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Subject: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [HyperForm](#) on Sun, 02 May 2010 13:13:02 GMT

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Hi there,

I just registered to Shapeways and I would like to find out more about selling my models/designs. I read the FAQ but many questions still remain unanswered.

I'm a 3D modeler and I even had the opportunity to play around 3d printing (although those were always custom models for clients not objects/designs made for "stock" ), so obviously my questions are 'market' specific.

So the first question is what to model/upload. I can do basically anything, but would like to know what people actually buy? Some abstract sculptures, hobby related items, geek memorabilia ? I'm sure some people would like to buy game related figures, but as far as I know there are some specialized companies doing this sort of thing already.

Another topic would be technical guidelines. For example how thin a "wall" of a model can be and generally how can I check how the structure behaves in real life. I would like to know if Shapeways can print the models "for a test".

Thanks

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [rawkstar320](#) on Sun, 02 May 2010 19:07:05 GMT

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First of all, welcome!

What to sell? anything and everything. If you want to specialize, you should...but keep in mind that it will require that you do a lot of advertising outside of shapeways. Something to keep in mind with shapeways buyers is that they are modelers(generally) that are (generally) capable of creating their own stuff...bluntly: they dont need you, or me, or any other shops.

Of course, that is very general. The reason I put it that way is because people buy things that they cant buy at the store. So you really have to put your thinking cap on for new designs and ideas.

Popular items that I have seen are puzzles, characters, jewelery and of course anything co-creator.

Pricing is tough...I have yet to figure it out. Because of volume sales, its tough to say "cheaper is better" because you may only sell 5 models, and those 5 buyers maybe have been willing to pay \$100 when you only charged them \$25, you just lost potential income. Here is a link to a forum post where i tried to gather some of this info:

<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=2351&amp;start=0&S=395f5a179271c35eff0b17363d339bca>

You can find info on material properties under the Materials Page (Support>Materials) Also, expect to do some printing of your own to verify your models - people are more willing to buy something that is guaranteed to work when they get it, especially if they dont understand the process.

My personal feelings:

Keep in mind that even though you plan on making a shop (to make money) we are still a community. Therefore, in my opinion, rating down your competitors models or somehow degrading another member/members creation is unacceptable in a community. We all help each other.

Good luck!

and dont forget to advertise outside of shapeways! Facebook and Twitter help a lot!

Oh, and dont forget to check out my shop!

Jake  
PM me if you need anything

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Jake Drews

JakeDrews.Com

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)  
Posted by [HyperForm](#) on Mon, 03 May 2010 10:11:43 GMT  
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Thanks for your answer Jake.

Quote:Something to keep in mind with shapeways buyers is that they are modelers(generally) that are (generally) capable of creating their own stuff...bluntly: they dont need you, or me, or any other shops.

I'm surprised that, as you say, the majority of customers are modelers. I thought this worked more like a site similar to Zazzle with the difference that it has 3D content. I would guess that the potential market for people wanting to buy a new gadget for their iPod, like the stuff you are selling, would be a lot bigger than the number of people that can actually model something like that.

Quote:

Also, expect to do some printing of your own to verify your models - people are more willing to buy something that is guaranteed to work when they get it, especially if they dont understand the process.

That would be a bit unpractical and pricey for me. I live in Europe, so even just the delivery costs would make the whole thing unprofitable.

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [rawkstar320](#) on Mon, 03 May 2010 15:03:11 GMT

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Shapeways is based in the Netherlands, and their shipping price is already included in the model price. So it actually costs more for me to get a model (I am in the USA) but i still pay the same as you.

I guess I should explain my reasoning with the statement that all Shapeways customers are modelers...

Its really something to keep in mind to help create something unique. You can create basic things (like a full color coaster) its likeliness of selling is not that great, especially because of cost.

And i still really recommend that you print your models and upload photos, it really helps sales. The minimum checkout is \$25 worth of product (if its yours you dont pay your markup). Make sure your are hollowing your objects to make them cheaper in cost.

Good Luck!

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Mon, 03 May 2010 16:47:19 GMT

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In the future, it may be less than injection molding. I may or may not have some insight on that but hopefully we can lower material costs in the near future

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [rawkstar320](#) on Mon, 03 May 2010 19:14:12 GMT

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Less than injection molding? That seems a little crazy to me...at least from what ive learn the past 2 years in college.

However....

I believe there was a post a while back about how Bugatti actualy 3d Prints their dashboards. Since they only do a limited number of cars per year, its cheaper and easier to offer different dash setups.

3D printing is nice because you dont have to front \$30k on a mold that makes only 1 kind of part. You can spend \$30k and make an unlimited amount of part designs.

Thats just my take though. I dont work in injection molding yet

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Subject: Re: Now what ? :-)

Posted by [RalphVdB](#) on Thu, 06 May 2010 14:53:02 GMT

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Hi Hyperform

First of all, a big welcome here!

Regarding your question:

Another topic would be technical guidelines. For example how thin a "wall" of a model can be and generally how can I check how the structure behaves in real life. I would like to know if Shapeways can print the models "for a test

Maybe this can help you out:

[http://www.shapeways.com/tutorials/design\\_rules\\_for\\_3d\\_printing](http://www.shapeways.com/tutorials/design_rules_for_3d_printing)

The minimum wall thickness for our different materials are:

White Strong & Flexible = 0.7 mm But we advise you to use at least 1 or 2 mm, depending on the size of the area.

White, Transparent & Black detail = 1 mm

Gray Robust = 1 mm

Stainless Steel = 3 mm

Full Color Sandstone = 3 mm

Milky White Matte Glass = 3 mm

Alumide = 1.5 mm

Hope this can help you out a bit

Cheers, Ralph

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