

Ten Tips for making the sale in your booth

1. Make your booth display attractive and inviting. Table placement is important so don't block entry with a table at the front. Bright tablecloths bring life to the displays and signs/brochures/flyers should be professionally printed. All storage boxes and other non-essential items should be out of sight.
2. Greet everyone who is within 5 feet of your booth. Don't hide behind your table on a chair and put your cell phone, iPad, or novel away! When you are engrossed in reading you are not paying attention to the people walking by your display. Instead, stand in front of your display and watch the people as they move into your area. Try to determine what they may be interested in or their personality by their actions, clothing with logos, and comments as they visit your neighbor's displays. Make eye contact and don't wait for them to speak first. Greet them enthusiastically and welcome them to your booth.
3. Introduce yourself and your art and ask them an open-ended question. (A question that cannot be answered with a yes or a no.) "How did you hear about our art show?" "Are you from this area or just visiting?" "What kind of art interests you?"
4. Have some quick stories or anecdotes about your art to capture their attention. For example, I tell them my decoys are hand carved from 100-year-old cedar fence posts found on the pioneer cattle and sheep ranches in Central Oregon.
5. Get them further involved in your art by handing them one or your pieces of art (if not so fragile) and point out any unique features. I hand them a large decoy made of cedar that is so very light because it sat in the sun for over a century. They are amazed it is weightlessness and can also admire the intricate carving and painting of the head up close. Explain the process you use to create your art.
6. Don't judge the book by the cover. On many occasions a person will come to my booth dressed very poorly and not appear to be very interested. I treat everyone as a valued potential customer and pay attention to them equally. One time a lady who did not look like she could afford my art kept coming back to look at 3 of my highest priced decoys and was demanding much of my time. She could not decide which one she liked and after an hour passed, she came back and bought all three for cash! Another time a long-haired biker dressed in dirty leather came to my booth and after many questions I learned he was a veteran. I doubted he would be a buyer but when I thanked him for his service and told him he qualified for a veteran's discount he bought four decoys.
7. Don't be afraid to ask for the sale. Do this by asking "closing questions". "Which piece do you want to take home with you today?" "How many do you want?" "Which color do you like

best?” “Where would you display this in your home?” “Would you prefer to use your credit card or cash?” “If you don’t see what you want here, would you like me to make a custom piece for you?”

8. If they like your art but are hesitating to make the purchase, get creative with offering a discount. I will pay a 30% or 40% discount to a gallery so why not a 10% at my booth? Veteran discounts are a given. However, I have offered senior discounts, student discounts, discounts to the first sale of the morning, discounts to retired teachers, Firemen, Police etc.
9. Oftentimes a person will say that a friend or relative would like my art. When that happens let them know that you welcome referrals from their friends/family and will custom produce something special for them. Give them your business card/brochure with your contact and website details and ask for their contact details as well. I will always have several commissions for future work from every show. Once I get approval to start a piece, I send progress photos to keep them involved. I never ask for a deposit as I know that if they don’t want the final product, I will be able to sell it at a future show. It gives the buyer confidence in my work.
10. Last but not least, dress for success. Don’t look like a struggling artist who just came out of their studio. If you are selling clothing, model some of your product. Wear some of your products if you are a jewelry designer. My art has an outdoors hunting/fishing motif, so I typically dress western style.