

Putting Art to Work in Business

“Don’t judge a book by its cover,” *they* say. Yet any reputable book publisher will tell you that selecting cover art is one of the most important aspects of marketing a new novel. Quite literally, it can make or break book sales.

Really, the same goes for marketing a business. You might make the best vanilla Bundt cake in the western hemisphere, but if you’re operating out of a dilapidated shop with shabby garage sale art, it’s like your outsides don’t match your company’s insides.

In the business world—looks *do* matter.

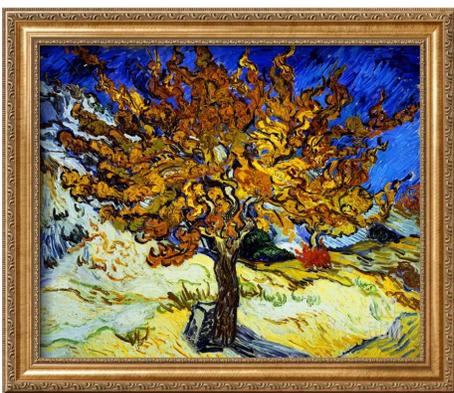
This is when you start to realize the value of art in the business setting. Yes, it can freshen up a drab space and help you sell more books, cakes—even life insurance. But it can also bolster your brand and help attract and retain the right kind of customers and employees.

Here are some tips on putting art to work in your specific industry.

Use art to create an experience

Ask yourself this: What do you want your client (and even employees) to experience in your business setting? Is your goal to put patients at ease when confined to a dentist’s chair? Are you looking to stimulate conversation and create buzz at a busy café? Do you want clients to feel as though they’re in good hands as you process their corporate taxes?

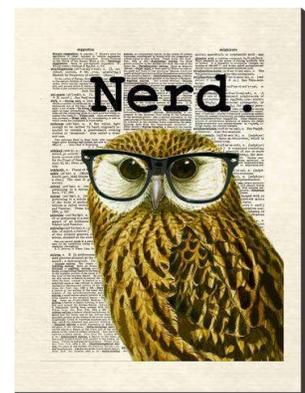
The answer to this question will lead you to the right art aesthetic for your unique business: classical, bohemian, irreverent etc.



Vincent Van Gogh, *Mulberry Tree*

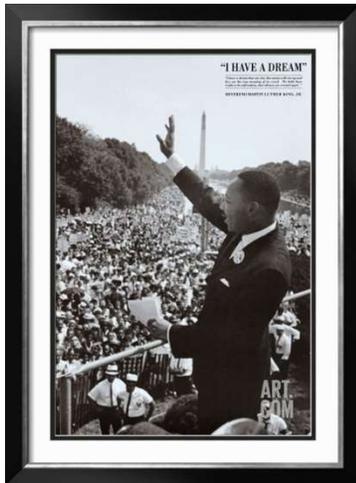


Sharon Turner, *Antelope Ivory*



Matt Dinniman, *Owl Nerd*

Use art to reflect your company's core values



Martin Luther King, *I have a Dream*

Is your law office known for its commitment to civil rights? Your walls can help tell that story. Consider showcasing a wide array of pieces that celebrate your devotion to the cause.

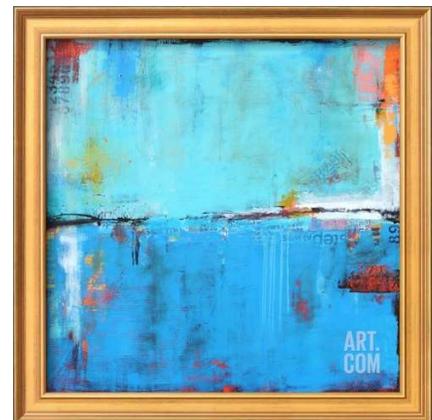
Do you run a large, multi-national advertising firm known for creative excellence in the industry? Let your walls reflect that. Select art from the Cubism and Surrealism movements, for example, to illustrate your interest in unconventional thinking.

Your website, employees and portfolio can speak to your company mission, but so can your walls. Put them to work and make sure they're saying the right things.

Use art to keep them engaged

A 2014 Harvard study published in *The Journal of Workplace Learning* backs the notion that art in a business setting helps express a company's personality, values and culture. But there's another strategic benefit from the study that seems a bit counterintuitive: Workplace art can bind employees—and ostensibly customers—to a business, *especially if it's changed regularly*.

If you put yourself in your customers' shoes, you might think that seeing a familiar Frida Kahlo or Diego Rivera framed art print at your favorite Mexican restaurant would make you feel a certain affinity for a business. Like "I know this place and I like being here."



Erin Ashley, *Matchbox Blues 5*

However, according to the study, the rotation and freshening of art in a business setting helps connect people to the strategic goals of a business and enhances their sense of feeling cared for as a client (and employee). It's like this: if you care about your business' insides, your customers and employees will, too.

In an age when brick and mortar businesses of all sizes are evaporating with frightening regularity, you need a competitive advantage. Use art to create an experience, speak to your business values and keep customers (and employees) coming back. Don't be afraid to put art to work.

Need help? Reach out to the experts at Art.com's [Art At Work](#) division for a free consultation.