

HELLFIRE

Painting

HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL

PROFESSIONAL

MINIATURE PAINTER



How to Become a Successful Professional Miniature Painter

By Max Dubois

This book wouldn't have been possible without the help of Michele Olsen, she is a rockstar of the painting world.

Her website, odins-vault.com is filled with sweet deals on essential hobby supplies.



Disclaimer and credentials:

Everybody is getting in commission painting these days.

Your mom, at least 2 gamers in every store, even Jacques, that weird French dude with the beret and flimsy moustache.

Maybe you want to step in the game yourself.

The good thing about everybody trying to become a commission painter is that most of them are doing it badly. But not you, no-uh, no sir. You are now in possession of the one tool all these so-called pro-painters on e-bay lack: this book.

Before giving you tips, who am I to tell you what to do and not to do with your own little start-up studio?

Well, I happen to make a living out of painting miniatures, teaching classes and writing articles and e-books about painting for the past decade or so. In that time, I've travelled across America, made friends and drank more than my fair share of beer in various tournaments. I also own a game store that I built from the ground up. Business and marketing are no strangers to me having been in the business now for the better part of my life.

What is in this book: You are going to learn a lot of marketing and business but little in terms of painting techniques and tutorials. The reason behind this is that running a successful painting business has very little to do with how you actually paint – provided you are at least somewhat proficient at the basics – basecoats, dry brushes and washes – it's rather based on how you use those skills and market them.

You can trust the method shown in this book will help be successful to start and grow your business.

Painting models for money might look like a dream job. It might be your dream job. I know for sure it is mine. And after doing it for years and watching friends succeed doing the same and, sadly, even more friends do it and fail, I've come to the realization that commission painting has less to do with your actual skills than how you run your business.

As much as I am a professional painter and spend most of my days painting, I am a businessman. My time is divided between operating a game store, setting up tournaments for various games and obviously, writing.

This book is about making money.

As much as self-improvement, fame and whatever else your heart desires, commission painting is a job and you need to pay the bills. I don't want to take out all the fun out of painting, as it is after all a hobby, but passion aside, commission painting is a job and you should treat it like one. The techniques and method in this book are aimed at those looking to make money out of painting models.

As such, there won't be a lot of techniques covered in this book, because I will assume you know a little bit about everything. Moreover, the methods addressed in the book work regardless of the techniques you have, as it will focus on making the most out of them, whatever they are.

If you are still reading by this point, bully! Because despite this harsh dose of reality, commission painting is an awesome job with a lot of nice perks. Namely, telling people your job is painting toys in your underwear in your living room (which I've found to work oddly well with the ladies), and travelling the globe to meet and teach others just as passionate about the hobby as you are.



Introduction:

Wait, all that previous stuff was not an introduction? The first part was my way of letting you know that I'm not some random weird guy from the internet, and that I know my way around commission painting and running a business.

The goal of this book is to help you assess your marketable skills (painting wise) and give you options on the best way to shape your business around them. If not the best way, at least a few different options to explore.

This is the core of the book. The rest of the book will cover technical business details that you will have to consider, like pricing, social media presence and other things that may seem trivial like naming your business or associating with other painters and businesses.



Part 1: The number one rule.

Part one is also rule number one, who'd have thunk it?

The number one rule, the one to rule them all, the motherlode, the golden rule of commission painting is: Get Paid!

Don't raise the pitchforks yet, call me a sellout or use a variety of words your mom wouldn't be proud to hear out of your mouth.

It's important to wrap your head around this: As much as it's art, it is your job. And getting a paycheck is how you make a living. Loving what you do and working in your passion field is not an excuse to not get paid or make decent living. Most chefs I know love to cook and love food. They also love getting their money every month. I know a lot of trainers that love to work out, they won't train you for free just because they love it.

And because what you charge determines what you earn, pricing is the first subject the book will tackle.

The amount you want to charge/earn is a little bit tricky, as it's very different behind the scenes as what is shown to the client.

Now, we are in the business of toy soldiers and art here, not rocket science, so the math won't be too hard, but you must wrap your head around this concept:

What you want is to be paid a decent hourly wage.

What you need to charge is a flat price per project.

Why is this important?

First of all, a lot of people don't value your time as much as you would want. If you tell a client you charge 20 dollars per hour for your work, they might think it's preposterous.

The second reason is that nobody knows the speed at which you turnout models. One hour's worth of work can mean a unit of 10 models to some and barely a basecoat on a single model to someone else. So you charge 20\$ per hour. Your client thinks it will take you 2, it takes you 4. He's angry, you're angry, you're not getting paid properly and here lies the problem.

The bottom-line is this, and it's the hardest to admit: The end result determines the price, not the time you spent on it. A lot of people fail to understand this at first. How you get there is irrelevant to the client. As such, you want to charge a flat rate per project. And you then figure out how much time it will take you and go from there. Part 3 will go deeper into this reasoning as it is the core of this method.

Getting paid

Unlike other day jobs where you get a paycheck every other week, getting paid per contract can be tricky. The most common and best for every party solution is half up front, half upon completion.

Half up front is half of the cost for painting, plus the amount to buy the models, if need be. This half is not refundable unless you screw up big time. And I mean big time, like destroying models. This half covers clearing up your schedule for the project, and buying whatever supplies you may not already have. Half upon completion is when the project is completed, the client is happy and you are ready to send them away. You get paid before sending them away.

The idea behind this system is that you are always in a position of power, and not in a position to get screwed over. If the client bails out, you have half of the money for your time, supplies and whatever you have bought, plus return shipping fees covered. If the client doesn't have the money when you finish the job, you still have the models, so you can just sit on them while he collects money from the cracks in the sofa or whatever, point is, you have models that are worth far more.

With returning customers and locals, which are easier to track down and deal with, you can be a little more flexible in terms of payments, but never too flexible. Without being hateful and trusting nobody, always assume people won't be able to pay you. Are you in trouble if that happens?

One thing to avoid is getting paid all upfront. Having all that sweet sweet cash might sounds great, but the reality is that nothing saps your motivation faster than painting stuff you might not even like for no incentive (as you already have the money).

Keeping the bigger end of the stick in transactions does not give you unlimited douche-privilege. If you are not owning up to your part of the bargain, like shipping models in a timely fashion after having been paid, you will get a well deserved bad rep.

Whatever terms for payment you chose, always keep them in written form with some sort of agreement from your client. On the next page you'll find an example of such written agreement.

