

The background of the book cover features a collage of US coins, including several one-dollar coins with the eagle design and various quarters and dimes. A string of dark, round beads is draped across the center of the image. The overall color palette is warm, with gold and brown tones.

**Terri
Paajanen**

Drawing the Three of Coins

**How to Open
& Run
a Pagan Store**

So You Want To Open Up Your Very Own Pagan Store?

Let me be the first to offer you a hearty congratulation to you and a welcome to the world of the entrepreneur.

As with any business, the decision to strike out on your own can be both exhilarating and overwhelming. You'll be the master of your own domain, the captain of your own ship, the creator of your own destiny!

Of course, you'll also be solely responsible for every problem, failure, and downfall.

But what is life without its exciting highs and stressful lows?

About the Author

Terri Paaanen has been a practicing Pagan solitary for 12 years. Her own spiritual path is eclectic, but she mainly worships the Deities of ancient Greece.

She has spent years running a small Wiccan store, both online and in the physical world. The experience of being a central part of the local Pagan community has stayed with her and had prompted her to share what she has learned with other Pagans in business.

Terri has been interviewed for Toronto newspapers and television and has hopefully dispelled some of the popular misconceptions about her religion. She also writes full time for About.com on the topics of Wicca and other Pagan religions.

In her spare time, she studies genealogy and her family tree, collects antique typewriters and tries to grow vegetables in the garden. She currently lives in the country near Toronto.

Drawing the Three of Coins

**How to Open
and Run a Pagan Store**

**By
Terri Paajanen**

**Spilled Candy Books
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By Terri Paajanen

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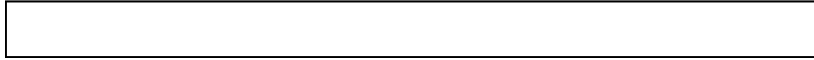
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Introduction

First of all, let me point out that this is a Pagan business book, but with the focus on the Pagan part, not the business part. I won't be explaining how to create a business plan or a map out a budget. Nor will I tell you how to incorporate your business, do your taxes, or file for insurance. These business basics are covered extensively in every single entrepreneurial book out there, and there are plenty of them to choose from.

This book is about all the unique and interesting *Pagan* aspects of your store idea. Every single retail niche has its own set of considerations, advantages, and precautions that are different from other retail niches. Running a clothing store is different from running a craft store or a book store. Only someone who has run a store just like yours can know what you're dealing with. Pagan shops are no different. Now *that* is something not covered in all those other business start-up books.

So who am I? My name is Terri, and I used to run a Pagan shop in Toronto called "The Purple

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Pentacle.” I spent several years selling merchandise from my web page and mail order, and I also spent several more years with a real physical shop. I would like to point out for the sake of honesty that I no longer have my shop. No, it did not close up as a dismal financial failure. I had had my fill of big city life and felt that my love of my store wasn’t as strong as my love for Mother Nature. I sold the shop and am now living it up with my family in the country. I loved my time at the shop and highly recommend such an endeavor to anyone who is up for the adventure.

I had read all those generic business books and, though they got me started, there was so much yet to learn that was uniquely Pagan. How do you deal with all those uneducated people who come in and ask if you’re a devil worshipper? How do you reach your customers when so many people are still in the broom closet? And the best question of all: Where do you find all the stuff to sell? Inventory items like cauldrons, dragon’s blood, ritual robes, and Tarot cards aren’t carried by your typical wholesalers. It took me years to amass my supplier list and even now there are some items I never did find a good source for.

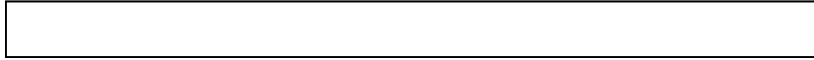
So why this book?

Because it took me so long to find suppliers and to learn some of the ins and outs of Pagan store-keeping, I just feel compelled to share what I’ve learned with the next generation of business folks. When I sold my store, I was just swamped with letters and emails from other store keepers who wanted to know where I got this and where I got that. Everyone in the business seemed as lost as I had been when it came to locating good products. That got me thinking that I had some important information to share.

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As the many Pagan religions slowly gain acceptance and as more people venture out of that proverbial broom closet, there needs to be more outlets for us to purchase the items that we need for our various religious practices. But it's more than that. We do not have the structured form of community that other religious groups do. There's nothing to help us stay connected or centralized. Except the shops. Pagan stores become the community center for the area. These are the places that people go to hear about upcoming events, gatherings, classes, or open circles. Your store can be more than just a place to buy things. It can be the living heart of the community. By helping to promote Pagan business, I am really trying to help improve the overall condition of Paganism in society.

Back to my opening point: this is not a business book but a Pagan book. I've put together all my observations, experiences, lessons learned, and information gathered in the first part of this book. The second part is a list of suppliers and other resources that you will find handy (or downright invaluable) as you head off into business.



Chapter 1

Making the Decision

So you want to open up your very own Pagan shop? Let me be the first to offer a hearty congratulation to you and a welcome to the world of the entrepreneur. As with any business, the decision to strike out on your own can be both exhilarating and overwhelming. You'll be the master of your own domain, the captain of your own ship, the creator of your own destiny! Of course, you'll also be solely responsible for every problem, failure, and downfall. But what is life without its exciting highs and stressful lows?

Not everyone is cut out to run his or her own store. You need to be able to make decisions without having anyone else to consult, take risks on your own, and probably work long and lonely hours. You'll have to be in charge of *all* facets of the shop: the creative flair it takes to design window displays, the financial knowledge, and attention to detail to keep your books in order, the patient personality to deal with possibly frustrating customers, and the stubbornness to stick with it all through the difficult times. You definitely need to be a jack-of-all-trades.

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If you've already made up your mind, you might still want to read through this chapter. My own experience may bring some things to light that you hadn't thought of, and you really do need to think this through. The pros will come to mind quickly and easily, but the cons are just as important to consider.

If you're still in the thinking stage and haven't yet decided to take the plunge, let me offer some further things to think about. First of all, why exactly do you want to open this type of shop? I think the best reason is that your city or town doesn't have any shops like this and there are no local places for Pagans to acquire the books and supplies they need. If everyone you know has to travel elsewhere for shopping, then you may be onto something. Of course, if you live in a small town, you need to keep the Pagan population in mind. Are there really enough people in your area to keep such a specialized store afloat? Don't let your enthusiasm and optimism cloud your judgment here. Be realistic. If your town just doesn't have the people, you might want to try a half-way approach and offer a small inventory of items out of your home. Or blend your Pagan wares with more widely accepted inventory. Natural products such as incense, oils, candles, herbs, and crystals appeal to many sorts of people, and they are all fairly innocent in the eyes of a non-Pagan populous. Offering craft or gift ideas like these can help boost your sales and still allow you to offer the more esoteric items that your Pagan customers want. Another option is to have a store but operate only part-time hours. By maintaining another part-time job besides the store, you may be able to create a livable income without having to rely completely on your new shop. People will quickly adjust to unusual hours, if necessary. When I first opened, I was holding down a regular full-time job. My shop was open only two nights a week and

Making the Decision

Saturdays. It didn't suit everyone, but plenty of people were happy to keep my odd hours in mind and schedule their shopping for those times.

