is always a good choice. A small gift basket of wine and cheese or a plate of freshly-baked cookies is usually welcome in any home. A box of gourmet chocolates will be welcomed by clients with a sweet tooth.

For a nice original gift idea, you can use your creative talents to paint small accessory items such as a picture frame or a set of coasters to match the décor and paint finish of the finished room.

If you're short on time, a plant or freshly cut flowers are also a nice touch to add to the completed room.

Gift certificates can also be used either alone or tucked inside a gift. Although some painters feel that this is blatant advertising, this isn't necessarily the case as long as the gift certificate will be valued by the client. Gift certificates can be setup so that they're used towards a small accessory piece such as a lamp in the finished room or even another room in the house.

This leads us to other promotional advertising gifts that can be used such as mugs or pens with your company name and logo. These can be combined with other gift ideas such as filling a promotional mug with chocolates.

Another trendy idea is to give chocolate bars wrapped with a photo of a faux finish and your company name and logo. You can bet the elegant wrappers will be kept long after the chocolate has been consumed.

So as you can see, by giving your clients a little something to remember you by not only do you create goodwill, but you leave a positive impression that will generate business for years to come.

## **Start Your Own Painting Business – 5 Top Reasons Why You Should**

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Here are the top 5 reasons why anyone with basic painting skills should consider starting a painting business of their own.

1. Unlike most other business, a painting business doesn't require a large monthly advertising budget. In fact, by using referrals it is completely possible to build a profitable painting business without any traditional advertising at all. Smart painting business owners spend time building relationships with people who know people that can refer them to jobs.

2. Every day painters sell their precious skills to their boss for a paltry \$12-\$15 per hour when they could earn top dollar running their own painting business. The potential to earn an above average income working part time hours is one of the main benefits of owning a successful painting business.
3. Running a small painting business out of your home provides many advantages like high profits and low overhead. You can also claim part of your home as a write off for income tax purposes.
4. A painting business is one of the greatest businesses to start because it doesn't require a lot of money up front. Most painters have their own tools to begin with.
5. Industry trends are hard to predict with this industry, but it is certain that faux finishing and decorative painting is one of the hottest trends and fastest growing markets.

The best thing a painter can do to secure their future is to start a painting business of their own. Many painters are making a great living running their own painting business. In conclusion, it does take several years to grow a painting business but it's worth it.

## **How to Make the Leap from Craft Painting to Painting for Profit**

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So you're a craft painter who loves creating beautiful designs on plates, woodwork and glass. You feel such fulfillment creating these little masterpieces that you think there has to be a way to make some money at the same time. Besides, your own home and the homes of all your friends are just crammed full of your artwork.

So how do you make the leap from craft painter to getting paid for painting? Here are 4 simple tips to get you going in the right direction:

1. Pick up some design and painting books for decorative painting. Donna Dewberry's books are perfect for this using her One Stroke painting technique which is a faster way of tole-painting requiring fewer strokes.
2. Start by painting your designs on larger flat surfaces such as floor cloths or placemats. Create larger designs than you would on smaller pieces. Start timing yourself to see how long a piece takes you to paint. This will help you when you need to calculate how much to charge per square foot. While you practice, don't turn your projects when you paint. Instead try to paint your projects like you would paint a wall, turning your wrists to complete each stroke.
3. Take on a small, simple room project such as a child's room. If you can't paint on your own walls ask a friend if they'll let you paint on theirs. Working with a friend to decide on the completed look will help give you experience in consulting with customers. Listen to what your friend has in mind and make suggestions based on your experience. Bring design books along to show what you can do.
4. Paint on as many different surfaces as you can and keep practicing your paint strokes. Make sure you take lots of pictures of all your projects for your portfolio (which can take the form of a physical photo-album type portfolio or an online photo album).

While you are practicing your painting skills, read as much information as you can get on interior designing, paint finishes, paint types and business start up information. You can gather a lot of this type of information from books or by surfing online. Knowledge gives you confidence and confidence will lead to your success.