For now, all you have to remember is rule number 1: GET PAID!

Agreement Template

You can include this as part of a Facebook conversation or e-mail. I am not a lawyer, so do bring this up, or me for that matter, to court, but this will help you settle disputes with the Better Business Bureau or Paypal. The example below comes from Caleb Wissenback at CK Studios who was gracious enough to share.

You can tweak and adapt to include as many details and specific as you wish. By having a written price and model list in the same

place, it's also a good reference for yourself, specially if you book your projects well in advance.

Price Quote

Generic Trooper x8

Assembly \$2 each: \$16

Painting \$18 each: \$144

Basing \$3 each: \$24

Total cost: \$184

Estimated delivery date 2/30/19

Weekly project updates will be sent to the customer and completion of project will be confirmed by the customer using final work photos.

We requires a deposit of 50% of labor fees and 100% of materials fees before work can begin

Note: Delay in paying deposit can result in delays to completion date.

The remaining 50% of labor fees along with any additional fees that may be accrued during the project is due within 30 days of completion of project. If remaining fees are not paid within 30 days of completion the studio gains ownership of all models and materials used in the project and will be sold to recover our costs and labor.

By responding to this Email with an affirmative you agree to the terms of service offered in this email.

Part 2 : Painting

Broad tittle for this part that involves very little actual painting advice.

The system

As stated in the disclaimer, this guide assumes you have at least a basic knowledge on how to paint to work with what skills you have to transition art skill into money making skills.

This is by no means to say that you should stop learning or improving your techniques. In fact, the more you paint, even if you're not actively trying to learn stuff, you will improve and develop new skills and tricks.

This method works regardless of your skills. However, you will need to get a firm understanding of what your skill level actually is in order to make the most out of them (which is what the method is all about).

The system is quite simple :

- 1- Assess your skills
- 2- Find your niche
- 3- Compare with competition
- 4- Setup your shop
- 5- Master your niche

After going through these 5 steps in details, this part of the book will go into business opportunities for you to get started with.

1- Assess your skills

In order to know what you're worth, or how to be paid what you're worth, you have to get a sense of where you stand on the skill ladder.

Now being the best at something or overplaying your skills is not really important. Being honest is. What can you do great? What can't you do?

By honest, I mean you have to be brutally honest with yourself.

So try to rate yourself in the following categories from 1 to 10, or with gold stars or whatever system of actual gradation you like- again it's not rocket science.

I can paint very high end miniatures that win painting competitions.

- 1- When I grow up I want to paint like that.
- 5- I can enter them and not be bottom of the pack in said competition.
- 10- Here's my crystal brush next to my slayer sword.

Over the last year, I've painted a full army.

- 1- You mean decade? Yeah, almost finished the one I started in 2009
- 5- Yes
- 10- You mean month right, 'cause I did like 9 of them.

I don't mind painting 50 standard Ultramarines at the same time.

- 1- I work on one limb of a model at a time, 50 is insane.
- 4- I will need Red Bull and a healthy dose of EDM, but eventually I'll make it.
- 6- I like it
- 10- Below 75 at a time is a waste of time, pick up those numbers son.

Next, try to think of what people say about your models when they see them at the store or on the internet. Or ask someone what they like about them.

- Damn Steve, are all those dudes you bought last week already painted?
- Man, John's warboss sure is awesome.
- You are totally winning best painted at the Steamroller next weekend Dana!

If you are from a more competition painting background, good. If you've never painted more than 15 models from the same army, know that too.

The same applies if you knock out armies every week, this is great, and if you've never got into the top tier for painting in a tournament with them, know that too.

These are 2 extreme opposites, as most people will land somewhere in between those cases, but you catch my drift.

This will create something like a *painter's profile* for your style of painting.

So write it down or remember it, but more importantly, remember our motto for this step : Brutal honesty.

BRUTAL.

HONESTY.

2- Find your niche

All painting gigs are not created equals, and different clients want different results. The goal is finding the clients that match your skills.

Gee wizz, what a luck that we sorted out our skills in step 1.

On a scale from highest quality to lowest quality, with the answers you provided from the previous steps, you should rank somewhere in there :

Display Models
High-end Gaming Models
High-end Gaming Armies
Gaming models
Gaming armies
Tournament armies

Display models is the highest in terms of skills. You can't bullshit your way into this or learn it in a week. These are models suited for competitions or for display, painted to the highest standards. Think busts, limited edition sculpts, dioramas.

High end gaming models comes right below. You paint awesome gaming pieces that just don't reach the super high-end of competition. Think army generals, Warcasters, Special Characters

High end gaming armies is pretty much award winning armies, or close to that. Armies that stand out from the crowd and can compete for best painted in tournaments.

Gaming models is exactly as the title suggests. Models used for games. Think Dungeons&Dragons hero or board game character.

Gaming armies is pretty much the same or a larger scale. Think a store's demo kit or full board game like Zombicide or Risk

Tournament army is rough models that just need to be painted, usually quickly. Most tournament require a 3-colour minimum on models. This step is going the extra mile and putting 5, but definitely not 6. Quantity is a quality in it's own.

Usually, your painter profile will land you somewhere between 3 of these « levels » and this will pretty much define your niche. There are lots of others of course, but this will give you a broad enough area to get started in the right path.

If your skill set is somewhat limited, the options are slimmer, Pick something you're good at and that's that.

On the other hand, if you are talented and can do a lot of things, picking the right one to start is key. Pick what you enjoy doing the most or what you truly are best at, to begin with, rather than trying to do a little of each.

3- Compare with Competition

As mentioned in part one, the end result is what counts when it comes to miniature painting businesses. So the next step is to compare what you can do with what's available elsewhere.

You want to compare the quality of their work, their prices and their turnout rate.

Quality : You can use the scale from part 2 and questions from part 1 to determine the quality of his work, of what's his target – does he only paint characters or full armies, for example.

Prices : Obviously prices are important, but only based on the quality of the work. This will help you later on to fix your own prices.

Turnout rate : This can be harder to judge, but how fast the projects are finished and the waiting time before they can take on a new project, if any.

Where to compare :

1- Locally. If there's already a few folks doing commissions, look at what they offer. This will most likely be your starting market too, so knowing who you're up against is important.