You should think twice about your motivations if there is already a thriving Pagan shop in your town. Do you simply want to take over and drive the other business into the ground? That kind of hostile intent will eventually come back to haunt you. Then again, if your city is large enough, there is no reason why two shops can't exist happily at the same time. When I had my shop in Toronto, there were three or four other shops that were very similar in content to mine. In a city of two million, there were more than enough Pagans to go around. Of course, you can also choose to change the slant of your store so that you appeal to a slightly different group of people than other stores in your area. If the other Pagan shop has a strong New Age feel with lots of angels and fairies among the inventory, you could go more Gothic or medieval with a darker décor. The other store offers primarily introductory, white-light, or fluffy-bunny products, you could delve a little deeper and offer things that a more serious or experienced practitioner would want.

Now, if there already exists a similar shop, but you *honestly* feel that they are doing a poor job of offering products or services to the Pagans in your town, then by all means take your best shot at doing it better. But as I mentioned in the previous paragraph, don't let competitive spite guide you.

Are you envisioning income and wealth beyond your wildest dreams? Sure, when you own your own store, all of the profit goes straight into your pocket. Don't forget that all debts may end up coming out of that very same pocket. I won't deny that store ownership has wonderful financial potential, but I certainly can *not* promise that you'll get rich. From my own

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experience, Pagan shops are not the most profitable of stores to open. I don't generally like sweeping stereotypes, but I did notice one rather obvious "fact" when I had my shop. Pagans are usually not wealthy people. Sure, I had some customers who didn't bother looking at price tags and would walk around until their arms could hold no more. But these gems were not the norm. I developed a theory. Many Pagans by nature are free-spirited, unconventional, creative, and adventurous people. These are not the qualities of someone who would be happy working a 9-to-5 job as a corporate cubicle-sitter. Pagans are more likely to be artists, writers, performers, or any number of other independent careers. And typically, these are not vocations that supply a great deal of disposable income. Please remember that this not a carved-in-stone fact, just something that I observed over the years at my own store. This creates an unfortunate situation for the Pagan shop owner but certainly shouldn't be seen as an insurmountable obstacle. If nothing else, use this as a guide when choosing and pricing inventory.

Perhaps you are so enthusiastic about your own spiritual path that the idea of running a store that caters to it sounds like a dream. Being surrounded by people who share your ideals and beliefs can be very empowering. I know I enjoyed it and miss it still. I had the most wonderful conversations with customers. I was able to offer advice and assistance and spent so much time researching Wicca and other paths so that I could provide the products and information that people would need. But there can be an unexpected downside to all of this. Imagine that you worked as a pizza chef and made pizza six days a week. It doesn't take much imagination to realize that you likely would get pretty sick of pizza in short time. See my point?

Now, your own personality comes into play here and this may not happen to you at all. Though I loved the atmosphere at my shop, I found that after spending day after day surrounded by Pagan people, Pagan ideas, and Pagan products, I just didn't want to think about it when I went home. It stopped being spiritual and simply became business. I found

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it difficult to get motivated for ritual or to do any studying beyond what I needed to learn for the shop. This isn't a reason to avoid such a store, but something you should think about if you're all starry-eyed about how wonderful it would be to be surrounded by your spirituality all day long. Just like with any career, you can get a little burnt out with it. One possible solution to this is to make sure you pursue other interests aside from your store. Take a class or join a group on some non-Pagan related topic. Give your mind a chance to think about other things sometimes.

Even if you think your town has enough like-minded people to keep your shop afloat, you still may need to keep the religious composition of your town in mind. A town that is highly conservative and/or Christian may not be the best place for a shop like this, no matter how large the Pagan populous is. Don't get me wrong: you shouldn't let yourself get pushed around by close-minded people! But you will be sinking a sizeable investment into this enterprise and you shouldn't start up knowing you'll be facing a battle you can't win. Technically, there are no laws preventing you from opening a religious-based store, but townspeople can make things difficult for you if they do not approve. A little opposition is manageable, but if you are battling all the time over every little thing, you will quickly find that your spirit will be diminished in the face of such frustrations.

How could I forget to mention money? You'll need a fair supply of funding to open up your own shop. For starters, you'll need enough to cover all your opening inventory, first and last months rent (and security deposit, if required), all the store fixtures and displays, outdoor signage, an initial ad campaign to announce your store, insurance, possible deposits with utility companies (if your utilities are not included in your rent), and all the other odds and ends you need when you open, like bags and business cards. And once you get all of this together, you'll need a large enough pool of funds to keep you operating through those first lean months as you're getting established. Getting a loan from the bank shouldn't be *too* difficult, providing you have a good credit history

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and you are able to provide them with a complete and professional business plan. Check out some regular business books for more details on getting financing and writing up budgets and business plans.



Chapter 2

Choosing a Name and Location

What's in a Name?

Here is where you can let your creativity shine. How you name your store is completely, totally, and utterly up to you. Take a tour around the Internet to get some ideas or to see if the ideas you have are already taken. If you plan on doing business on the Internet, it's best not to duplicate someone else's name if they are also on the Net. It can cause confusion, and you might have trouble getting a domain name for your site (See Chapter 4 for more details on getting your website going). As I said, your name is your choice, but I'm going to share a few of my own personal opinions and suggestions. I don't much like overly poetic names: they strike me as being a little unprofessional. Names like "The Quiet Grove of the Misty Moon" or "Magical Wares at the End of the Rainbow." Of course, that is just my own opinion. If

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nothing else, names like these are just too long and will make it difficult to put your name on packaging and handouts. Keep the tone of your store in mind when picking a name. “Enchanted Isis” is a great name, but doesn’t make sense if you haven’t got a single Egyptian item in the store. “Satan’s Bookshelf” might not attract the customers you are looking for, either.

When I first got the idea to open a store, I had the perfect name picked out: “Maiden, Mother, Crone.” I checked the local phone book and the Internet and found nothing. So I registered the name and set up a website. Next thing I knew, I got an email from a woman threatening legal action if I didn’t cease using that name immediately. No polite discussion or anything—just a threatening letter. Not only was there a business with that name in existence, but it was right here in Toronto as well! I couldn’t believe I’d missed that. She had been closed for years and wasn’t operating any business with that name. But it was her name and that was that. I was so disheartened. I couldn’t imagine doing business as anything else. My brain grabbed at the first idea that it found, and “The Purple Pentacle” was born. I originally thought it was a little stupid, but I had many customers over the years tell me how much they liked it. Short, unique, and easy to remember.

Looking back, I am glad I didn’t stay with “Maiden, Mother, Crone.” It really wasn’t that original after all. I’ve seen it used for websites, newsletters, and at least one other store in the United States. Besides, the name “The Purple Pentacle” gave me a head start deciding the color scheme for my décor.

Choosing a Name and Location

Where to set up shop?

When starting a business, there are three things that are more important than any others: location, location, and location. Okay, it's a bit of a cliché, but location really is an extremely important feature of your new enterprise. A bad choice here can make you or break you. Actually, I shouldn't be so negative. Even a bad location can be overcome with creative advertising, promotion, and some persistence.

It's pretty standard to try and find a place that offers the most exposure and walk-by traffic. Of course, the price of rent will go up considerably as you venture into the prime commercial areas of your city. So you'll need to find a compromise between the best area and what you can afford.

