Printful Releases a 10-Way Guide to Earning a Living From Art in 2026

New resource spans prints, print-on-demand products, licensing, teaching, digital downloads, grants, and freelance work, with advice on combining income streams


10-Way Guide to Earning a Living From Art in 2026

CHARLOTTE, NC, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Printful, the leading global print-on-demand and fulfillment company, has released a new guide outlining 10 proven ways artists can earn income in 2026, from selling originals and limited-edition prints to licensing, teaching, and freelance work, together with practical advice on building a sustainable business model around creative output.

From Originals to On-Demand Products

> Most artists already have the hard part done – the work itself. This guide is about the second half: putting that work on products, courses, and licenses so income stops depending on a single sale."
>
> *Davis Sarmins, Director of Growth Marketing at Printful*

According to the guide, the most direct route remains selling original art and prints through marketplaces such as Etsy, Saatchi Art, and Artfinder, and the resource recommends offering the same design as both an original and a limited-edition print series, with files prepared at a minimum of 300 DPI for print quality. The second route is placing artwork on custom products such as wall art, hoodies, and tote bags through print on demand, which the guide notes carries zero upfront production costs and no inventory overhead. Printful advises starting with three to five core products before expanding, and connecting a store on Shopify, Etsy, WooCommerce, or Amazon.

The resource on how to make money as an artist then turns to teaching and licensing. Artists can run group workshops, private lessons, or structured online classes on platforms such as Skillshare, which pays per minute watched, or Teachable and Udemy, which allow custom

pricing, and the guide suggests publishing a free short tutorial before launching a paid course. Licensing lets companies use an artist's designs on stationery, home decor, apparel, and digital products in exchange for royalties, with agencies such as Art Licensing International and Wild Apple named as entry points and a licensing-specific portfolio of product mockups recommended.

Building an Audience and Diversifying Income

The guide devotes a section to online presence, pointing to blogs that rank in search, YouTube as the second-largest search engine globally, and Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest, while advising artists to commit to one or two platforms and build an email list from day one. Digital products such as Procreate brush sets, wallpapers, coloring pages, and planner templates sold on Creative Market, Gumroad, or Etsy offer instant delivery and can be bundled for higher price points. Contests and grants, including the Luxembourg Art Prize, the BP Portrait Award, the World Illustration Awards, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts, are presented as sources of prize money, exhibitions, and curator visibility.

The remaining routes cover writing and self-publishing art content through Amazon KDP and Blurb, collaborating with other artists on limited print series or co-branded merchandise under a written agreement and a test run of 50 to 100 units, and freelancing in graphic design, editorial illustration, and pattern design on Upwork, Fiverr, Behance, and Dribbble. Across all ten, Printful recommends selecting three or four income streams that reinforce one another, keeping a weekly practice schedule with at least a daily 30-minute sketch session, and researching competitor pricing on Etsy, Saatchi Art, and Society6.

Turning Artwork Into a Product Line

"Most artists already have the hard part done – the work itself. This guide is about the second half: putting that work on products, courses, and licenses so income stops depending on a single sale," said Davis Sarmins, Director of Growth Marketing at Printful.

The guide closes with a five-step path for selling art through Printful: create a free account, upload artwork to the Design Maker, integrate a Shopify, Etsy, or WooCommerce store, list products, and let Printful print, pack, and ship each order on a pay-per-order basis with no monthly subscription. The Catalog spans apparel, accessories, wall art, posters, and pet products, alongside stationery such as custom notebooks and home decor such as custom pillows, allowing a single illustration to appear across an entire product line.

About Printful
Printful is a global ecommerce platform and on-demand production partner that helps entrepreneurs and businesses create and sell custom products online. Through in-house production, fulfillment services, ecommerce integrations, and design tools, Printful enables brands to launch and grow without holding inventory.

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