2- Close proximity internet. *What do you mean, proximity, bro. It's the world wide web...* Close means roughly the same country. Or same continent at least. While it's great to stay updated and connected to talented artists everywhere, if you're from the US, comparing yourself with some dude from Poland is of little use. He's not really competition, at least not while you start. Close proximity is for those clients for whom the shipping costs would be roughly the same. A service from New Jersey and one from Baltimore, for example.

3- Big names. I won't go into naming them, you can probably figure out for yourself who the big ones are. This is 3rd on the list, because you are not really looking into specifics here – their turnout rate is long because they have a large wait list, and their prices are, usually, higher to reflect this. But figuring out how they do things is great. Again, pick names that have the same quality or service as the one you want to offer. Not a lot of point checking out a high end display model's method and quotes if you plan to bang out an army a week.

Again, in the interest of comparing what you can do with what they can do : Brutal honesty. No « I could if I really wanted to » if you've never done it before, be it painting a whole army or scoring top 3 in painting for a large event, assume you can't at least to start.

The purpose of comparing is to determine where you rank up and which services you can offer. It will also be used to determine pricing in part 3.

4- Setup Shop

You've read this far for this section. Hopefully you didn't skip straight ahead to get here.

All the previous stuff was for this purpose : Plan your work and work your plan.

If you are starting, I would advise on selling a single service. Billy-Joe's Overnight Army, a painted army in a week is nice and there's a niche market for that.

Offering Tabletop A, tabletop B tabletop C, Display quality A, Speed Paint B and other weird ass code names that nobody gets is not better, specially if the distinction between these is hard to or carefully explain. It confuses the client, and it might also confuse you at some point, it's easy to get carried away while painting a nice model, or be bored to death painting the 78th exact same dwarf warrior.

How to pick a service :

First, look at what the local scene is. Collectors, casual gamers, tournament gamers and so on. Billy-Joe's Overnight Armies mentioned earlier would be the perfect service for a Warmahordes-focussed group. Most Warmahordes players don't want high end models and only need their models painted for specific events, so the less they have to pay is generally great, and a quick turnout greater because the lists change fast with the meta.

Bobby-Ray's Majestic Painted Minis on the other hand, could focus on a collector scene, or focus on the same Warmahordes players and offer a good price for their Warcasters.

Picking out and having a clear lists of things you'll do (You can't ever say: « Well, normally no, but I guess I can... ») first makes the rest of your decisions much easier. You are much better off telling a potential customer that you can't paint his HQ to the quality he wants for a decent price than do it anyway and have that client be unsatisfied. We will go deeper in this in part 3.

The best way to start is, of course, to have a couple of clients and projects lined up. If you don't, do not worry, we'll get there.

Setup a business page for your service.

This can be very minimal and only require you the basics :

1-Making sure there are ways to reach you – an e-mail you check every so often, a phone number if you wish, or simply the Facebook messenger interface if that's where your page is. Whatever contact method you have, the key is checking it daily or so.

2- Galleries of what you offer. If you have previous work to showcase, go ahead. If not, pick some of your own models that reflect what you offer in terms of services. If you want to go in the high end quality models, don't bother displaying that army you painted in 2007, as you are not offering that. But the characters from that army, perhaps.

Keeping this page updated is quite important, we'll go deeper into social media in part 3.

Your shop is set, if you have projects lined up, knock 'em out the ballpark and go, you crazy beast. If not, don't loose up and read on, we'll cover that as well later in this part.

5- Master your niche.

According to Malcolm Gladwell, it takes a person 10,000 hours to master any skill. So this is our aim. Now, hopefully we won't get there. But the key to success or moving on is mastering what you do. This is how you transition from being just another commission service to THE commission service for this type of thing.

And maybe maybe it won't take 10,000 hours to get there but repetition truly is key as it develops your competence. Getting to the point where whatever you're painting becomes second nature. When what you're doing is second nature, it becomes easy.

Mastering what you do offer many possibilities onward. One of the most straightforward approach once you've mastered your technique is teaching other painters your way and building a studio or team around this. Teaching classes is another opportunity that will rise once you've mastered your techniques, wether it's at conventions, game stores or something you setup yourself, like a class once a month at a local game store.

Once it's easy, you can improve and pickup something new. And with the plethora of skills you've gained in the process of mastering your first niche, it's only a matter of time until you master that too.

Painting without clients

All this is great if you have clients to paint for. If there's no line at the front door waiting for you to take on their projects, or if you're in a quiet period in between projects, what can you do to make the most out of rule #1?

You should avoid at all cost freelancing for other studios or 'painting agencies', they are the devil and help you in no shape or form your own business.

Here are what I've found to be the best 4 strategies to get started

These strategies will require you to own models or buy stuff, so you will need a little cash down. Also, some are more suited for some painting style, so pick the ones that fit your skill set and go hand in hand with the service you want to offer.

All of these involve setting up an e-bay account, or taking part in sales group on Facebook or forums. These sometimes include a long period before your funds become available, but once you get the ball rolling, it's easy to get a steady paycheck.

1- Fresh new *hawtness*

This is #1 because it's relatively cheap, works with every level of painting and sells really well. Pick something that's been recently released, paint it and sell it. It can be a new army, unit, character, anything that's new and has some people loving. Games Workshop is really good for this if that's your market, as they have new models coming out every week or so.

The key with brand new thing is that it's limited availability. To keep with GW, take Space Marines for example. Space Marines have been around for ages, so there are plenty of those around Ebay and trade groups. On the other hand, painted units/models that came out this week are a lot more hard to find.

This works with pretty much every level, but used differently.

High end stuff: because time is more the issue than quality- to a certain extent, picking a single character or a single unit is fine, specially because high end new releases sell well.

Gaming stuff: Try picking out stuff that's good in game. This might require a little research on the internet, but there's usually a buzz around those units that everyone is looking for.

Low end stuff: You can either pick up a lot more of the new release if you know it's a killer and sell more of them for a lower margin of profit, or combine them with older stuff to make an army/warband of sorts, something playable.

2- Classic Banger

The classic banger is pretty much the same as the *Fresh New Hawtness*, but instead of targeting new releases, it targets best sellers. Again, best sellers might require you to do a little research to actually figure out what is a best seller.

Take Warmachine/Hordes for example. They offer Battle Group Boxes, a box with a Hero and 2-3 big robots/monster guys and a rulebook. These boxes are a banger, people love them. But out of these boxes, some are better than other – because the faction is more popular or straight up better for example. So picking up the Khador Box instead of the Retribution box makes a lot of sense.