Watch out for neighbors as well. Do you really want to grab that vacant storefront next to the Christian bookstore or evangelical church? As I've mentioned in Chapter 1, there are no laws against operating a religious store, but your immediate neighbors can make things frustrating for you if they choose to interfere.

Now, if you have the funds to get a prime location, then go for it. But you are likely going to be paying for a lot of foot traffic that you will never use. That's what makes the search for a location a bit different for someone wanting to start a Pagan shop rather than a standard mainstream store. You're after a *very* small part of the population. So you'll find that you don't *need* the same level of immediate exposure as say, a clothing store would need. You will develop your customer base through word-of-mouth and other specialized advertising within the Pagan community. Which means that you can save some money by taking a storefront that is a *little* off the beaten path. Take a walk and look at side

Choosing a Name and Location

streets, basements, and second story retail spaces. You know your city best, so only you can determine what parts of town are suitable. These are just some general points to keep in mind.

My own shop was located at a very busy intersection in the downtown core of Toronto, well-known for its funky shops and unique boutiques. Not a cheap area, by any means. But I was lucky and found a small store space on the second floor. My rent was *much* lower than those stores on the main level, but I was still accessible because I was at a major intersection. I had a big purple sidewalk sign made up down by the door so that people could find their way up (See Chapter 11 for more on signs).

Regardless of what the walk-by traffic is like at your proposed location, it *must* be easily accessible. Near a major intersection that is serviced by public transit is ideal. Nearby parking is another plus. If the name of your store's street is unfamiliar to most people, make sure to mention the closest major street so people can quickly orient themselves to your position.

My spot was just perfect, except for my neighbors. My store wasn't alone on the second floor. There were three other shops along the hallway, and we shared the staircase. Still an agreeable arrangement, except for my one neighbor. There was a "head shop" next door that sold marijuana paraphernalia and bootleg dance tapes. I have to admit, I did get some customers from him. Lots of folk would shop there and pick up some incense on the way out.

But he had dance music playing all the time. It was so loud that I could barely hear to talk on the phone in my shop some days, especially when someone was looking at the tapes. I know I lost a number of customers who didn't stay to browse very long because of the noise. Did I ever say anything? Well, no.

Choosing a Name and Location

You can learn from my mistakes. Always stand up for yourself when it comes to your store.

Don't be so anxious to start up your new shop that you take the first storefront that opens up. You're going to be saddled with that rent and location for at least a year (typical length of a lease), not to mention the loss of business that will occur during a move. Make sure to think in the long term before signing anything. Most commercial rental agreements do not include utilities, meaning the cost of your heat and electricity on top of your rent. Don't discount these as minor expenses. Cheap rent stops being a bargain if you are paying a fortune in other bills. Make sure you can cover the extra expense.

Depending on what kind of look you're wanting for the inside of your store, you might want to pass it by the potential landlord before agreeing to anything. Some landlords won't take kindly to their space being painted black or some other outrageous new design. Don't worry, all landlords will be expecting *some* modifications to the space, but it's always best to err on the side of caution. I'd hate to see you locked into a lease only to find out that you aren't allowed to install that custom-designed ceramic tile wall mural of the Greek Goddesses you had your heart set on.

One more thing: size. It does matter. A large store is nice, but remember that you will have to spend a lot more on inventory to fill a big space. Leaving too much empty space doesn't look good. A smaller shop that is nicely filled is much better. But then too small can be cramped. So if you have to choose between a big store in a so-so area, and a smaller shop in a better spot, I would recommend the smaller shop. There was a store in Toronto that didn't last very long, and they had a wonderfully huge space but with very little inventory. It was positively cavernous and there was actually an echo. I suppose

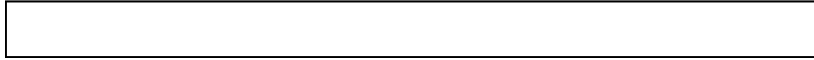
Choosing a Name and Location

they had room to grow, but it felt uncomfortable to shop there.

Another option you may have already thought about is operating your shop out of your home. You certainly wouldn't be the first person to do this. There are pros and cons, just like any other arrangement. The most obvious benefit is the cost. Not having to pay rent for a storefront will ease your initial cash outlay, meaning more money for inventory and advertising. It's pretty convenient, too. Nothing beats the ease of working from home.

Before you commit yourself to this course, there are a few downsides as well. Your home will not likely be zoned for commercial use, meaning you may not be able to put up any display signs to let people know about your shop. If your home is large enough, you may be able to set aside an entire room for your "shop," but if not, finding space to store and display everything could be a problem. The unprofessional atmosphere will likely be a drawback, though some customers may prefer the casual atmosphere of shopping in someone's home. It's up to you. Oh, and don't forget that you will have strangers in your home. If you plan on serving only your friends and immediate Pagan community, you won't have a problem. But think about how comfortable you will be with strange people walking through your house.

Even if you choose the home-store idea, most of the information in this book will still be helpful to you though it has been written for more standard retail arrangements.



Chapter 3

Your Store's Look and Design

As with the choice of your store's name, the look and feel of it is limited only by your imagination (and perhaps your budget). Use your name as a guide. Not all names will invoke an image or atmosphere, but some might. If you've called your shop "The Gothic Grimier," I'm sure I don't need to tell you that a shop full of neon lights and chrome won't really suit. You don't *have* to match the décor with the name, though. It does create a more unified image to at least keep the name and the style in the same ballpark.

The *stereotypical* look for an occult or magical shop is archaic, cluttered, and musty with lit candles everywhere and perhaps a black cat wandering around the aisles. Though this can be an appealing atmosphere for a shop, it may not be the best for business. One of my competitors had this look. Their store was dark and dusty, with melted candles on every flat surface. A little exciting at first glance, but

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on closer inspection the shelves were downright dirty, inside signs were faded, and labels were yellowed. I know quite a few people who wouldn't shop there because it was just too grubby.

Don't limit yourself to what you think (or other people think) a Pagan store should look like. There are no restrictions or guidelines that you need to adhere to in order to be a "real" Pagan shop. Besides, who wants to be typical anyway? I had originally planned on going somewhat dark and brooding for my store but my husband talked me out of it. We chose pale purple for the walls, and accented it with black and natural wood. It was nice and bright, and I had several customers tell me it was pleasant to shop there. It wasn't what people were expecting and that made it memorable. I tried having large plants around but there wasn't enough sun, not to mention that I have a brown thumb.

Whether you choose to go dark-gothic-and-mysterious or bright-modern-and-fun, you really need to be consistent through the entire shop. Trying to mix medieval architecture with space-age furniture can create a very lopsided look. Make your decision and stick with it.

Arranging a shop can be a complex science as well as an art. Take some time to browse around your favorite shops (Pagan or otherwise). See how things are arranged and how space is used. Flat surfaces like shelves and tables will likely make up the majority of your display space, but you should think vertically as well as horizontally. The walls are excellent spaces for hanging items. Heck, you can even have things suspended from the ceiling.

