VENTURE & OPERATIONS · ARTISAN COMMERCE

The Finer Things Club — Artisan Marketplace

Aggregating rural artisans and renting distribution to close the gap between makers without reach and buyers without access — 300+ artisans, $8k+ revenue, zero inventory risk to the maker.

OUTCOME	300+ ARTISANS
REVENUE	$8k+
MODEL	Marketplace
CHANNEL	NGO + mktpl

ARTISANS ONBOARDED 300+	REVENUE GENERATED $8,000+	TENURE 2021–2024	MODEL Consignment
CHANNELS NGO + marketplace	CATEGORY Handicraft	GEOGRAPHY Rural India	ROLE Founder

Jay Kapoor · Founder

2021–2024 VENTURE CASE STUDY

I The problem

Rural artisans make goods urban buyers want — and capture almost none of that value. The constraint isn't craft; it's **reach**.

Individually, a single artisan can't access urban demand, can't afford marketing, and is forced to sell through middlemen who take the margin. The result is a maker with a sellable product and no path to the people who'd buy it. The Finer Things Club existed to close that distance — without asking the artisan to take on cost or risk.

II The model

Two moves. **Aggregate supply** — pool many individual artisans into a single curated catalogue worth distributing. **Rent distribution** — reach buyers through **NGO and marketplace partnerships** rather than the cost and time of a cold direct-to-consumer build.

Crucially, artisans were onboarded on **consignment**: they carried no inventory risk and no upfront cost, while the venture handled everything between the workshop and the buyer. The artisan kept making; the venture solved reach.

III Operations

WHAT THE VENTURE ACTUALLY RAN

FUNCTION	WHAT IT INVOLVED
Onboarding	Sourcing artisans via NGO networks; consignment terms; cataloguing
Curation & QC	Selecting sellable SKUs; quality and consistency checks
Pricing & presentation	Market-aligned pricing; photography and listing copy
Fulfilment	Aggregation, packing, dispatch through partner channels
Payouts	Artisan-favourable settlement after sale (no inventory risk to maker)

The real work was operational, not technological: turning a scattered set of individual makers into a coherent, shippable catalogue that a partner channel could actually sell.

IV Traction

ARTISANS	REVENUE	CHANNELS	RISK TO ARTISAN
300+	$8,000+	NGO + marketplace	None

The initiative onboarded **300+ rural artisans** and generated **$8,000+ in revenue** through partnership channels — meaningful income access for makers who previously had none, achieved without building a marketplace from scratch.

V Unit economics

ILLUSTRATIVE UNIT ECONOMICS

LINE	PER ORDER	NOTE
Avg order value	$22	Handicraft basket
Artisan payout	$14	~65% to the maker
Platform / partner take	$8	~35% gross
Fulfilment + curation	$5	Logistics, photography, QC
Contribution / order	**$3**	**Thin — volume-driven**

The economics are deliberately **artisan-favourable** — the majority of each sale flows to the maker. That makes contribution per order thin, so the model only works at **volume and with tight curation**: roughly speaking, a handful of dollars of contribution per order means breakeven needs hundreds of orders, which is exactly why aggregation and trusted partner channels mattered more than margin on any single sale. Curation is the lever — a tighter, better-presented catalogue lifts conversion and average order value far more cheaply than chasing volume alone.

VI Impact

Beyond revenue, the outcome was **income access**: 300+ makers who were previously cut off from urban demand gained a route to it, on terms that protected them from inventory and marketing risk. For this kind of work, the unit of impact isn't margin — it's the number of makers who reached a market they couldn't reach alone.

VII Challenges & lessons

01 **Thin margins demand discipline.** Consignment protected artisans; only curation and volume protected the venture. There was no slack for waste.

02 **Quality consistency is the hard part.** Aggregating many individual makers means variable output; curation and QC were the difference between a catalogue and a pile of inventory.

03 **Trust rode on partners.** NGO partners supplied the credibility and reach a new direct brand couldn't have earned quickly — the partnership was the go-to-market.

04 **Aggregation creates access.** Individually invisible, pooled and curated these artisans became a catalogue worth distributing. That's the whole thesis in one line.

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Summary of a real founder-led initiative prepared as a work sample. Artisan count and revenue reflect the project record; per-order unit economics are illustrative and shown for demonstration. For demonstration only.