

Networking with others online is a great way to share information, especially for artists or those with a very specific interest. It can be a great way to get your name and work known. There are some smart 'rules of the road' to follow, however, when you join in on the conversation. Do see the links for internet etiquette below before jumping in.

### **PMC and related email lists:**

An email list allows groups of people to participate\*\* in a discussion by sending email regarding a certain topic to each other easily. Instead of emailing everyone individually, subscribers of a mailing list can send one email to one address, which will then automatically send the message to everyone else who is subscribed to that list.

\*\*Be sure to read up on "netiquette" (Internet etiquette) and how-to's before posting to an email list that you join. A good article on email list netiquette can be found at <http://isp-lists.isp-planet.com/email-list-netiquette/>. Most email lists also provide a FAQ (frequently asked questions), a good place to learn how to use your chosen list.

If you feel fairly 'internet saavy', you can also create and host your own email list for free at sites like <http://groups.yahoo.com> or <http://www.topica.com>. Be sure you read all the instructions. Some web hosts also offer email list hosting, using their software. This usually involves a higher learning curve to manage. Hosting a list can be a big responsibility if it becomes large, with many emails to manage.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Precious\\_Metal\\_Clay\\_IL-WI/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Precious_Metal_Clay_IL-WI/)  
for the Illinois or Wisconsin professional artist or hobbyist interested in learning about/sharing information regarding precious metal clay

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ISMCA/>  
the ISMCA is an international group of metal clay artisans and hobbyists

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/metalclay/>  
Metal Clay Gallery is a place for the professional artist, a certified instructor, or hobbyist to share their Precious Metal Clay (PMC), Art Clay Silver or related projects.

### **Discussion Boards:**

Web-based discussion groups or forums abound on the internet - there are discussion boards on nearly any topic you can think of, where you can read, post and reply to different topics or 'threads' of discussion on a subject. All you need is your web browser.

<http://www.pmcguild.com> (go to Resources>Discussion)  
the official PMCGuild discussion board

<http://www.silversmithing.com/forum.htm>  
Society of American Silversmiths Forum

<http://www.silversmithing.com/silchat.htm>

### **Usenet (newsgroups):**

Newsgroups are the 'big bulletin boards of the Internet', a free-for-all where anyone can post a message for the world to see. Although newsgroups aren't part of the World Wide Web, you can subscribe to a particular newsgroup using the 'news' feature on both Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator, or download a newsgroup program such as Forte's Agent or Freeagent - <http://www.forteinc.com/main/homepage.php>

Search for a newsgroup on the web: <http://groups.google.com/>

Some rules for posting to a newsgroup:

<ftp://rtfm.mit.edu/pub/usenet/news.answers/usenet/posting-rules/part1>

A Primer on How to Work with the Usenet Community

<ftp://rtfm.mit.edu/pub/usenet/news.answers/usenet/primer/part1>

rec.crafts.polymer-clay - <http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&lr=&group=rec.crafts.polymer-clay>

rec.crafts.jewelry - <http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&lr=&group=rec.crafts.jewelry>

rec.crafts.beads - <http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&lr=&group=rec.crafts.beads>

rec.crafts.metalworking -

<http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&lr=&group=rec.crafts.metalworking>

### **Online Chat:**

You can 'chat' with folks in real time, either via a web browser or via a specialized chat software program that you install on your computer, plus an Internet connection. More and more organizations are offering web-based chat. To be sure you can join in, make sure your web browser is 'Java-enabled'. (Usually found in 'preferences' in your web program.)

<http://www.silversmithing.com/silchat.htm>

Society of American Silversmiths – Chat (requires Java capable web browser)

### **Web Rings:**

A web ring is an associated group of web-sites around a particular topic from dog breeds to metal clay. If you see a web-ring box on a site, you can often browse through the other web-sites in the group by clicking on the links.

<http://c.webring.com/hub?ring=metalclaywebring&id=7&chub>

Metal Clay Web Ring

The tips below apply to e-mail lists, web discussion boards, and news groups (USENET).

### **Learn the "Tone" of the Group Before Posting Messages (a.k.a. Lurking)**

If you're new to a mailing list or group, "lurk" (read without responding or initiating a post) for a while before posting to pick up its tenor. Try and learn something before commenting.

When you do post, introduce yourself. Lurking isn't forever either. So, once you've picked up a sense of the place, leave a message about yourself.

Don't oblige any specific participants to welcome you. Let people decide for themselves if your interests are compatible with their own. List general information about yourself, such as basic biographical background, professional interests or hobbies. Keep it brief. A few facts, especially those that demonstrate you belong in this community, are all you need.