Speaking of hanging things on the walls, I want to take a second to recommend using grid-wall. You can easily utilize wall space with regular shelving, but that still limits you to displaying flat-surface

Your Store's Look and Design

items. Products like bagged incense, jewelry on cards, or anything else that is designed to hang are not that shelf-friendly. Small spinner racks with hooks can work well on tables. If you have a lot of this kind of inventory, you should use your walls. Grid-wall is a system of large wire grids that hang flat on the wall. You can buy all kinds and sizes of hooks that latch on to the grid, creating a large surface for hanging products. You can even get shelves for grid-wall, too. One drawback is the look. My store was fairly modern in style, so the grid-wall fit in nicely. If your design is more old-school, it might be too modern for you.

Chapter 5 has lots of suggestions for display ideas for the different kinds of inventory you are likely to have. Take a read through and you might want to use my ideas or they might just spark some creative concepts of your own.

Getting Equipped

This can be tricky if you live in a small town. You may need to invest in a rental truck and find a source for retail store fixtures. I was lucky and had several stores like this within a few blocks of my store, but they are not common outlets and you'll likely need to check your nearest large city. If you can find a retail fixture outlet that sells used items, you should check there first. You can find some excellent bargains. That said, you don't even have to limit yourself to "official" retail fixtures. I used some traditional store items, but all of my tables came from the local thrift store. Most of their surfaces were in terrible shape, so I covered them up with decorative cloths and nobody could tell the difference. Those with particularly long cloths allowed me to store extra inventory underneath and out of sight. I also used simple

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wooden bookshelves from a regular furniture store. Of course, if you're handy or know someone who is, you can make a lot of shelving and displays yourself.

Some other things to remember when laying out your shop:

Put prices on everything or at least make the prices clear with a sign. Nobody likes to ask how much something is.

Keep things clean. Musty and dusty is fine for movie sets but won't help you sell any inventory.

Dark is fine, but don't overdo it. Customers don't like having to move things into the light to get a good look.

Full shelves are good; cluttered shelves are not. Customers shouldn't have to move a half dozen other items aside to reach what they are looking for.

Another nice touch is seating. Having a comfortable chair or two won't earn you any money but will be much appreciated by the tired customer. Folks who want to browse through a book might like a place to sit, as will friends of browsers. Who wants to lose an interested customer because their friends are bored or tired? I found that chairs also made a nice place for customers to set their bags while they looked around. Anything that makes a person more comfortable will encourage them to stay that little bit longer, and maybe make one more purchase.

If you choose to use spotlights to illuminate your wares, be careful with them. They create a nice look, better than plain fluorescent fixtures that light up the entire room evenly. When you position the spotlights to highlight a display, make sure you're not setting them up to blind anyone else. Walk around your store and glance around, like a browsing customer would. One light that perfectly shows off your

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incense rack might catch a book-browser right in the eye.

One “display” that I had that attracted attention and interest was my store altar. A few personal items from home, along with lit candles and incense, added a strong touch of spirituality and personality to the store. It made people feel that I was more genuine for some reason. If you try this, don’t display delicate or irreplaceable items. Though most of my customers realized it was an altar and left the items alone, some still picked up and examined the things I had displayed. I think I had a sign that this was a not-for-sale area, but it didn’t deter everyone. It also gave me a central and somewhat safe place to burn candles and incense, rather than having these combustibles scattered through the store.

The nature of a Pagan store can sometimes be a little scary for the just-curious or very green novices. For some people, coming to your store might very well be their first step towards discovering a new spiritual path. Shopping in a store that is so quiet you could hear a pin drop can just add to the tension. You can give your shop a friendlier feel with some music playing in the background. Not so loud that people have to raise their voices to speak to you, but loud enough to get rid of that tomb-like quality that an empty store can create. Of course, I don’t need to tell you that good Pagan music would be the logical choice. Soft instrumentals are fine for background, but I personally prefer a more modern beat. Your choice is up to you. If you are not familiar with the realm of Pagan tunes, there is a section in Part 2 of this book with sellers of Pagan music.



Chapter 4

Setting Up a Website

Hey, it's the 21st century! Anybody who's anybody has a website these days, and it's an absolute must for a shop owner (especially a Pagan shop owner). Now don't panic, this can be a very simple undertaking if you want.

Now, when I say "website," I don't necessarily mean you have to have a fully automated web-store with online shopping cart and credit card authorization. You could have those things if you really want to add a sizeable mail-order component to your business. But this is more than most shops need. Don't think of it as a *store* online, but more simply a *catalog* online. Even if you have no desire whatsoever to sell products through the mail, you should still have a site. People do use the Internet to find stores locally as well as remotely. I've known people who are traveling to use the Internet to scope out the cities they are visiting to find Pagan shops to try.

First, some details on the mechanics of getting a website up and running. The easy route is to pay someone to do this for you. You may be able to find a

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local web designer (maybe even a Pagan one) who might offer his services for a reduced fee or in exchange for a discount at your store. If you choose this path, then you may not need to read much more in this chapter. Then again, you should still read it so you can pass my ideas and wisdom along to your designer. You might want them to stay “on the payroll” and keep the site maintained, or you could take over the upkeep once the site is created.

Once you’ve either decided to do this yourself (it really *is* easy) or are having the work done by someone else, you will first need to decide what content you want on your site. Certain items are a necessity: your store name, location (with directions and/or small map), your operating hours, phone/fax numbers, and email address. A contact page can contain all of this information and should be prominently linked to from all parts of your site.

Are you going to include details and photos of your entire inventory? This can greatly increase the size of your site and the work required to create and maintain it. If you aren’t interested in actually selling products via mail-order, you may want to limit how much of your inventory is portrayed in detail. If you are interested in shipping products, then I highly recommend you list everything you are offering, with a description, photos, and prices. Expecting people to email you for more information is pretty much futile.

You might want to offer your website visitors more than just your store. Put together some information pages or articles that are linked from your store’s site. A helpful Book of Shadows section will encourage people to return to your site even if they are not shopping. When time comes to make a purchase, they’ll remember that handy site with the great herb page or Wicca 101 articles.

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Once you've mapped out what's to be included on your site, next comes the more technical steps. You may want to purchase one of those "Website Creation for Dummies" books. They are actually quite good and will explain all these steps in greater detail. This chapter could be a whole book, so I will be greatly simplifying the process so that you can basically get a feel for what's needed (or not needed).

At this point, the next step is registering your domain name. Your domain name makes up the URL (*www.whatever.com*) of your site. Typically, you would choose the name for your store that hopefully won't already be taken. If there already is a site with your name, you may want to rethink the name. You may be tempted to futz with your URL so that you can have the name you want. Traditional business sites have the well-known *.com* extension. You may find your name to be available if you select a *.org* or *.net* or even *.biz* extension. Be careful with this. Even experienced web surfers will practically ignore the extension and will likely forget the proper URL for your site. I highly recommend finding a name that is available with a *.com* extension.

You can register your domain name at sites like *www.register.com*. Prices for registration can range from \$10/year to upwards of \$50/year. I've had fine success with the registrars at the lower end of the spectrum. Use your search engine and look for "domain name registration" and you'll find plenty of sites to compare.

