

Marketing your Art Video Summary  
An interview with Cheryl Sleboda  
By Vivika Hansen DeNegre

Bio:

Cheryl Sleboda is an award-winning art quilter, lecturer, traveling teacher, and runs two businesses: a merchandise and media company *Muppin Inc.*, and *Sew Much Cosplay* which targets the sewing audience of cosplay enthusiasts. She is highly visible in the sewing and quilting industry. And most recently, she was the coordinator and host of “Threads of Success”, an industry conference held during Quilt Market 2019. You may have seen Cheryl’s work at Houston, on TV (the Quilt Show with Alex Anderson and Ricky Tims as well as QATV), her free web series *Con Crunch*, as well as in other venues. But she is also a recognizable “sewing celebrity” with a distinctive brand.

Cheryl brings a unique perspective to the business side of quilting. Her extensive marketing experience in the comic book industry informs her work with quilters.

In our video we covered a lot of ground:

1. We all love to make art quilts, but a professional practice doesn’t stop there. Marketing is a big part of our art businesses. Cheryl tells us about her growth as an artist and the path she took to becoming a full-time professional in the quilting industry.
2. Cheryl clarifies the idea of a **branding** and distinguishes it from marketing.
3. What determines good branding? Her suggestions are:
  - i. Branding is separate from marketing
  - ii. Overarching style of how a business presents itself publicly
  - iii. Consistency in style, visual presence, and content
  - iv. Branding creates a connection with the audience
4. Good business practices
  - i. Put together a business plan and identify short- and long-term goals
  - ii. Clarify what success looks like for your business
  - iii. Set a timeline and create a roadmap
  - iv. Consider diversifying your revenue stream: sell art; teach a technique in person, online, through pattern making, etc; write a book; design a product or tool; create instructional videos
5. Partnering with industry
  - i. Getting the word out about your own art is the first step to being able to partner with publishers
  - ii. Create a dedicated following that supports/buys your product or brand
  - iii. Be prepared to leverage your following as part of an industry marketing plan
6. Working the “business” and marketing into an art practice
  - i. Cheryl plans social media posts. This takes approximately 1 hour/week.
  - ii. She posts on social media daily. This takes 15 minutes/day.

- iii. Take lots of photos while you are making art to share with your fans and friends.
  - iv. Put on an objective hat and evaluate what your fans relate to.
- 7. The SAQA Seminar audience is serious about the business of art quilting and making a living/paying the bills with their art. Here are some resources Cheryl shared during our interview.
  - Muppin.com
  - Sewmuchcosplay.com
  - Threads-of-success.com
  - Thequiltshow.com
  - Quiltingartstv.com
  - Con Crunch web series (videos.sewdaily.com)
  - Craftindustryalliance.com
  - Storybrand.com