
Subject: Advantages for shop owners

Posted by [woody64](#) on Sun, 15 May 2011 07:55:12 GMT

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In the last period I was rather busy with work for my shop *). Since we shop owners are part of Shapeways' business case I'm wondering if there can be additional support from shapeways.

*)

- reacting to new materials
- dealing with the user interface
- reporting and advertising our shops and thus also Shapeways
- driving the community

....

Things which could make my life easier as shop owner and also reward work done:

- new material: getting probes of new materials for some of my pieces to check the possibility to make my items available in this new material and to report the results also to the community
- test order costs: I try to test my new pieces only to make them available for further buyers. The positive results should flow into more Shapeways' business.

Currently I have to pay for my test orders the same price as normal buyers.

- test order feedback: in my case there are always the same 2 questions.
 - Is the item printable. This can only be checked with a test order. So new items need a certain time to get evaluated
 - how does the new item look like. So far only a test order can do the job. Dealing with community requests I often let the test order done by the requester. He reports the result via photos and I can react. No idea how Shapeways can help here but maybe there are some ideas out.
- The reason why this is important for me is. I can make a new design in an evening work but the minimal time to have a final piece is. 1 + 10 + 1 + 10 working days, doing a test order a design change and a verification of the change. In real life that expands to 1 + 20 + 10 + 1 + 20 + 10 adding extra 20 days for collecting pieces for a new test order. Thus having 62 working days to get a new design done which could have been done in 4 days.

Maybe there are some other shop owners adding their input ...

Woody64

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners

Posted by [noesis](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 04:00:28 GMT

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Couldn't agree more. Currently it takes me a LONG time to roll out a new product. I've tried taking

the "I'll just render it approach" only to lead to numerous failed prints (for whatever reason) and then canceled orders, which HAS to be a headache for Shapeway's customer service. Now the only way I post a new item for sale is when I've done a test print and photographed it. I just don't trust renderings anymore and kind of think that practice is a bit shady now that I know how easy it is for a model to be rejected. On a side note I've also had cancellations based on non-print-ability (or most often polish-ability in metal) even after I've received a successful test print and thought everything was okay for selling.

I think a "test print" option would be amazing, especially if it was allowed to go through the process complete with failures or worn down text or broken pieces so I could at least see the issues and evaluate a solution instead of guessing based on the sometimes cryptic responses we get. My favorite being "Mesh is not sane" but that's more of a modeling issue. Anyways, I think this "test print" concept is at least something that's being considered? Maybe just one per model?

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners
Posted by [woody64](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2011 11:04:29 GMT
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Yes that's the same problem for me. The only render once and let it buy often fails. Currently I have some key users interested in an object and in applying changes and therefor also do some test buys.

The costs of the test buys are also one problem on my side.

Woody64

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners
Posted by [bitstoatoms](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2011 12:15:07 GMT
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Ahh, guys thanks

From a personal perspective, selling from render is not an ideal situation. It leaves far too many uncertainties that have the potential to disappoint a buyer.

We are considering a system that would inform potential buyers what materials an item has been successfully printed in.

Would this be of value?

Also a beta test phase of new materials?

Are you implying that when we are trialing materials, shop owners should get every order they submit, whether it is successful or fails?

This could also lead to disappointment, if you are paying for broken components? Is this something you would be willing to accept?

Thanks again for your feedback

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners
Posted by [stonysmith](#) on Sat, 04 Jun 2011 16:42:07 GMT
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To directly answer your question.. "Would this be of value??" .. YES!

My comments here are based upon the fact that my models are \$5-\$10 in price range.. I realize that these ideas may not be reasonable for steel/glass/silver materials, and won't be appropriate for the folks with "more expensive" stuff. It would, however, be good for us "small parts" folks.

I personally don't expect these test prints at a drastically reduced cost, but I think it'd help if we could break apart minimum order and shipping from the cost of printing.

On many of my models, I would have been more than willing to pay even a little extra for test prints, given the following:

- 1) No minimum order (only print one)
- 2) Only available once - for models not previously printed (see "flag" below)
- 3) Expedited turnaround
- 4) Complete review/critique of any printing/cleaning problems from the production team
- 5) Some way to see a set of high-res photos of the printed item
- 6) By default, the item would NOT be shipped, but discarded

then:

- 7) Option to pay (separately - after printing) to have the item shipped (regardless of success or failure)

=====

At worst, my suggestion would be to add a "notes" field to the order/invoice process... there are many uses/reasons for this, but in this specific case, I could request "Please ship regardless of

condition".

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Shapeways loses a bit of money when shipping multiple packages for the same order. If there were a way to request "Ship everything together", the amount they recoup on shipping might cover the cost of shipping (single) test prints.

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I STRONGLY support the idea of a flag on each model that indicates "Has been printed successfully". This flag should be set by the production team, not the shopowner, and I would go so far as to only allow the shopowner to turn it off, not on. It should also automatically set back OFF if a new copy of the file is uploaded. Unfortunately, this may require a per-material flag.. a bit of work for SW web folks. <grin>

This would also serve a second purpose.. back to the production team.. so as to not have questions about the printability of an item that has previously succeeded.

Personally, I would go so far as to include a count as to how many of a model have been sold to date... I realize that some people may not want that kind of info shown, but I would like it for my shop.

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As a dreamer, I wish that when I get the email "Your model has been shipped" that it would include one low-res picture of the actual model as it's being shipped. But, I fully realize that would be adding extra labor. <grin>

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners
Posted by [woody64](#) on Mon, 06 Jun 2011 05:51:13 GMT
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A system where the information is given which item has been successfully printed/sold would be very helpfull !!!

Such an information has to consider these points

- that's an info needed per material
- personally I would first go for a default material given by the designer
- items sold for these type would be helpfull for the buyer
- successfull prints have to consider uploads (thus reset the value to 0)

- there would be further status needed like design ok from the designer. since from the end user view it's no big difference between a print failure and a design failure which hinders the functionality

@stonysmith

1)-7) definitely yes

only available for shop owners

multiple packages: from my point of view can also be done with one delivery. but maybe in the current way it's easier from the shapeways' logistic point of view

Subject: Re: Advantages for shop owners
Posted by [MikeyBKF](#) on Sun, 12 Jun 2011 03:31:45 GMT
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I'm a new Shop Owner just starting up.

I like the Idea of being able to print 1 test model for a new design at a discounted rate, though I can SW's lack of enthusiasm on that Idea since anyone could open a shop and just make one off models for cheap.

I think SW could come up with a way to make that Idea work though even if it was linked to a sale level where they would discount your 1st new model and after you sold, or bought X number of prints they would grant you another discounted new 1st new model print.

That would make me feel safer when it comes to my wallet knowing I plan to start spending some good money here.

They could even limit the discounted print to a cheaper material that meets the same detail level so even shops using gold plating can print a discounted 1st model in something like SWF. (since it is only being used to prove it is a printable model)

I also think a Flag or Stamp Logo for successful prints would be a big incentive to shops. Since any customer perusing our galleries have that sinking feeling in the back of their minds what if this model is untested and doesn't perform as expected, or as designed. A proof of product that is only given to a successfully completed and delivered part just sounds like good honest business. Especially if it can only be given out by SW so we can all be sure of it's authenticity.

Removing that stamp or flag for a updated model also seems fair. As obviously something needed to be changed and proving the model can print would need to be proved again.

Even I want to be assured my designs can print.

Just my thoughts on the topic hope to hear some more great ideas. Thanks!