Once you have a name for your site, you'll need a place to host it. Don't be fooled by web host companies who insist you need every bell and whistle in the book and need to spend hundreds of dollars to maintain your site. Not true! Many hosting sites target new entrepreneurs and try to convince them that a successful business needs far more than they really

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do. There are lots of inexpensive web hosting companies that are a fine choice for the small businessperson. Again, use your search engine to check out other “web hosting” sites. One hundred megabytes of storage is more than enough for photos and pages for a store’s worth of inventory and then some. You shouldn’t need to spend more than \$20/month for adequate space with all the options you could want. I’ve even seen places for \$5 or \$10/month. Don’t be tempted by free hosting places. Nothing looks more unprofessional than a long URL like www.freehostingplace.com/pages/users/1123/myPaganshop.html.

If you can’t afford the \$5 or \$10 per month fee for web hosting, maybe you should rethink your intentions here.

Okay, you’ve registered your name and found hosting space. Now comes the hard part. Create your site. As I mentioned earlier, this subject can fill an entire book and is beyond the scope of this chapter to teach you web page creation fully. If you plan on sticking with this, you could invest in some software such as Microsoft’s *FrontPage*. It’s not cheap, but it’s excellent. There are other web page editors out there, but this is the only one that I have any experience with. It works just like a word processor, and you can see your page develop as you work on it, rather than see a page full of code. It connects directly to your web host server and as you save your pages, they become live on the Internet. There are tools built-in that can make the tedious work of coding links and choosing colors as simple as a mouse click or two.

Some other tips for your website:

Keep your site current. References to long-past Sabbath specials are a turn-off. Nobody wants to shop at an abandoned site. If your site is simple and

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doesn't require much maintenance or updating, then just keep it free of dated references so it doesn't look stale.

Keep the colors and text clear and easy to read. Text in heavy calligraphy over a bold paisley background will drive even the most interested shopper away.

Animated graphics are nice for accent, but don't overdo it. Pages filled with dancing witches or spinning pentacles will give people headaches.

Arrange the navigation so that it's easy to move from page to page. Repeat important links (back to the main page, your contact page, your catalog index) on all pages so that people can quickly get back to the "beginning" as they browse around. Links to "related products" can also be handy for navigating around a catalog.

Finding your Site:

This can be a tricky area, and is often overlooked by fledgling website creators. You could just create a site, include the URL on your business cards, and be done with it. But you are doing yourself a great disservice if you don't put a bit more work into it than that. I'm sure you're working hard to promote your store, so you should also put some effort into promoting your web page. The Internet is *vast*, and your site will be lost among the multitudes if you don't take the time to make yourself stand out. The first step is to make sure your site is included in the major search engines. At the time of this writing, the one to be in is *www.google.com*. Take some time and visit every search engine you can find and submit your URL. I also recommend that when you write the description to go with your URL, include your city name. That way, whenever someone is specifically

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looking for shops in your town, you're more likely to come up. Just like with web page design, I could write a whole book on how to promote your website and how to improve your placement in search engine results. Check out some other web page books for more on this. But don't ignore it! Getting your web page found is crucial and worth a little work and research.

Payment for Mail Order:

One more thing, particularly for anyone with a full-service website with mail order: how are you going to accept payment for orders? The simplest is to have people mail you a check or money order, just as if they were ordering from a paper catalog. It's safe and pretty much anyone is able to buy a money order. You may insist that they email you with their order first so you can give them a solid shipping charge before they send you payment. My own customers were forever adding far too little for shipping even though I had the charges clearly explained. This also gives you a heads up on orders coming in.

Being able to accept credit cards is becoming the norm, but isn't always easy for a small business. Because you do not get an impression of the card or signature at the time of the transaction, a customer can go to the credit card company and deny making those purchases. And usually the charges are reversed and you lose your money (called a charge back). The risk isn't huge, but is a factor. And major banks and credit card companies don't want this happening either, so they can be very limiting when it comes to granting these services to small businesses that operate online or mail order. In my own case, VISA wanted a down payment of \$3000 to ensure against charge backs. And it turned out that money was not

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a temporary payment either. I wouldn't get it back until I closed off the VISA account. I wasn't about to pay that kind of cash, so I stuck with people paying by money order.

One final option that is quickly gaining popularity and allows small businesses to take credit cards: Paypal. It's a service that is commonly used among online auction shoppers (like me) and works like an intermediary between you and your customers. If you sign up for a Paypal account, then anyone else with a Paypal account can simply email money to you, either as a withdrawal from his or her bank or as a credit card payment. You'll have to check through their different plan options, but a basic account is free. Accepting credit card payments has a charge attached though. But using Paypal frees you from having to deal directly with any banks or credit card companies. You can all the info you need at *www.paypal.com*.



Chapter 5

Your Inventory

This is probably the most fun part of opening your own store. Like a kid in a candy store, you browse through a pile of catalogs trying to limit your starting inventory to within your operating budget. But what to carry? The following sections can be used as a guide to help you cover all the bases, but that doesn't mean you need to have each and every item that I've mentioned.

Most wholesalers offer larger discounts when you order larger quantities. Don't go overboard trying to get the best price on everything. Buying too many of anything may get you a better deal in the longer run, but it will eat into your opening budget and you will be stuck trying to store all those extras.

How you price your products will be based on how much you've had to pay for them in the first place and then increased to cover your store overhead (rent, utilities, advertising), and hopefully there will be room for a little profit, too. Visit other stores, or even visit online shops, to see what the market price is for your items. You may have to jiggle your prices

Your Inventory

around a bit at first as you see what's selling and what's not. Using your competitors as a guide will help you get started.

If your store is anything like mine was, you'll have a great number of young and curious people. Some will be sincere seekers, and some will just be experimenting in something that they feel is exciting. Either way, they will likely have limited budgets. Another reason to keep at least a part of your inventory in the lower budget range.

a) **Altar Tools**

Product Suggestions:

- Athames
- Chalices
- Patens
- Bells
- Burins
- Offering bowls
- Altar cloths
- Wands
- Cauldrons
- Besoms (brooms)
- Statuary (more details in Section k)

My first suggestion when it comes to altar tools is to try to maintain a range of prices for your items. Inexpensive items are typically less impressive in looks or quality, but they are within the reach of younger shoppers or anyone on a budget. Of course, you can get *too* cheap. When ordering these items for the first time, make sure to check the quality. Athame handles that fall off or bells with sour sounds are not worth the money.

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If you are going to sell athames or any other kinds of ritual blades, make sure to check with your local laws for selling such things. You may not be able to sell them to minors, you may have to restrict your inventory to blades of a certain length, or you may need a permit to sell knives at all. Regardless of these details, make sure you keep all blades in a secure display. I had mine in a small case with a removable top, and one night a customer popped off the top before I could say anything and was waving an 8-inch blade around the store. Thankfully, he was just show-boating and nothing happened. Nevertheless, I moved all my athames to the secure jewelry case at the counter by the next day.

Items like this are easy to display, on tabletops, shelves, counters, or any other flat surface. There is no real need for any special display structure. To save surface space, you might want to hang athames, wands, besoms, or altar cloths on the wall. Get creative with your variety. Cauldrons don't have to be cast-iron, nor do chalices need to be silver. Be prepared to assure people that unconventional items are just as good as the traditional. Novices tend to cling to the typical and might only be interested in items that fit their pre-conceived idea of what an altar tool needs to be. Even though it's traditional for an athame to have a black handle, I never found any decent ones like that to carry, so I didn't have any in stock. Many novices accepted my guidance that their tools don't need to be any specific type, but some still left empty-handed because they were not convinced.