### **Don't blatantly advertise**

Don't go overboard and post your resume or advertise your business/web-site (see also the section further below on Spam). If you have products or services you wish to promote, learn the gentle art of networking: develop relationships, build friendships, and remember that the Net is an INTERACTIVE environment, and not television.

The best advice to get you and your art/business known on a discussion group is to be a contributing member, offer good advice, and simply post your web-site address in your signature line. If folks come to like what you have to say, there's a good chance they'll check out your web-site.

**Avoid typing in ALL CAPS.** Make sure your Caps Lock is off! Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading. Typing in all caps is generally termed as SHOUTING. If you want to emphasize a word or phrase, \*asterisks\* surrounding a word can be used to make a stronger point.

**When appropriate, Use private e-mail instead of posting to the group.** Don't waste expert readers' time by posting basic information. Refer new folks to a web-site, or send a private e-mail.

**Take the time to edit any quotations down to the minimum necessary** to provide context for your reply. Nobody likes reading a long message in quotes for the third or fourth time, only to be followed by a one line response: "Yeah, me too." Don't let your mailing or Usenet software automatically quote the entire body of messages you are replying to when it's not necessary.

Some caution needs to be exercised here because with many e-mail lists or listservs, if you click on your e-mailer's "Reply" button, the message will go to the entire list, rather than to the one person you intend to send to. So watch those "To:" fields when you are sending e-mail. Similarly, if you respond to an inquiry on a listserv, if your reply isn't beneficial to the whole list, just send it to the person who made the inquiry to avoid wasting everyone's time.

In general don't clutter up everyone's mailbox or the board with lots of comments such as "thanks" or "I totally agree," which can be sent to specific individuals by private e-mail. This is a sure way to irritate other participants.

**Post messages to the appropriate discussion group**, i.e., don't post messages about your dog's breed to an e-mail list specifically about jewelry.

**Always include a pertinent subject title** for your message, and if replying to a thread with a title that no longer makes sense, by all means, change it.

**Adhere to the same standards of behavior online that you follow in real life.**

Never forget that the person reading your mail or posting is, indeed, a person, with feelings that can be hurt.

Don't participate in "Flaming" (nasty arguments, mean-spirited behavior on discussions/lists/groups):  
To help a flame die a fast death, simply ignore it. You can't have a screaming match if one of you refuses to scream.

Try to avoid stepping up to defend others. It may seem terribly unfair when someone targets your friend(s) but unless your friends incompetent, they can probably handle it themselves.

If you **MUST** flame: watch your language and don't slander anyone. Most moderators will delete messages that contain too much obscenity or which launch ad hominem attacks.

**Cite all quotes, references and sources and respect copyright and license agreements.**

**Never assume your e-mail messages are private** nor that they can be read by only yourself or the recipient. Never send something that you would mind seeing on the evening news.

**Check grammar and spelling before you post.** Be careful posting private information about yourself, especially on bulletin boards and newsgroups, where thousands of unknown people will read your posts.

**Be careful when using sarcasm and humor.** Without face to face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. When being humorous, use emoticons to express humor. (tilt your head to the left to see the emoticon smile)

:-) = happy face for humor

Acronyms can be used to abbreviate when possible, but don't overuse them.

IMHO: in my humble/honest opinion

FYI : for your information

BTW: by the way

For more emoticons and acronyms, see

<http://gloria-brame.com/glory/jour4.htm>

**Never give your userID, password or credit information to another person.** System administrators that need to access your account for maintenance or to correct problems will have full privileges to your account.

### **Never send or post "spam."**

Spamming is bad news. It's a form of mass advertising and involves posting unsolicited advertisements or announcements to numerous discussion groups or sending unsolicited e-mail to countless people. It makes people who are trying to carry on a serious discussion in their group very mad, it clogs up e-mail boxes, and for most people, it is the epitome of bad etiquette. (See also the section above on Blatant Advertising)

### **NEVER send an e-mail attachment to an e-mail list.**

Every one of the recipients will be annoyed that they have to wait to download your attached file, which may have absolutely nothing to do with them and will clog their hard drives. Proper netiquette dictates that if you need to send someone a very large e-mail attachment, you ask permission first, and then.. send it privately, NOT to a list.

### **Attachments can carry viruses (and often do).**

Do not open any e-mail attachments that come to you, UNLESS someone has e-mailed you privately to tell you they're sending an attached file. Before you choose to open an attachment, make sure you run it through a virus-scanning program (and keep your program updated!). Opening an unsolicited e-mail attachment is one of the fastest ways to pick up a virus!

