Abstract

Traditionally, the sellers of custom, handcrafted goods were restricted to peddling their wares at craft shows and flea markets. With the advent of the Internet, new channels of distributions have opened up such as, Amazon, Ebay, and personal website; giving sellers access to a much larger audience. However, with Amazon and Ebay, handcrafted goods were lost in the large amount of listings on these platforms. A different solution was needed and etsy.com was born out of this desire for a more targeted marketplace.

Study Questions

1) How were handcrafted goods sold before? How did the Internet change that?
2) What is the benefit of community for an online marketplace?
3) What is the etsy.com model different from Ebay and Amazon?
4) What are some of the key innovations that etsy.com employs to make this a unique experience?
5) What are some of the best practices for establishing an online community?
6) What are some of the issues that plague etsy.com? What are your recommendations to alleviate those problems?

Required Readings:

Forrester Article: “Online Community Best Practices – Jeremiah Owyang”

General Etsy.com Background:
http://www.cfnnews13.com/Technology/YourTechnology/2008/7/12/buy_and_sell_homemade_items_at_etsy_com.html
http://www.etsy.com/storque/
http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/jun2007/sb20070611_488723.htm
http://cnettv.cnet.com/?type=externalVideoId&value=6692186

Funding:

Negative Feedback:
http://monlarvae.blogspot.com/2008/06/etsy-woes.html
Optional Readings:

General Etsy.com Background:
http://images.businessweek.com/ss/07/06/0612_smallbiz_etsy/index_01.htm
http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1633488_1633458_1633474,00.html

Funding:
http://www.unionsquareventures.com/2006/06/etsy_1.html

Negative Experience:
http://community.livejournal.com/bad_etsy_deals