When it comes to tools, handmade items are always a draw. Chapter 6 has more details on this, and I highly recommend soliciting handmade goods, especially when it comes to altar tools.

Your Inventory

b) IncenseProduct Suggestions:

- Cone – loose or bagged
- Stick – loose or bagged, various sizes
- Nag Champa – a must
- Burners – boat, disk, hanging
- Resins – myrrh, frankincense, dragon's blood, copal
- Charcoal tablets
- Heat resistant bowls for charcoal
- Boxes for storage

The standard display for loose stick incense is in open topped tubes or jars arranged in some kind of wall display. Customers can pick and choose the scents they want, and they are priced per stick. This is common, and what most customers will expect, but it is *not* the best way to offer your loose incense products. Incense that is left open to the air like that will go stale in no time. There will be no scent left, and you'll end up pitching the stuff before it's sold. Either that or people will buy, be unimpressed with the product and not buy again.

You can either put tight lids on your display tubes or sell only packaged incense. Plastic bags will keep the incense fresh. Packaged incense is considerably more costly than the bulk stuff, but if you want to still offer the cheaper product, you can just buy in bulk and bag it up yourself. This is what I did, and it worked very well. It took a bit more time, but I was able to offer a very cheap product (\$1 for a pack of 10 sticks), it stayed fresh, and I used a custom label with my store name. When folks ask why I didn't carry the usual loose stuff, I explained why, and they were

Your Inventory

impressed that I took the time to ensure a good product for them.

Stick incense is the most popular, much more popular than cones. Many incense manufacturer's carry more than one size of stick incense. You might want to try a small offering of mini-sticks (and the mini-burners too) or huge 2-foot long sticks that are great for outdoor rituals. You just have to carry Nag Champa (Indian incense that comes in narrow blue boxes). I've never seen a product fly off the shelves like that stuff.

Too many scents to choose from? You should keep three different types:

Basic scents – patchouli, lemon, vanilla, mint, etc.

Purpose blends – love, money drawing, psychic, banishing, etc.

Custom scents – night queen, summer dream, fresh rain, etc.

A word about resin incense or using dry herbs as incense: they will not burn on their own. You can't just put a match to them and have them smolder away. Resins and herbs need charcoal disks for burning. Make sure to explain that to your customers. They will appreciate the advice.

c) Oils

Product Suggestions:

- Pure essential oils
- Oil blends
- Carrier oils (apricot, grapeseed, almond)
- Empty bottles, in various sizes
- Droppers for bottles
- Oil burners

Your Inventory

Oils are very popular with Pagan and non-Pagan customers alike.

You should not display your oils in the sun, unless they are in opaque bottles. I had my display far from the window, and frankly the oils sold so quickly that none of the bottles ever sat out for very long. You might want to keep a bottle of each scent designated as a sampler. People will inevitably put a dab on their wrist no matter how large a “No Testing” sign you have. Trust me.

Lots of people like to blend their own oils, so things like empty bottles and droppers, along with a few varieties of carrier oils will be popular. Carrier oils are unscented oils used to dilute strong essential oils. If you carry pure essential oils, you should let customers know that some may be too strong to wear directly on the skin (like cinnamon oil, for example). I carried all-natural oils that were already diluted with a carrier, so they were still well-scented but could be worn safely.

Synthetic oils are also available and will be quite a bit cheaper, but they may not sell well. For the purpose of magick, natural products are always better. I carried a few, mostly for perfumery purposes (such as ambergris and Nag Champa).

All those small bottles can be hard to display easily. I used a wooden wall rack that was designed to hold craft paints. Worked splendidly. As with any wall display, make sure it is well secured! My oil rack fell off the wall one day, but the Gods must have been watching out for me. Only three bottles broke.

Some oil wholesalers offer lower prices when the oils are purchased by the gallon. If you have the space and the time, you might consider this option and bottle the oils yourself. You can then add a custom label from your store.

Your Inventory

Even though it may seem rather obvious, I'd place a sign stating that your oils are for external use only. I had a customer buy a bottle of rose oil and commented as he left, "So, I just drink this potion, right?" He had no idea what he had bought and no idea what to do with it.

Just as I mentioned with the incense, there are three basic groups of scents you should carry:

- Basic scents – patchouli, lemon, vanilla, mint, etc.
- Purpose blends – love, money drawing, psychic, banishing, etc.
- Custom scents – night queen, summer dream, fresh rain, etc.

d) Books and Printed Goods

Product Suggestions:

- Books, books, and more books
- Videos
- Magazines
- Music CDs and cassettes
- Blank books (Books of Shadows)

Well, I added music products in here even though they are not really printed matter. Pagan music can be hard to find in typical music stores, and always caught the eye of my customers. You might want to have an album playing in the background. Not just soft folk music either. There are some great Pagan bands out there playing catchy pop and rock.

You can never have too many books. If there is any area of inventory that you should go crazy in, it's books. Lots of beginner books, but don't stop with

Your Inventory

just books specifically on Wicca. Books on side topics such as herbs, mythology, Deities, divination....

What about fiction? The Pagan fiction market is starting to grow, and there are many great titles out there.

There aren't too many good magazines available (see the Resource section for some titles and contact info). Some wholesalers sell magazines just like books, but you can also get your magazine supplies from a magazine distributor. Many of these distributors allow for returns of unsold copies, so find out the details ahead of time. You may be required to purchase a minimum number each month to qualify for returns.

Be prepared for the folks who like to read before they buy (or instead of buying, unfortunately). It's inevitable. Sometimes books can start to show some wear from this browsing. If you find this a problem, you might want to designate one copy as a "reader" and keep it prominent. People can read to their heart's content and you won't be pulling your hair out worrying about spine cracks or thumbled pages.

Videos can be movies or educational. There aren't many decent Pagan movies on the market, but cult favorites like "The Wicker Man" might be popular. You might even consider creating a lending library of tapes. AzureGreen Distributors carries a small selection of good educational videos as well.

There are only so many ways to display books. Make sure you have plenty of space, and I would suggest that you not place your entire book inventory spine-out on the shelves. Cover art is much more appealing and eye-catching. By orienting some books face out and some spine out, you can create a more interesting shelf of books.

Your Inventory

e) Dated Items

Product Suggestions:

- Wall calendars
- Datebooks
- Almanacs
- Astrological ephemera

This is a section of your inventory that will only be required for a few months of the year, but is something that shouldn't be ignored. I have had my suppliers run out of popular calendars as early as October, so don't wait until the last minute to order these products.

You'll have to be careful about these types of items. If you order too many, you will be stuck with them. Once you pass March, they are unlikely to sell unless you drastically reduce the price. At this point, I often gave my excess calendars away to good customers. I was going to lose money anyway, and this generated quite a bit of goodwill. You may want to ask around beforehand to see which styles are desired, or even ask customers to pre-order. Anything to help you get a solid idea on how many to order.

Many wall calendars come shrink-wrapped or sealed somehow. Have an open one of each style to let customers browse the interiors.