### **Never send or post chain letters.**

### **Mail Volume Can Be Overwhelming.**

Some e-mail lists generate so many messages daily that you hardly can sort out your personal e-mail from the pack. Consider subscribing to only one list until you feel comfortable with the procedure, content, and volume of messages.

Be careful what you subscribe to; you may get far more than you want. Rather than receiving scads of separate messages each day from your mailing list, you can ask to receive them in digest form - a single e-mail containing all that day's or week's messages. Only automated lists can create a digest for you. It's usually as simple as typing "digest" or a similar command into an e-mail and sending it to the list administrator. Check your list's instructions to see exactly how.

Consider stopping your e-mail subscriptions for any period when you will not be checking your e-mail, and then re-subscribing upon your return. Otherwise you might find several hundred new mail messages waiting for you.

**Check the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)** document of your group before asking questions that might be answered there (especially regarding how-tos). When you get a copy of the list FAQ, save it to a folder on your computer so you can keep referring to it. If you still need help, e-mail the list-manager or a group leader privately. Don't post subscribe, unsubscribe, or FAQ requests. Don't post unsubscribe requests to the whole list!

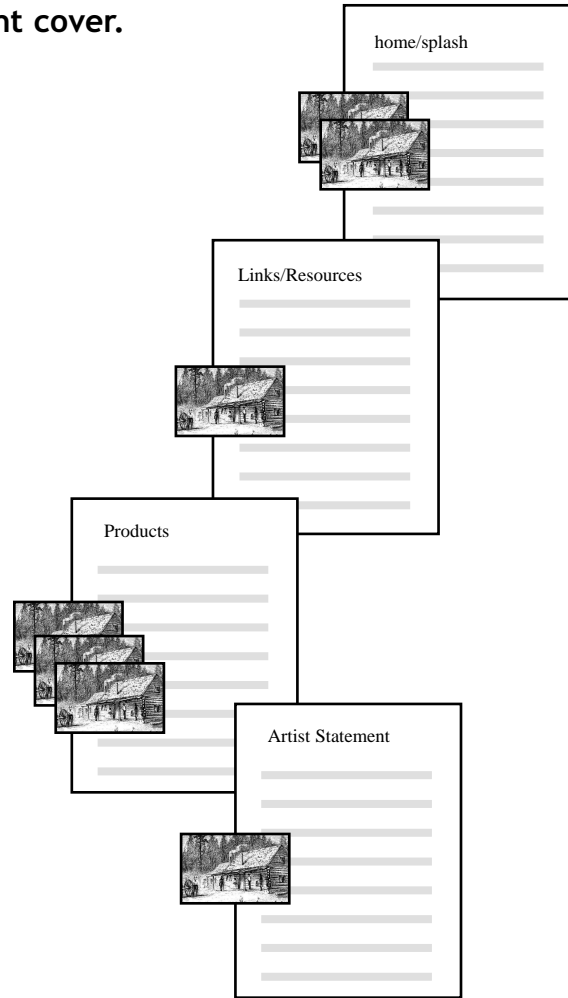
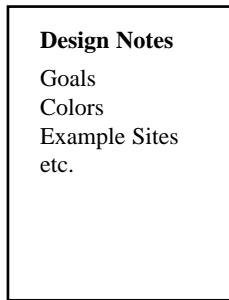
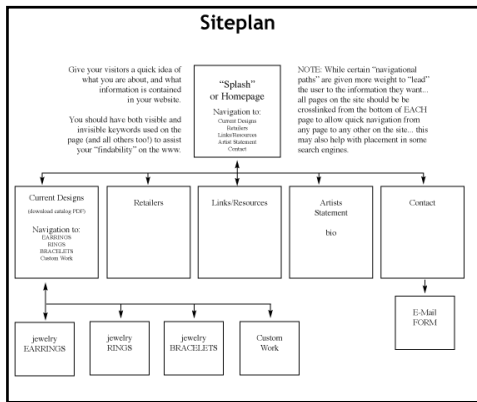
### **Bibliography and Sources:**

The Net: User Guidelines and Netiquette - by Arlene Rinaldi <http://ns1.fau.edu/netiquette/net/elec.html>  
<http://www.wisbar.org/wislawmag/1999/11/tech.html>

Netiquette: A Concise Guide to Good Manners On-Line: <http://gloria-brame.com/glory/jour3.htm>

Emily Postnews Answers Your Questions on Netiquette: <http://psg.com/emily.html>

See "Money Saving Tips" on folder inside front cover.  
 Have your text ready to go on disk.  
 Printout pages, include images.  
 (Images noted in text and marked accordingly)



**Process**

A stepped approach to the design process allows full input from the client and designer to ensure a shared vision for the look and feel of the site design and navigation.

