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Do You – or Don't You: Do you take part in art and craft markets as either a buyer or seller?

BY INSTORE TEAM



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15% YES, I HAVE

I shop for up-and-coming artisans. — Michael Cook, Walter J. Cook Jeweler, Paoli, PA

We went to the Philadelphia Buyers Market and the Global Design Show and had a great buying trip. We saw some regulars and also picked up quite a few new jewelry artists. — Leslie Lawrence, FireWorks Gallery, Halifax, NS

We've found that one or two of the jewelry designers we sell are selling at these shows at the same pricing they give us, which we consider to be unfair. It's definitely not the best situation, but the shows are a great place to find emerging talent and catalysts for new trends. — Andrea Riso, Talisman Collection, Folsom, CA

Love them! The creative part of the jewelry business is what I adore. Craft markets show things with a lot of fresh ideas and innovative styles. — Susan Eisen, Susan Eisen Fine Jewelry & Watches, El Paso, TX

We do a lot of custom so I need to see what's out there. — Marta Jones-Couch, Elements, Des Moines, IA

We always do a raffle so we can get the e-mails of people in attendance. We like to follow up with an email with a promo code for free shipping with an Etsy purchase, or something along those lines. We love to network with the other vendors, because in the handmade market, other crafters can sometimes be your best customers. — Sarah Ragsdale, David Douglas Designs, Marietta, GA

85% NO, I HAVEN'T

Our downtown just had a big one, and we closed for it! Sometimes we try to participate, but it usually proves to be not worth our while. Those craft festivals tend to bring out bottom-feeders, and our regular customers can't get to us because of street closures and parking complications. — Jennifer Hornik Johnson, Jae's Jewelers, Coral Gables, FL

The set-up and tear-down, the travel and the overhead just got to be stupid-expensive for us as vendors. As a buyer, they make me want to buy a beer, chug it, and slice my wrists with the bottle. Glass sold as stones, plate sold as sterling — just too disheartening. — Erin McMichael Hess, Accents, Colorado Springs, CO