Custom printing houses sometimes offer a range of promotional items that you can have imprinted with your business name and/or logo. Small pocket calendars are a common item, and would make great giveaways especially if they contain some basic astrological information (like the phases of the moon).

Your Inventory

f) Jewelry

Product Suggestions:

- Pendants
- Rings
- Bracelets
- Earrings
- Crowns, headpieces
- Silver, pewter, gold, precious stones

As I said earlier, you can never have too many books. And it's just as true that you can't carry too much jewelry. You know the saying about Pagans and shiny things!

Silver is by far the most popular and available metal for Pagan jewelry, but pewter is gaining popularity, too (it's a good bit cheaper than silver). There are a few jewelry distributors that carry items in gold, but you might want to take those on special order only. They will be very expensive, and nowhere near as desirable as the silver pieces. Silver and pewter can be difficult to tell apart, so you should take note of the material when choosing your inventory. I was surprised to see how many customers were unable to wear certain materials due to skin reactions, and I did lose some sales because I couldn't be sure what the metal was.

Jewelry that is mounted on cards can be displayed on racks or other tabletop displays, but loose pieces or particularly expensive pieces should be kept more securely. I had a large glass display case that doubled as the cash counter. Don't forget to have a mirror handy. Customers do like to try things on.

You'll want to have a varied selection of pendants and pentagrams, but you needn't stop there:

Your Inventory

other symbols such as the ankh, triquetra, triple spiral, God/Goddess figures, runes, Celtic knotwork, astrological symbols, and other star figures. If you choose to carry items associated with a Left-hand path, you'll want some inverted pentacles as well. Remember, not everyone is out of the broom closet. Big and bold might suit some customers, but you will definitely get some people who want small and discreet.

If you carry a large number of pendants, you should keep some chains in stock too. People like to wear their purchases right away, and quite often won't have a spare chain handy. A cheaper alternative that budget-conscious customers liked was black cord (in either silk or leather). I often tossed in a strand for free with the purchase of a silver pendant.

Many Pagans have an artistic flair and like to make their own jewelry. You might want to find a supply of small charms and other jewelry findings that would appeal to jewelry makers. On that note, you will likely have no shortage of local and hand-crafted jewelry items coming through your door. I found that everyone and their dog made wire-wrapped crystal pendants. Though they are not specifically Pagan, my customers did love these. But I found pretty quickly that I only needed to carry one or two styles, not the six or seven I had because I could never say no. Check out Chapter 6 for more on handling local and hand-crafted inventory.

g) Stones and Crystals

Product Suggestions:

- Loose semi-precious stones and crystals
- Jewelry with stones

Your Inventory

Stones always attract a customer's eye, and since these items are not explicitly Pagan, they appeal to a wide range of people.

Customers will have different intentions when they buy stones, and so some people will be looking for very small pieces (for charm bags), large pieces (to carry on their own), and really big pieces (for altar decorations). Unfortunately, this can create some very bulky inventory. My own experience showed me that the mid-size pieces sold the most often (about in inch in length or diameter). You might carry a few pieces in the altar décor range in your more popular stones (quartz, amethyst). You'll need to price your stones accordingly. People won't take kindly to having to pay the same for a tiny little stone chip as they do for a hefty chunk.

Which stones to carry? There are hundreds available, but a good starting selection is: clear quartz, rose quartz, amethyst, malachite, hematite, aventurine, onyx, tiger's eye, turquoise, jet, bloodstone, moonstone, and red jasper. Other popular stones are: garnet, lapis lazuli, carnelian, blue lace agate, aquamarine, and fluorite. These are just suggestions. Watch what your customers ask for and go from there. Of course, you'll be limited to what your supplier has to offer as well. Some distributors do offer individual stones among their wares, but you will get a much better deal if you purchase in bulk (usually by the pound). An exception would be acquiring a stone on special order for a customer. Buying a few at a time can give you a chance to see if anyone is interested, but you'll likely go broke if you do that for very long.

Loose stones can slip into pockets very easily, so keep your stone display within clear sight of the cash area (or wherever you spend your time). How to display your stones can be tricky. You really do need to

Your Inventory

keep a large quantity accessible for customers' perusal. Few people are content to pick the top stone on the pile. Most people will dig through all your stones looking for the *perfect* shape, size, color, or feel. Small jars or open dishes work great for stones. I used those shallow terra cotta dishes that are supposed to sit under flower pots. You can get fancy ones, but I used plain dishes from the hardware store. They were ridiculously inexpensive and made a very nice display when all filled with stones.

b) Clothing

Product Suggestions:

- Robes, cloaks
- Pagan-themed T-shirts
- Renaissance/gothic clothing

The most typical and expected clothing items are ritual robes. These can be odd items to carry because there are very few sources for mass-produced (and therefore reasonably priced) robes, and hand-sewn robes can be outrageously expensive. In order to offer simple robes at simple prices, you may need to look for a local seamstress who is willing to take on this kind of project. A plain robe with a scooped neck and slightly belled sleeves is traditional and simple to make. Don't limit yourself to black or white either.

If you buy from a local seamstress, make sure to examine the robes carefully. A piece of jewelry just sits on a chain, but clothing needs to be more durable. I had several robes made for my shop and I purchased them from the maker, but I found later that she hadn't completed the hems or trimmed any of the loose threads. She also made a few of the dresses with

Your Inventory

such huge neck openings that only a linebacker would have shoulders broad enough to manage.

With clothing, you are faced with an inventory dilemma that you won't get with other products. Sizing. It's not enough to offer a particular T-shirt design, but you have to have it in at least two or three sizes. This can lead to you needing to buy more inventory than you'd like, but at least clothes are not perishable.

Loose clothing can be tried on over street clothes, but if you plan on offering a varied selection of items, you may need to offer private changing space and a full-length mirror. A simple curtain across a corner of the room might suffice, but these kinds of spaces need to be monitored for shop-lifting. Keep an eye on the changing area, and if someone wants to try on a robe or other clothes, offer to hold their bags or items at the counter for them.

You could fold T-shirts for display on a table, but I would recommend a rack with hangers. Easy to flip through and your customers can get a full look at the garments. Hanging a nice ritual robe flat on the wall would draw attention to your clothing inventory.

While there are some manufacturers and distributors of Pagan-related T-shirts, these are not too common and I found them to be in high demand. If you are feeling adventurous, you might even consider creating your own line of shirts.

See what kind of pricing your local print shop can offer you. Even just plain white T-shirts with popular Pagan slogans in neat fonts would work well. If this works out, you can expand to baseball caps, sweatshirts, and more.

Your Inventory

i) Artwork

Product Suggestions:

- Posters
- Prints
- Postcards
- Greeting cards
- Original artwork

Lots of attractive artwork on display can really add beauty and interest to the inside of your shop, not to mention these items are popular among customers.

Truly Pagan artwork items can be few and far between, but I found my own customers were happy with a variety of New Age, nature, or fantasy designs, such as fairies or dragons.

If you choose to carry a number of posters, you may have difficulty displaying them effectively. You might need to invest in a proper poster display stand. They usually have a number of panels that are hinged together in a fan-like shape. Display posters go in the panels, and rack underneath stores the rolled up versions for sale. Postcards and greeting cards are easily displayed in either stand-alone spinner racks or smaller racks that could sit on a table. Larger prints or paintings pretty much need wall space for proper display.

