



For Immediate Release

4.4 Million Active Artists in the U.S. Spend 4.2 Billion Annually Related to their Art According to New Industry Survey

—Independent survey sponsored by NAMTA and “American Artist” magazine shows interest in non-traditional art materials is on the rise—

New York, NY, October 14, 2009: The International Art Materials Trade Association (NAMTA) and Interweave’s “American Artist” magazine group announced today, during National Arts & Humanities Month, the results of a new industry study of artists and users of art supplies in the United States: *Artists & Art Materials USA 2009*.

The study reports that there are 4.4 million active artists in the United States (600,000 professional artists, 600,000 college art students, and 3.2 million active recreational artists), spending \$4.2 billion annually on art-related materials and services in 2008, with market growth at about 4%+ annually.

View the executive summary online at: <http://www.namta.org/marketstudies>

Artists & Art Materials USA 2009 is the first large-scale survey of industry size and trends, business best practices, and the needs and preferences of artists in more than a decade. The report was independently researched and written by Hart Business Research and co-sponsored by NAMTA, an organization of more than 650 professional art materials businesses dedicated to supporting the art community, and “American Artist” Magazine Group, a division of arts and crafts media company Interweave.

“NAMTA is pleased to have sponsored this first-ever comprehensive look at U.S. artists and art materials businesses in the 21st century. Our goal is to provide art materials businesses and the entire art community with the information they need to grow and prosper,” says Sid Smith, NAMTA’s Executive Director.

“There’s helpful information regarding demographics, income, and education amongst three groups: professional artists, active recreational artists, and students. But the real value in the study comes with the ground-breaking (and eye-opening) findings regarding the importance of arts education, mixed media usage, and digital media along with the ongoing value of magazines and books,” says “American Artist” Magazine Group Publisher David Pyle.

This study creates a detailed picture of both professional and recreational “active artists”: those who are actively engaged in art and who have completed 10 or more artworks in the previous year. The study looks at how artists purchase and use materials, how they become artists, and what inspires them to make art.

Here are a few of the survey’s key findings:

1. Interest is growing in non-traditional art materials. Artists noted they would like to try some traditional materials as well as art fabrics, inks, encaustics, ceramics, digital, fibers, found/

recycled/ repurposed materials, printmaking supplies, and metals. Recreational artists who responded to this survey noted they made around 183,000 different works of art in 2008. 30% of these were multi-layered (mixed media/collage, handmade books, cards, scrapbooks, or 3-D art); 23% were drawings; 17% were paintings; and 18% were digital art. This does not include the other 72,492 artworks that recreational artists listed under other artworks (mostly quilting, beading, jewelry, photography, and other creative forms).

“Historically the art materials industry has focused on traditional art materials product categories, but artists now spend only half their art-related budget on these; the other half is spent on classes and workshops, books and magazines, framing, and non-traditional materials. This report forecasts a growing future for art materials businesses that can provide the full range of what artists need alongside the quality, knowledge, and service these businesses are known for,” says Smith.

2. Artists use digital media as one tool among many. While 17% of all artworks were paintings in oil, acrylic, or watercolor, 18% were created as digital art.

“Take a moment with that,” says Pyle. “We’ve crossed a critical threshold: there was more digital art made than paintings. And for those who didn’t use digital as a principle medium, fully 75% of the artists who completed the survey used their computers to help as a tool to improve their artwork, reproduce it, or supply materials and ideas.”

3. The fundamental importance of art education. 63% of professional artists said that art became a regular part of their lives by age 12. That percentage climbs to nearly 80% by age 20. For recreational artists, that percentage is 52% by age 12 and roughly 65% by age 20. In addition, the study makes it plain that relatively few people take up art after age 30. In addition, 40% of professional artists and art students said an art teacher helped them with their first significant artwork. The study concludes, “The art materials industry needs to support elementary school art teachers NOW as they create the market for 2040.”

“In short, the importance of art education for young people—both through private channels as well as in public education—simply can’t be overstated,” says Pyle.

4. Baby boomers are a booming opportunity. The study found that the largest population of art-makers is currently in their 50’s. The study reports, “Interest in creating art builds steadily after people are done with kids and career and continues to peak into people’s 60s and 70s. This gives the art materials industry from now until about 2030, when the last of the boomer generation hits 65, to leverage that demographic.”

5. Print media is not dead. 87% of survey respondents noted they looked at or read art-related magazines, typically more than three apiece. This is especially surprising given that most respondents were recruited online. In fact, **magazines were cited as the number one source for learning** with 77% of recreational artists stating that they used magazines for learning, followed by books at 76%, the web at 64% and art classes or workshops by 63%.