For high end miniatures, again think classic or popular characters. In the Warmachine example, pick an iconic Warcaster that's played a lot. Or a Space Marine Captain from Games Workshop, everyone wants Space Marines.

Number 1 and Number 2 strategies are the best ones to get started, and might land you returning customers over time. "Hey, I bought these guys from you way back, I want to add these to my army, can you paint them to match?" And bam, client reeled in- he literally paid you to become your client.

They also work with any quality of paint you want to offer.

3- FLGS Hero (Mid-tier painting strategy)

The Favourite Local Game Store (FLGS) Hero is a little more time consuming, but the payout is great in the long run. Most stores have starter set demos, open copies of some games or new releases, and these work a lot better when they're painted.

This strategy is a mid-tier level, as game stores don't need and won't pay premium for insanely well painted models, and poorly painted demos don't work either.

If you can paint them in exchange for gift vouchers, more power to you. Now this seems to contradict rule #1 as you are getting paid funny-money, but if you turn your vouchers in for models and units you can use in strategy 1 and 2, well you are making money.

Now this is time consuming, as you have to paint twice as much models, but the added bonus is great. The added bonus is exposure and a constant paycheck-sort of.

Exposure will be covered a lot more in part 3, as it's a tricky subject. The keyword here is added bonus. The store is not paying you with exposure, you are getting vouchers (or actual real money, if they're so inclined) that will pay you eventually. Exposure here brings you potential clients, as the store's staff can say: 'Yeah, Jim painted those for us' and the legend of Jim the miniature painter grows.

The constant paycheck thing is about becoming the store's go-to guy when it comes to painting. They have a new demo/starter/advanced copy, better call Jim to get those painted. Way to go, hero!

4- Second Lifer (Any level strategy)

This is for the baller on a budget out there. Buying secondhand minis and painting (or re-painting) them.

The pros of this are that it's incredibly cheap to do, because you invest exactly the amount you want in it. Unlike new models which can sometimes be pricey, second hand models and armies come in all shapes and sizes, and therefore, prices.

Because the Cheap/Fast/Good rule applies everywhere in life, the 2nd lifer is either not fast or not good. Sometimes you don't come across the deals you are looking for or you have to spend quite some time searching, and sometimes the models you are getting are in terrible shape.

One way to bypass this con that is treasure hunting for good deals, the 2nd lifer strategy is best used as a side hustle type of thing. Being focussed on another money making method, but knowing when to pull the trigger on a nice bargain for second hand models.

The biggest trick to learn about second-life-ing models, is to know when to strip (the model, not you, ya perv') and when to paint over. Stripping is a boring and tedious process that is not mandatory in a lot of cases. Plenty of awesome models have been primed 2 or 3 times. The miniature you are repainting may be ugly- uglier than even a mother wouldn't love, but if the paint on it is not an inch thick, it can handle being primed over.

Terrain

Terrain was left out of everything because it's an area that is tricky to work with and somewhat limited. There is a niche for that, and it's easy to start from nothing with terrain building it for materials that cost next to nothing.

Some of the tricky area of terrain include shipping, and while it's easy to get a big box for large pieces, shipping a whole table is another deal.

When building terrain, try to look for pieces that are either really versatile and can be used in multiple games, or that fit certain games to perfection. No in between. For example, Warmachine and Hordes use almost 2D terrain, so making sur most surfaces are completely flat for easy of play is a must. In Warhammer 40K, ruins and forests have a defined edge, so 3 random trees or a corner of walls without is base is not great, no matter how awesome it is.

Another trick to do when you are just starting out is leaving said bases undone before the sale and offer to match it to the future buyer's table. This way, a client doesn't pass on your awesome scenery piece because you painted it desert theme and his table is grass green.

From this point on, you should be able to get started with your own shop. If you don't already have clients lined up, at least have a grasp at what you can do to get the ball going. Part 3 goes deeper in building your brand as a miniature painter and helping the ball roll faster towards your goals.

Part 3 : Business Management

Part 3 will focus on the nitty gritty details besides rule number 1 : Getting paid! and rule number 2 : Paint it like you mean it!

These cover the various odds and ends of running a business.

The information is presented in various points here, and should be easy to browse for specific information later on, in a time of need with the search tool.

Depending your service, some will be spot on, some you will ignore and most will require you to fine tune the general idea into your specific reality.

Essentially, rule number 1 and 2 will get you to where you want to be : you are painting models for a living. Bully! Part 3 takes you to the next level and allow you to get the most out of your business.

Price

Because of rule number 1, setting prices is the first thing covered.

Because of various laws I'm not sure about and don't fancy writing a "painting from jail" book, there won't be specific prices- you should charge 3.5 per model this or that size – type of thing. Mostly because of laws, but also because it's not the way to go. There is not a one size fits all prize chart.

Prices were briefly covered in part 1 and 2, but now we can dig in the specifics of what constitutes a fair price both for your customers and you.

You want to come up with a chart that covers mostly any model you do with 2 prices. Small infantry, big infantry, small cavalry, large cavalry, small tanks, large tanks, insanely large tanks, characters. One row of prices for simple models, one for complex models. An ork and a space marine are both small infantry and roughly the same size, but let me assure you that painting a space marine is 3 times quicker. On a smaller scale, a space marine in one colour and a space marine painted in a split scheme will not take the same time.

Whether to display that chart or not for your clients to find is up to you, but keeping it to yourself is generally a wiser choice. Below is an example of such chart that you can print and fill out for yourself, or you can download it from the hellfire painting blog in pdf form.

MODELS :	Basic	Complex
Small Infantry		
Large Infantry		
Very Large Infantry		
Cavalry /Bikes		
Monster Cavalry		
Standard Monster		
Large Monster		
Behemoth-sized Monster		
Small Vehicle		
Medium Vehicle		
Large Vehicle		
Behemoth-sized Vehicle		
Infantry Character		
Large Character		
Mounted Character		
Monster Character		
Display Board		

Setting a Price

Prices are set mostly by comparison and by the rule of 2.

There is this rule in life : Fast, Cheap, Good. Pick 2.

Painting high quality armies at a fast rate will not be cheap. Armies done for cheap and in a week won't be high quality.

The only combo we are not really interested in is good and cheap, as it goes against rule number 1 : Get paid.

As such, when comparing, don't assume that doing the exact same thing as someone else, but charging lower is the way to go, as it usually isn't. You are essentially cutting on your own profit. The only way this is the right path is if a painter is overcharging for a service.

