

Art Marketing Tips from Banksy Himself

The notorious and anonymous artist Banksy has a lot to say about the world through his art. With a closer look into his distinctive style, it's clear he has used specific marketing techniques throughout his career to grow his brand to unimaginable heights for a living artist.

His work is continually uncompromising in its poignancy towards society, but through this, he is using social media and the digital age to help his work gain exposure. He has created easily some of the most sought-after pieces in the last few decades. Here are a few of the many ways he markets his art and in turn his art markets itself.

His Work is Extremely Accessible

Banksy is a street artist; thus, all his work is inherently free for his fans and critics to view and interpret. He does not show in museums (unless they amass or borrow a collection of his work) and only more recently in galleries. Instead, he chooses to take up residencies in cities around the world. Being on the streets gives an accessibility to his work that is hard to find in the art world today. If you like his style, if you want to know what he is making, or want to see his latest piece, you can just check his website, official social media accounts, or search for him on Google.

His work being so accessible is just one factor that helps make it renown and talked about online. His social media accounts always detail what and where his latest works are. Print and digital media are constantly trying to catch up with not only who he is, but what he is making a statement about, and where that statement is going to be. Explaining all or parts of his work online helps him stay accessible and in touch with society today.

He Stays Current

Not only does Banksy continually push the envelope in the art world with his creativity and unique ideas, but he intersects that with a sharpness geared towards flaws, myths, and illusions in society today. This relevancy in his work evokes such strong emotions out of fans and critics both good and bad that his work is often talked about for weeks after it is put up. His work can even be visited for years after it is put up, endlessly shared on social media by fans and visitors. Because of this exposure, his name is continually thrown in front of new people where they might be converted to fans or collectors of his.

In 2011, he released a work called "Cardinal Sin" displayed at Walker Art Gallery. It depicted a bust of a priest but with the face sawed off and replaced with bathroom tiles. This work specifically targeted the Catholic Church amid a massive child abuse scandal. Said Banksy about the work, "The statue? I guess you could call it a Christmas present. At this time of year, it's easy to forget the true meaning of Christianity - the lies, the corruption, the abuse."

The immediacy of what his work said about the society that we live in today is what made it become such a noteworthy piece and why news outlets such as BBC covered the release of the work. Staying current allows Banksy to gain extra exposure for his work because of how culturally relevant his messages typically are. The fact that people are interested in what those messages say makes people want to talk about his work.

He Involves His Audience

It can be difficult to involve one's audience in any piece of art. However, Banksy often incorporates his audience flawlessly into the messages of his work. While he took up residency in New York City for a monthlong show in 2013, he set up a toll-free 800 number where anyone could call in to listen to a recorded message detailing his latest work, the location, and a semblance of meaning. This forced his audience to engage in the work to truly understand it.

Later in the show, he put up balloons next to the Long Island Expressway and shared the message "Save 5pointz." A reference to a local art exhibition that was going to be demolished and turned into condominiums.

This type of interaction not only with his fans but with the people and messages of the location he was in showed people that they were a part of the art and that in some way art mimics life and vice versa. Accordingly, this involvement of his audience helps promote the work and his brand. It creates a bond between him as the artist and the viewer who can be left to interpret the works as they will.

It is amazing to think that for the last three decades Banksy has been at the forefront of the art world making some of the most renowned pieces ever seen and now shared on social media. But it is clear through his tactics and strategy that he knows what he is doing when it comes to marketing his art. From being accessible, to staying current, and involving his audience, Banksy uses these tactics and many others seen on his official social media pages to market his brand and his new works. Keep looking out for Banksy's next pieces because they will offer more insight into art marketing and how to stay current and relevant in today's art world.