Quick Facts: Artist Numbers, Spending, and Artworks

Numbers

- 4.4 million active artists
- 600,000 professional artists
- 3.2 million recreational artists
 - 1.8 million took art classes or seminars (55%)
 - 1.9 million sold their artworks (60%)
- 600,000 degree-seeking students taking art classes
- 122,000 art-degree-seeking college students
- Market growth about 4% per year, including population and spending growth

Spending

- Active artists total
 - \$2.5 billion on art materials, durable goods, media
 - \$1 billion on classes and workshops
 - \$665 million on “craft” materials, photography, software, travel, studio
- **Per artist**
 - \$1,330 professional artists’ median spending on art-related materials and services
 - \$880 recreational artists median
 - \$1,241 student artists median
- **By retail type on art supplies (recreational artists)**
 - 36% art supply stores
 - 28% online
 - 18% crafts chains
 - 18% other (bookstores, hardware, home dec, fabric, quilt, bead, thrift)

Artists’ works of art

- Number of artworks created, median for 2008
 - 75 professional artists
 - 36 recreational artists
 - 57 students
- Kinds of art, as percentage of all art produced by recreational artists, 2008
 - 17% paintings
 - 23% drawings
 - 30% mixed media, handmade books, 3-D art
 - 18% digital art
 - 12% other
- **Percentage of artists using various materials (recreational artists, selected categories)**
 - 89% paint (acrylic 66%, watercolor 58%, oils 35%)
 - 87% drawing materials (pencils, markers, pastels, charcoal, etc.)
 - 91% supports/surfaces (paper, canvas, books, panels, etc.)
 - 49% found objects
 - 53% fiber
 - 61% digital tools (printer, scanner, graphics software)
- **Materials of growing interest not regularly carried by art supply stores**
 - Art fabrics, inks, encaustics, ceramics, digital, fibers,
 - Found/recycled/repurposed, printmaking supplies, metals

Additional Resources

For a free copy of the 8-page *Artists & Art Materials 2009* executive summary, visit <http://www.namta.org/marketstudies>. The complete, 190-page study is available to NAMTA members, or can be purchased for \$5000.

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted by Hart Business Research and is based on spring 2009 surveys of 2,714 active artists; 141 specialty art materials retailers; and 78 art materials suppliers as well as analysis of government data and numerous industry interviews. Retailer and supplier respondents were randomly selected. “Active artists” were defined as those who were actively engaged in art and completed about 10 or more artworks in the previous year. Artist survey respondents were gathered from a diverse set of sources, including magazine subscriber lists, artist Web sites and blogs, and retailer sites and e-newsletters. No source provided more than 20% of artist respondents. Artists were segmented into professionals (367); recreational artists (1,970); and students (377). All summary data is from the 2009 surveys unless indicated otherwise.

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The International Art Materials Trade Association (NAMTA)

NAMTA is the only organization catering specifically to those who sell or manufacture art and creative materials. NAMTA unites members in a common goal to grow the art materials industry by sharing information, creating networking opportunities, and providing benefit programs to its members.

“American Artist” Magazine Group

Founded in 1937, “American Artist” is the leading monthly magazine for representational and figurative artists seeking inspiration and instruction on improving their craft. Devoted to the realism in art that its readers cherish, “American Artist” considers the artists it features to be shining examples of excellence in their medium, whether oil paint, sculpture, watercolor, pastel, colored pencil, graphite, printmaking, or charcoal. “American Artist” is published by Interweave, a leading arts and craft media company. Additional publications in the “American Artist” Magazine Group include: “Watercolor,” “Drawing,” and “Workshop,” as well as the online media site ArtistDaily.com, an online community for professional and recreational artists and students.

Hart Business Research

Hart Business Research specializes in research and reports for creative businesses and industries. Hart reports provide reliable market data and innovative findings that uncover paths for growth. Founded in 2002, Hart has produced reports on beading, stamp collecting, sewing, knitting and crocheting, needlepoint, counted thread, amateur astronomy, museum equipment, and adult education.

Websites

www.Namta.org

www.Namta.org/MarketStudies

www.ArtistDaily.com

www.Interweave.com

www.HartBusinessResearch.com

Media Contact

Jaime Guthals

Publicist, Interweave

(502) 243-6834

JaimeG@interweave.com

Rachel Gray

Director of Membership & Communications, NAMTA

membership@namta.org

(704) 892-6244

rgray@namta.org

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