So, when you are comparing prices with immediate competition, look at services that have the same 2 rules as you and go from there. There is very little point in knowing that a high end painter charges 200 for a detailed bust if you are painting a full army every week.

A couple of key points:

Turnout rate is usually underpriced and undersold. Do YOU need models fast of for a specific close deadline? There's a huge market for that, and with express shipping or next day shipping available in most countries, there's no excuse for missing out on this service.

"This place does it for lower" If you've done your homework in comparing prices, you can usually tell the clients why that's the case. Matching prices is not a great policy overall. If a lot of people are telling you that there's better offers out there, maybe you need to revisit your price chart.

Write every order or quote down. Ideally in a word file to be able to browse for specific projects and quotes. Write down the name of the client and a broad description of his project that's easy to find. *Space Wolves Army – Steve G.* Is easy enough and pretty straightforward.

And make notes on the project:

- Did the client say yes
- Was it pre built
- Did you get bogged down by some models

Next time Steve G asks your for prices, look at what you've already offered and if he took you up on it, or next time you have a Space Wolves army to paint, you have a better idea of what to charge.

Below is a slightly modified chart that allows you to keep notes or show to clients to give them a breakdown of the prices. Once again, you can find a downloadable version on the hellfire painting blog if you don't feel like making your own.

Project		
Client:		
MODELS :	Quantity	Price
Small Infantry		
Large Infantry		
Very Large Infantry		
Cavalry /Bikes		
Monster Cavalry		
Standard Monster		
Large Monster		
Behemoth-sized Monster		
Small Vehicle		
Medium Vehicle		
Large Vehicle		
Behemoth-sized Vehicle		
Infantry Character		
Large Character		
Mounted Character		
Monster Character		
Display Board		
Extras :		

Clients

Transitioning from getting paid to figuring out exactly who the shadowy figures giving you money are exactly.

There really is only 2 type of clients : New clients and returning ones. New clients are the 1st timers, people who you've never painted models for. *Noshitsherlock*. Returning customers is, as the name suggest, clients that come back to you for new projects. *Ground breaking stuff, I know*. These two types of client each come with their own list of pros and cons, and this paragrah is about using those pros and cons to your advantage.

Let's start with returning business. These clients are your bread and butter, and you should always strive to accommodate them (within the means of the humanly possible).

Returning clients are a great proof, one you can showcase to other potential clients, that you are not ripping off people. You don't see people getting ripped off come back and ask for more. In the age of sending your precious models to some stranger from the internet, this kind of golden seal of approval means a lot.

The other thing about returning clients is they know how you work. From deadlines to quality, they've been there before and they approve of it, which is the main issue you can have with new clients.

The biggest problem with returning clients is that when your business evolves, they stay the same. If you have a longer waiting list or are upping your prices, they are not familiar with this, and this is where you have to accommodate them. Letting them know when your next window for a project for them will be for example.

Now with new clients : The classic business theory is that acquiring new clients costs 10% more than keeping a client. This 10% is not truly in cost, as you won't have to shell out money, but in time, as you will need to put some efforts in sealing the deal and understanding what they expect from you.

The pros of signing new clients is to expand your reach and client base. If you only paint models for Timmy, once all of his stuff is done, or if Timmy suddenly loses his job, you also end up out of work. Now if you're lucky, Timmy's play group will want some of your models as well. Again, once this play group no longer have models for you, there goes your steady income.

That's what new clientele does, showing off your work in other circles. So getting a new customer might be in reality getting you 2-3, or more if you've struck a gold mine in the form of a really large play group.

A good trick when dealing with new clients to mitigate the 10% more work theory is ask where they heard of you. Most of the time, if they are friends or in the same gaming group as one of your other client, they will tell you before you even have to ask. Using this information can help you steer their project into one they will like. For example, if you did a flashy looking army that this new guy tells you he has seen online, chances are that he likes flashy armies. If he didn't like what he saw in your online post, he wouldn't have bothered with you.

Turning down new clients : The big pro of new clients, expanding your reach, can backfire pretty quickly. As much as they may tell everyone that you are the bee's knees, if you mess up their project- for whatever reason, even if he's a client from hell, you will most likely lose that circle forever.

If you feel like you can't deliver on what a new client wants, again, for whatever reasons, your end or his, tell him straight up. This will prevent the backlash of you becoming unreliable or whatever else he chooses to describe your work ethics, whether that description is accurate or not.

Exposure, Added bonus and Free Stuff.

There are always clients that expect to be given a lot of credit for exposure and for showing off your army. This is a big no-no, as it breaks the first rule (Get Paid!).

The thing about exposure is this : you are going to get as much exposure from the guy that pays full price. The same goes for free stuff, added value, and bargains because it's a large order and other whatnots.

If you do stuff because you want to, this is perfectly fine. If you have a returning client that has a nice model you really enjoy painting, step up the quality and don't charge for it.

But whenever somebody asks for it, it should be a no. Not a flat-out no, but something you can charge for. Obviously they want it, they asked for it.

The same goes for exposure. Don't discount or give away freebies unless you want to paint models for someone to show them off for you, for example a big tournament goer, a blogger or youtuber.

Do so with the express condition that they have to promote your business and/or models.

Another way to get exposure and not lose money is lending models and/or armies to such people for a specific event (ideal if you are also attending said event). This way, once the exposure period is over, you are free to sell the miniatures, or keep them without having given a whole army to get exposure.

Showcasing your Work

This is quite important and ties in with the next point, Social Media and Online Presence. Showcasing your work correctly is another fundamental aspect of running a successful business.

As a general idea, consider that whatever you are showcasing is the only thing a potential client will see to judge your work and chose whether or not you'll paint their army.

What sort of showcase? Digital and Physical.

Digital, as the name implies is pictures and videos. The important part here is accurate representation of your work. Having thousands of crappy pictures to show off your awesome work is irrelevant, just as having a massively retouched portfolio of crappy models that look nice on pictures is. Both of these will cost you clients.

To recap the statement that whatever you are showcasing is the only thing a potential client will see to judge your work, consider this. Everybody at your local game store has seen your awesome Ultramarines army. However, to anybody that has never seen them in person, your ultramarines are just as good as the pictures or videos they've seen of them.

And to the same extent, if you retouch a picture well beyond it's actual look, people from the internet will think it's nice, until they see it in person and will be disappointed with your work. Businesses that do this are generally torn apart by the community pretty quickly.

