

#	Question
1	I do voluntary work for a charity called USPG and wondered if What's App could be helpful for marketing?
	Yes Whatsapp can be used as a channel for marketing and reaching your audience. Using contact information in this way is bound by the typical GDPR framework, my colleague Jacqueline who looks after email marketing would be best placed for further support in this area.
2	Do all web platforms have easy to use functionality to set up e commerce options? Does the payment happen automatically through those websites or is there a lot of work to do behind the scenes? (Selling online courses)
	Most website builders, such as Wix, Squarespace etc have a subscription option which provides transactional functionality ie the ability to accept card payments. The process of setting these up is quite user-friendly and well documented. When setting up the configuration for this, you will typically decide which payment gateway to use - there is generally a choice of the platform's own gateway; or using a third-party such as Stripe. This will then be used to handle and process funds, and ultimately transfer to your bank account. Once setup, payments will be processed 'automatically'.
3	We have struggled to find platforms for pre-recorded content, we can sell links to recordings, but making them unsharable has been a problem. I know you don't want to get into the weeds with suppliers, but for video content we do find it tricky.
	Yes this can be a concern. Many organisations are of the view that the risk of content 'leaking' and inhibiting sales is minimal/low-risk, therefore do not overly concern themselves with this and are happy to take the revenue on sales regardless. There are tools such as Wistia which offers a reasonable free account with 25GB of free video hosting space which enable time-sensitive URLs to be set. However working out which tool/platform to use and how it connects to your ecommerce sales platform would be best addressed in a 1-to-1 conversation.
4	This is fantastically helpful. As a resource can I share the recording with students on my programme (BA PhotographY at Salford University)
	Yes - the recording will be publicly available on our website, so you're welcome to share it with your students. While direct DCN support is limited to individuals and organisations eligible for Arts Council England funding, these open resources can be accessed more widely.
5	Do people still sell direct through Instagram? And using eg PayPal? Thinking of one-off sales
	Instagram is primarily important as a channel to generate awareness and interest in your products, including for one-off sales. You can then direct traffic to a webpage with for example a Stripe checkout, or Paypal checkout, or your own fully-fledged online shop checkout page. There is something called 'Instagram Shops' but this functionality is only fully available in North America, and the UK is in what is described by Meta as an 'open Beta' trial, with not all functionality available to all users.
6	As an independent artist I find it hard to understand where to begin in terms of reach (eg for selling artworks and prints through one owns website) - in your experience where is it simpler/easier to get more reach beyond your own network? Is it through social media or seo or email newsletters?
	I'm not sure this is ever a simple or easy thing to do and I don't think that a single channel holds the magic answer. I think instead it is about thinking strategically about how you can use different channels to build more relationships of quality and depth, with more people. Social Media is definitely a key lynchpin in this.
7	Where can I learn more about selling paintings through platforms like Instagram? Is Instagram just sending people to your website or can Instagram be used to sell in a different way?

	Probably best by booking in for a 1-to-1 conversation with me!
8	Would it make sense to do a mystery item sale? We dont have a catalogue of items but if people pay e.g £5 they get a random piece of our ceramics? How important is SEO to drive traffice to the site.
	Yes, this is a great idea - a little bit like when in charity shops, you sometimes see books wrapped in brown paper with a loose indication of plot eg: '1920's detective thriller'. In a similar way, I'd give a loose indication of the mystery ceramic. Regarding SEO - it depends on what you offer. If you have any kind of in-person venue or activities, SEO is really important to make sure that you appear for local searches. For broader ceramics, unless you have a particular specialism / niche focus, which people might be searching for, it is probably less critical. I would be happy to discuss both areas on a 1-to-1 call
9	Would you ever just ask people to do a bank transfer to avoid fees? Or is there a free way to do it?
	Yes, you can do this, however the downsides are that it can feel unprofessional and some customers pay be put off by not having the protection of paying by card, and generally it probably has a lower conversion rate, than a standard checkout page. Some banks such as Monzo and Starling, now offer an embeddable bank transfer page, which is a slight improvement, but technically it still leaves the customer exposed to more risk. The most economical payment gateway that I know of is Stripe, 1.5% + 20p transaction charge. Sadly there is no such thing as a 'free' payment gateway, except cash, IRL (in real life).