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HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

A good online presence will boost career in the art world

**Ask
James**



James Caan

Dear James,

I AM an artist and have shown my work at the New York art expo. I've sold approximately 120 original oils over the past 10 years. Business has slowed and I've had to close my gallery through the week. How do I market my art to the next level?

Sharon Hayes

THE art industry can be tough, as everybody has their own opinion. You have clearly had success; I see one of your paintings was featured in Times Square. The key is to get your work positioned where it is more likely to be seen by your customer base.

Networking is crucial. Make sure you go to the right events, and consider hiring an agent or rep. A good one will have plenty of contacts and be able to get your work into a top commercial gallery. This is absolutely crucial and, especially now that your own gallery is closed on weekdays, should be your main focus. Of course they will take a large commission but when you consider the vast number of people who will see your art, it should be worth it.

What about contacts through your other jobs in the creative world? Ask if they can link to your work.

Your own website should be search engine-optimised – there are plenty of guides to help you with this. You want to make your work easy to find.

Social media is also essential. A page where you can visually promote

your art is a great tool.

The other advantage of having a good online presence is the ability to get together a database of potential customers. You can collate details of people who are interested in what you do and let them know about work you have produced.

■ *James Caan's The Business Class is on CNBC at 10pm this evening*