The keyword here is accurate. You want accurate representation of your work.

Physical is people getting to see your models with their own eyes. There is more than pictures in term of showcasing your work. Most stores have actual showcases where clients can leave their models on display. Having some of yours displayed along with a business card of sorts can work wonders.

The other great way to showcase models is attending events with them and talking about your work. The talking part is important. Don't just lurk there and assume people will know you paint models for a living. Or for that matter, that you painted the army and you're not just *reppin'* whoever painted it for you. Putting a face on the studio or artist how you create connections with clients.

In face to face situation, you are just as much showcasing yourself as you are your models, so keep this in mind.

Social Media and Online Presence

This part is quite big and could very well be part 4 as it's quite important.

In the age of technology, having an online presence is a must. The internet is an awesome way to showcase your work, sell your work, make new clients, learn techniques.

In this case, less is more. Less, not none. This is strictly business based and not what you do on your free time. The problem with social media is it's time consuming, whether you want it or not. Sticking with 2 or 3 platforms is the best route. The goal with our 2-3 platform technique is mastering those platforms. In Ron Swanson's term : Don't half-ass 2 things, whole-ass one thing.

Even with apps and bots that connect all your accounts and sync all your posts, you can't make the most out of the platforms you are *bot-ing*. Using bots and apps to post on everywhere for you is useful to save time, but you are not making the most out of social media, which is interacting with other humans.

Because our goal is to paint models and not become a social media page, you want to focus on good traffic – people that like you, clients and most importantly, people commenting and interacting with you. Having 100,000 followers on Instagram is not of much use they're all ladies from Russia that post about Starbucks, fake handbags, vodka and couldn't care less about miniatures.

The platforms we want to focus on are the one that drive traffic to your business. For example, Facebook is great as you share stuff you've made in groups or your page, and people form said group « discover » you and your work. On the other hand, snapchat might be all the rage these days, unless clients are actively looking for your account, you will not gain new views/clients/followers.

This is why we focus on 2-3 platforms and not try to do it all. Here's a run-down of the most popular (at the time of writing) and what you can do with them to interact with miniature enthusiast from all over the world.

Regardless of the options you chose to invest time in, keep your business account separate from your personal account. People who follow you for your miniatures don't usually care about your food, your gym going or whatever club you were in last weekend.

Facebook : Facebook is the big one, as mostly everybody uses it. Having a Facebook page for your business now is more important than having a website. So, step one is getting a business page for your painting business. Step two is joining a bunch of groups hobby or gaming related to your target audience – if you want to paint high end display model, following play groups might not mean as much as the guy who paints armies in bulk. Step three is following other commission pages to keep up with the time.

When you do finish projects, share it with people in a few selected groups. Try to pick the most relevant groups rather than share on all of them, as people who follow all the groups will get spammed by your post. Missing out on a few viewers trumps out annoying the crap out of some other viewers.

Website : I would recommend a website only if you know what you are doing. Keeping it simple is our main goal, and there are a bunch of other options out there. Having a functioning website, or at the very least a landing page with a few contact information and a couple of pictures does scream: *I have my act together*. Simply put, a website is a nice and professional way to showcase your stuff, but what drives people to visit your website is what's more important.

Blog : Blogging is quite easy and straightforward and they are great because there's a large community already. Setting up even the most minimal blog takes minutes, and you can use it as a picture dump if you don't enjoy writing. Blogger is pretty great, it's free and it ties in with google, the biggest search engine on the planet, which makes reaching new viewers easy. With blogger, anybody who has a gmail account can comment on your posts. Posts can also be shared to your other social media places. Wordpress offer a nice alternative, with more customization to your blog, but it's also costing you some (not a lot) of dollars and require some skills or learning to truly make it great.

Youtube : As mentioned earlier, google is the biggest search engine on the planet. Youtube is number two. A short movie where you go over some models of the commission or even a simple slideshow of pictures can do great. This is good with armies because you can talk tactics and options if you know about them. Just like blogger, almost everyone has a youtube account and can interact with you.

Instagram : Instagram looks like it was made for miniature painters. Post square pictures, use a couple of hashtags that get traffic and relate to your picture and it will be shared to people with similar interests. Because the sharing thing is based on who you follow as well as your hashtags, follow other miniature painters because a) you might learn new techniques and see what's up in the miniature painting world and b) the afore mentioned social interaction. Every time I've asked a question on techniques and tips on someone's Instagram I received the answer I was looking for.

These are the main ones, but here are a few alternative :

Facebook live/ Twitch : Or any other live streaming. This is great, but because of the material and time it takes to set up, it's not quite worth the effort if you're beginning. Sticking with quality youtube content is a better starting strategy.

Twitter : Twitter is nice because there's is a lot of interactions, however it's not quite picture friendly, so it's always tied to some other platform- usually a blog.

Snapchat : Somewhat Instagram's weird cousin, snapchat is definitely fun and picture oriented. However, as mentioned earlier, you can't really gain exposure with snapchat, people have to find your account for themselves.

Periscope : A mix of live streaming and snapchat, periscope is not really suited for miniature painting, as it combines all the features we were not really looking for.

Forums : The glory days of internet message board is behind us. Unless you are heavily, and really, really implicated in a forum already, you are better served with Facebook groups, as they work in similar fashion, but offer more upside.

Social Media Trap

This is a trap that a lot of budding painters fall for. Mostly youtube, but currently Twitch streaming is the rage and both are ways you can screw yourself. A lot of folks hear about youtube ad revenue and they go crazy. They think they can stop doing contracts and only do videos. *They've made it out of the commission painting. They'll be big names, superstars.* This is absolutely not what this book is about. And yes, these quotes, even the superstar one, comes from real people.

Even if youtube is recommended as one of the best source to showcase your stuff, ad sense, the youtube money platform, is not a job in itself. Youtube videos are best used to drive customers to your painting business. Your painting should not be a way to sustain your video making whatever. The only way to make money with youtube is making more videos and hoping ad sense doesn't change their payment modalities and screw your income.

Simply put: there are ways to make money online, but the bulk of your efforts should not go towards that. Showcase your painted stuff, but don't lose time making tutorials, step by steps or whatever else, at least, not until you are a painting legend.

Work ethics and schedule

Yes, this book is about work. As mentioned earlier, even if painting model is your passion and it's art, you are also making it your job, and it requires work.

