After you've done your research to find a gallery that is appropriate for your work (as described by Don Friedlich in Part 1 - Galleries: Are They Right for You?) it is time to contact the gallery with images of what you make.

First look on-line at the gallery’s web site for information on how artists should submit images and material for review. Check the web site thoroughly; often this information is buried deep in the web site since this is not information commonly accessed by the public.

If you don’t see this information on the web site, call or email the gallery directly. Introduce yourself and ask about their procedures for artist review and application. Don’t be surprised if they say that they aren’t taking on any new artists: the gallery world is limited and selective.

If you are invited to submit material, follow the gallery’s submission guidelines EXACTLY including the number, size and type of images. Some galleries prefer a package sent through the mail; others may prefer email submissions or a link to your web site.

Most importantly, submit only fantastic images. Gallery owners and managers may reasonably assume that the quality of the photographic documentation that you submit is representative of the quality of your work. While this assumption may not be true, visual images play a critical role and their quality and appearance do influence the gallery’s assessment of your work.

Examples of poor quality images:

Left image (above) has a distracting background that is not look like a professional quality photograph. The hot spot on bracelet washes out the vibrant color.

Right image (above) has wrinkled, busy fabric. The red beading on the fabric and fabric color are very distracting to the earrings. The earrings are not large enough relative to the total image. The earrings are also slightly out of focus.
Do not send images with distractions in the background. I would suggest a background of white or a graduated grey. Brightly colored backgrounds are fine for websites (e.g. Etsy) but rarely used in the "gallery world."

Here are a few additional suggestions for top quality images:

- Avoid an unbalanced image, such as the subject off to one side.
- Avoid too much empty space in your image – fill the frame.
- Correct lighting and exposure is essential.
- Do not use heavily textured fabric or paper, wrinkled or draped material, dramatic or contrived backgrounds such as sunsets, landscapes, pebbles or exotic patterns.

**YOUR IMAGE PACKAGE** should look creative and professional. Unless the gallery specifies differently, include the following in your image package:

- **Cover Letter** - stating briefly why your work is appropriate for that particular gallery or retail establishment. If you have visited the gallery, say so in the letter. Make it clear that your decision to approach this particular gallery is based on your research into the work they represent.
- **Resume** - one or two pages
- **Artist Statement** - one or two short paragraphs (*short, entertaining and relevant about your work*). Pique their interest in your work with interesting content, and make it relevant to the gallery and their audience.
- **Images of your work** - burned on a CD or sent by email.
  - Send jpg (for easy viewing) if sending the images by email.
  - Send both jpg and tif 300 dpi (or higher for print quality), if you are sending a CD.
- **SASE Envelope** (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) if you want your materials returned.
- **Image description sheet should include the following information for every image.**
  - Title of work
  - Date of work
  - Artist’s name
  - Brief description of materials
  - Dimensions (height x width x depth)
  - Photo Credit of the photographer
- **Contact Sheet** (Page of thumbnail images and key information).

A contact sheet is rarely requested but if you are sending a CD in the mail, I think this adds a lot to your image package. This way the gallery or store can quickly glance at your images.
without even putting the CD in their computer. This quick and easy access to your images was an advantage that slides offered that has been lost with digital media.

Make sure that the titles for the images include your last name and the title of the work (or at least part of the title). Example for my images would be:

BermanH_IDneck.jpg or

Berman.idnecklace.jpg

Your key to success is hard work, originality, and persistence. Good luck.

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This is Part 2 in a four part series of articles originally published on Etsy to promote the SNAG Professional Development Seminar 2009. You can find the other articles in this series on this web site.

The Professional Development Seminar organized by Harriete Estel Berman, Andy Cooperman, and Don Friedlich presents lectures and discussion designed to offer students, emerging artists and established professionals information vital to establishing and maintaining a career in the arts.