Painting takes time, and slow and steady wins the race. Slow and steady as in 30 hours spread over 5 days, rather than 30 hours crammed in 2 days.

Even if commercial space is incredibly cheap where you are, most setups will be working from home type of situations. Working from home (in your underwear) is a blessing and a curse. I don't need to explain the joy of working in your underwear, or sweatpants in the colder months. All is not blue skies and sunshine.

There are countless resources, tips and tricks out there covering this, as no matter the field, working from home can be quite challenging. This is where schedule and work ethics come in.

Pros, you can pick whatever time you wish to be your working hours.

Cons, you actually have to work those hours.

Try to pick something that's constant. Night, day, morning, afternoon, whatever, but make it your regular working hours. Try to pick times that you won't really have other things to do.

Evenings is the main culprit. Painting in the late afternoon and evening every day is quite awesome, you get to wake up whenever, waddle around for a couple hours while you wake up and comes the afternoon get to work. Easy peasy. However, when your roommate or girlfriend working a 9 to 5 comes home, distractions everywhere. Your friends are going out for a beer, distraction. It's

game night at the club, distraction. And after a week, you've painted 20 hours instead of 35. Rats.

This was for external distractions, now for the internal distractions. Or the distractions that are at home, those tasks and other whatnots. Your working hours are not time to do laundry. No you can't squeeze a movie during your lunch break, or clean up the closet between drybrushes. Don't get me started on that X-Box!

Here are two productivity tricks:

1- Out of Sight, out of Mind.

Having a space dedicated to your work with a curtain or a door is amazing. Keeping your phone in another room when you paint. Put endless playlists on repeat so you don't have to keep clicking or touching your computer. Pets are also tricky, because dogs don't fully grasp the concept of work and cats are as*holes that will sit on your stuff and/or hands (Yes, I have cats at home, and I love the crap out of those as*holes)

Keep all your distractions minimal and set aside 30 minutes to an hour at the end of your day to answer messages, emails and post your stuff up. You will never lose a client because you didn't answer immediately. However, on average, when you lose concentration on a task, you lose 40 minutes of quality work.

2- Juggle-tasking.

This is not multi-tasking, as you are not doing many things at once.

This is really helpful for the slightly ADD, ADHD or people who drift away and lose focus after a while. It's similar to the pomodoro technique but for longer periods.

The pomodoro technique is a study trick where you study for 25 minutes, take a 5 minute break and repeat. But this is ill fitted for miniature painting. Pick blocks of 2, 2.5 or 3 hours with 15-30 minutes in between and work on different projects.

Two and a half hours blocks are great because they make a normal 8 hours day when put together.

From 8 to 10:30 work on your main project. Stretch, watch some netflix or whatever for 30 minutes. 11 to 1:30PM: work on another project. 1:30PM lunch, well deserved. 2PM to 4:30PM work on your main project again. 4:30-5PM, answer emails, post work in progress shots. Then put on pants and enjoy your evening.

Depending on the number of hours you want to work, you can adjust these to fit your need. You can do shorter blocks of the stuff you hate, but have 3 of those blocks each day until it's done.

Crunch time

Crunch time, the grind, beastmode, whatever you want to call it: that one day of the month when you work for 18 hour straight.

Despite your best efforts in planning ahead, sometimes you got to get stuff done. Maybe your client's deadline, maybe yours. When a project is nearing completion, you get carried away. At least, I know I do.

There is no real trick here or whatever. I'm just putting it out there, it's a reality of life and it will happen. However, once per month is reasonable. If you find yourself working 18 hours for 3 days in a row every project you take on, maybe try adjusting the deadlines you give to clients or look carefully at your work ethics and schedule.

Side Hustle

Keeping up with time management, starting your painting gig as a side hustle is something to consider. Of course it's safer because you still have a steady paycheck coming in. However, pulling the trigger and painting full time then becomes a lot harder to do.

The only upside to keeping your job is the steady paycheck. It is a big deal for rent and actually living, specially if you have a wife and kids that depend on your income to live.

The downside is obviously that you can't put all your time and energy on your own setup, and the 40 or so hours per week you spend elsewhere is limiting what you can accomplish in a major way. Working part-time elsewhere is an improvement only if you have days off. Working less hours, but still 5 days a week at a job is the worst, as you get less money and no real day dedicated to painting.

Starting out with a job is obviously the best way, and keeping it unless you can line up a couple of clients to get you rolling probably is the best way to go.

I am not telling you to quit your job and jump in without a chute, but knowing when to do it is the key to success. It's also the best feeling in the world, ask anyone who did it before.

Budget

Keeping your budget like your butt hole, tight, is mandatory. Because you've transitioned from enthusiast hobby to full time hardcorebadassmachine painter (or strive to be) you need to pay more attention to your hobby spending to pay less money. Stuff that might look mundane at first piles up quickly. A 4 dollar tub of glue is fine, but when you go through 5 a month, consider getting the cheapskate version thats a dollar each. 15 bucks saved only with glue in a single month. That's like 26 Miller Lites.

The goal of checking your spending is to save money without compromising the result. Glue, brushes, basing materials are the most important ones, as they are quite expensive when you don't look around and shop for real world equivalent.

Real world equivalent.

Anything branded as a miniature painting specific tool comes with a price hike. It's the same with high performance, sports, construction grade, chefs and whatever else specific sphere in life. Glue is glue. Whatever the pot says it's for, cyanoacrylate from the dollar store is 99% the same as a miniature brand that says cyanoacrylate on the pot. Same for brushes, files, and sand. Yes, \$6 pots of sand are for sale in every game store for a handful, yet you get enough of the same sand can fill an entire sandbox for \$9 going to a hardware store.

Game Store Partnership

Tying in with the budget part above, working a deal with a game store for discounted supplies and models should be another priority for your painting gig. The best way to offer this or approach this is by stating why you are doing this: "I paint a crap load of models and need a crap load of them and supplies" and offering examples of deals you'd be happy with: "Patrons here get a 10% discount or loyalty program, can you double it?" and offer a way to make this easier on them, something like a weekly order basis and paying upfront.

Weekly Order: Each week or so, when it's convenient for the store, you order what you want. This way, you don't take all of the store's new releases on launch day or rob them of an entire row of blue because you're painting 500 Ultramarines that week. You have to be thorough with this, order the supplies and models you will need. You can't call the store back a few days later with a: "never mind, changed my plans, won't buy".

Paying Upfront: This might be more helpful for smaller gaming stores, or to build your trust with the managers of the stores with your orders (who might fear that change of heart call and be stuck with 16 boxes of crappy stuff). Paying upfront gives small stores the incentive and the cash down to do bigger orders, and if your orders are large, you end up helping them a lot.

The don'ts of dealing with stores.

These words and sentences should never leave your mouth when dealing with a store manager/owner:

- I've bought a lot of stuff here in the last couple of years.
- I'm good friend with Billy the manager.
- Whatever, it's cheaper on the internet
- It will get you good exposure when I say I buy my stuff from you guys.

And some explanation as to why you shouldn't utter those words.

It's not being a loyal customer if you expect something in return – you are a loyal customer for a reason, and they might reward you for it. They also might not, it's not something you can leverage.

Everybody probably is friend with Billy when they want something. Friends from way back, too. For some reason, everyone becomes a great friend with game store owners and managers. If Billy was such a friend, he'd work the deal out for you.

Yes the internet might be cheaper. However, game stores offer a steady client base and actual players. Having a healthy gaming community around you is a gazillion times more valuable than saving 20% from some shady seller working from his mom's basement. Healthy community, place to play, display your models, and meet new gaming pals/clients.

Exposure? *Bro, really?* We covered that.

LLC, Sole proprietorship and other Legal Shenanigans

First thing first, I am no lawyer, and even if I was, laws where you are may differ. So don't take this part for granted, and don't end up in jail for tax evasion. I won't come visit you, drug mule is a worse job than commission painting and shower time can be tricky. However, being the only jailed miniature painter in the world has a certain ring to it. Ok, back to the main thing.

When you do start painting, not before, you can start saving your receipts for everything to buy commission related. Not hobby related, commission related.

There is a lot you can do painting wise before actually having to setup a legal corporation/business. Once things get going, after 3-4 months, call your accountant and ask a couple of questions with how much you are making painting and how to handle your next tax papers. Accountants will steer you in the right direction and you can then take the appropriate steps.

You don't need to bother, and most importantly, pay before you start actually making money off painting. Sending \$1,000 to create Melissa's Magical Miniature LLC is somewhat dumb if you end up too broke to buy new models and can't get started making the money roll in.

The most important thing really is to ask your accountant at least 2 months before you actually have to declare your income so you have some time to turn around and setup the correct legal form.

Unto actual painting and hobby tips. I know the disclaimer said no painting involved, but this is important and couldn't be left out.

Trends

There are trends in painting and art since the dawn of time. Much like the eras in classical art (all those no-arms-tinyweeny-silkysmooth-greek statues sure look a lot like each other), miniature painting have periods where one special thing is THE hotness. 1990's GW was everything red. 2005 or so was the confrontation-inspired NMM trend, where everyone had to paint NMM. At the time of writing this book, highlights over dark is the thing.

Here's a Games Workshop Ariel model painted by Kenny Boucher from Next Level Painting that's a great example of highlights over dark effect in the horns of the monster.



Recognizing, learning and mastering these trends is something you should work on constantly. By staying ahead of the curve, ideally learning it before clients start asking for it, you save yourself the trouble of having to learn on the spot. Moreover, in terms of dollars, you save yourself the trouble of wasting time learning something you were getting paid for anyway.

That last part sounds confusing, but here's a simple breakdown.

Example A : You client wants OSL on his army. Your answer is automatically : « *Hellzyeah*, that will look awesome. » You have never done OSL in your life. So you have to learn how to do it during this commission. If it takes you 5 hours or 5 takes on a single model to get it right, obviously, you can't charge those to your client. This situation will occur at some point regardless of your careful planning.

Example B : OSL is the freshest technique since dipping, so you want to learn it. You buy a random model that would look neat with some OSL on it, work on that in your spare time and sell it. Two-fold profit : You mastered something new, and you made some money (or worst case scenario, you broke even on the cost of models). Next client that comes through the door and asks for OSL, you will knock it out the ballpark. Best case scenario, someone will see the model you've painted your test on and go : « Hey you can do OSL? Can you do it on my models? » And with your chin tall, staring far away at the sunset you will say : « Yes I can. Yes. I. Can. »

The ideal scenario is to transition example A into Example B, assuming your project deadline is not urgent. Learn on models you can sell later before doing it for the army.

Matching Schemes

Every so often, a client will ask that you match an existing paint job. This is usually the case for gaming models, where you're adding new units to your roster. If you did his previous models, all his well with the world, rinse and repeat. If it's from someone else, as is usually the case, try to gather as much information as possible. Research is king, ask your client if he knows the exact colours used, or who did the paint job you are trying to match is. This way, you can poke around and hopefully find out or ask the original painter.

The general guideline for matching if you can't match exactly is upgrade. Do a better job than the one you are trying to match and your models will stand out because they are better, not different.

Your own style

Think of your style as your special move. How cool is it to have your very own MK Fatality? Right? This is not mandatory by any means, but it's something that you can exploit. Your style or signature move is something you do well and on most models. It can be heavy weathering, blood and gore, lava bases, OSL, bright contrasting colours. Something that makes your models stand out and people know it's yours. Obviously, you won't be the only one on internet to do lava bases, but if you do a couple of armies with them, folks at the game store will know. And the legend grows...

That might be an overstatement, but without becoming a one trick pony, having your models recognized is a great word of mouth publicity and it attracts the right kind of clients, those that like what you do.

Closing words

Armed with this book that you can now browse for specific section and part when the need for them rises.

Of course these are ways to get you started and even more ways to improve certain areas of your painting gig. Over time, you will see what works for you and what doesn't so you can tailor it to your success.

Should there be anything you are still unsure or you struggle with not covered in this book, all is not lost.

There are a lot of resources available for professional painters out there, as well as a helpful community on Facebook if any issues you have were not covered by the book. The Professional Painters Society is full of artist from various skill level and experience ready to help. The Hobby Hangout is another place to meet great painters and explore new areas, as well as finding buddies to paint with.

One last step you can take is ask for a mentor. Unlike business coaching which can be expensive, and not quite appropriate for what commission painters do, having someone that's been where you are guide you can be quite helpful. Look around in the groups and ask nicely, or ask me directly. I may not always answer immediately, but I am always ready to talk shop and love to see you strive. Look me up and ask away.

Now, show me your war face, get painting and don't stop until you become a legend!