Greeting cards that are specific for Pagan holidays would be a wonderful item to carry. I admit I never found any good supplies of such things, but I highly recommend that you snatch up any that you find. Many people would love to send a Beltane or Mabon card, if such things were available.

If you solicit artwork from the local community, be prepared to be tough. I had so many people tell me

Your Inventory

about the gorgeous paintings they did, only to find out that I didn't really share that assessment. Poorly done artwork won't likely sell and may detract from the look of your store.

One last comment. Artists can sometimes be unrealistic when it comes to pricing their work. An original oil painting with a price tag of \$600 will likely hang on your wall for a very, very long time. If an artist insists that they must have that much, you can either accept that the piece will remain as décor in your shop or you may want to refuse it altogether. Yours is a shop, not a high-end art gallery.

j) Candles

Product Suggestions:

- Candles, various colors and sizes
- Shaped candles
- Candle holders
- Snuffers
- Inscribed ritual candles

Candles are a wonderful item, namely because they are so often used and customers will keep coming back for more.

I would say the most important thing to keep in mind with your candle selection is color. If someone is doing a prosperity spell, they are going to want a green candle. Size and shape are secondary concerns. Scented candles can be a risk, unless they are specifically scented for a magickal purpose.

Most people prefer to choose their own oils when preparing a spell and may find that pre-scented candles conflict with the purpose they are after.

Your Inventory

Large numbers of candles can be awkward to display. Some manufacturers can provide racks or cubby-hole style display units. Whatever you use, make sure it's stable and secure. A shaky display can result in broken candles on the floor.

Another factor is temperature. I found this out the hard way. After a prolonged heat wave one summer, I opened up the shop to find nearly my entire candle inventory had sagged and warped in the heat. If you can't control the temperature, you can take precautions by not leaving candles upright in holders when it's very hot. Try to leave them lying flat. That way, even if they soften up, they won't bend.

Bigger isn't always better. Since it's traditional during spells or rituals to leave a candle burning until it is completely consumed, smaller candles are actually more desirable than larger ones. Customers purchased my mini-candles by the handful.

k) Statuary / Other Ornaments

Product Suggestions:

- Statues
- Wind chimes
- Sun catchers
- Decorative boxes
- Wall plaques
- Yule tree ornaments

This is a rather diverse inventory grouping that is sort of a cross between altar tools and miscellaneous. Decorative items with a Pagan theme can be used and enjoyed by customers all through their homes, not just on an altar.

Your Inventory

These types of items may seem frivolous, but what Pagan doesn't like pretty things? Not everything you carry need have a serious magickal purpose.

Statues of Gods and Goddesses are in high demand, due to the limited number of places that manufacture them. I have a couple of good sources listed in the second half of this book, though high-quality statues are pretty costly. You may want to leave a suppliers catalog out and offer to special order any items that your customers are interested in.

Decorative items for outside altars or gardens can be difficult to find. Statuary designed for indoor use may not stand up to the elements outdoors.

1) Herbs

Product Suggestions:

- Loose herbs
- Purpose blends
- Mortar & pestle
- Cloth pouches
- Teas

Herbs are another wonderful product grouping because Pagans can go through so much of them. Unfortunately, there are so many available, it can be difficult to have a large enough variety to suit every customer.

You might want to add a sign to your display warning people that care should be taken with herbs, as some may be toxic. I found that many people figured that since herbs are natural, they are therefore safe. On that note, be careful when carrying blends for teas for the same reason. I had some

Your Inventory

“professionally” produced tea blends, and some of them contained herbs that I would never recommend ingesting.

The standard display for herbs is a wall of large jars (usually behind the counter), and the herbs are doled out for the customers as they request them. I didn’t take this route, and I never regretted it. It may look nice, but it can be a pain in the butt to measure out and bag a dozen different herbs while a customer is standing here. So, my solution was to pre-bag all my herbs in 1-ounce bags. I used plain sandwich type bags, and wrapped the unused portion of the bag around the herbs inside. It resulted in a sort of cigar-shaped baggie of herbs. Add a label with the name and price, and they were ready to go. People coming in for one or two herbs would snatch up a few extras because it was so simple to just grab them without having to wait for me to prepare them. Because of their odd shape, I chose to display my herbs in terra cotta flower pots. The small pots held three or four tubes, and they matched nicely with the terra cotta dishes that my stones were displayed in. When my herb shipments came in, I spent some time bagging them up and always kept the extras behind the counter to refill the pots when necessary. Some customers didn’t like that they couldn’t smell the herbs, but most liked the convenience of pre-bagged. Adding tags with holes to your herb bags and using a hanging display is another option

If you’re carrying charcoal tablets (if not, you should be), you should keep a few of them among your herb display. Dry herbs won’t readily burn on their own and customers buying herbs for incense might not know this

Herb suppliers sometimes offer different cuts to their herbs (whole herbs, chopped, or powdered). I found the chopped herbs (also known as “cut and

<h2>Your Inventory</h2>

sifted”) were the most popular. Whole herbs are bulky and hard to bag up, though they do look nicer.

m) Divination Products

Product Suggestions:

- Tarot cards
- Other card decks
- Pendulums
- Scrying mirrors
- Crystal balls
- Runes

Though divination is not a uniquely Pagan pastime, it’s a common enough practice among your clientele that decks make an excellent item to carry.

Depending on the publisher, most Tarot decks come sealed or shrink-wrapped. I highly recommend that you keep one open deck as a demo so that customers can flip through the cards and see all of the artwork. The pictures on the front and back of the box just aren’t enough to seal the deal.

There are other decks besides Tarot that you could carry as well. You can get rune decks and I-ching decks, as well as a number of other decks that are not strictly Tarot cards. If someone is looking at a deck that is not used like a standard Tarot deck, you should point it out to them. It may not make any difference to them, but customers who are disappointed or confused about their purchase may not come back to your shop.

Be careful how you display your decks. They are small and make for easy pocketing, even if you only display your demo decks. A slightly scuffed deck is just as appealing to a shoplifter. Either keep the

Your Inventory

display very close to the counter or keep your cards under lock and key in a display cabinet.

Crystal balls are a little stereotypical, but they do make for good scrying tools. Of course a small crystal ball will cost you several hundred dollars. I'll bet you didn't know they were so expensive! Glass makes a perfectly acceptable alternative that will keep these items within your budget and your customer's as well. Don't try to pass them off as crystal though. I labeled mine as "scrying balls" and never had a problem. As soon as I pointed out that you could scry in a bowl of clear water, they realized that the material itself wasn't as important as the intent. And don't forget the little rings used to stand the balls on.

n) Miscellaneous

Product Suggestions:

- Bumper stickers
- Pins/buttons
- Bookmarks
- Keychains
- Spell inks

This was my favorite component to my inventory, and where I felt my shop shined above my competition. I carried all the basics, but I also didn't shy away from the unusual, frivolous, and fun. I always had plenty of "neat stuff" that the other stores didn't bother with.

Though I have listed a few items above that fit in here, there is obviously no limit or bounds to what one might call "Miscellaneous." These also make great impulse items to keep close at hand near the

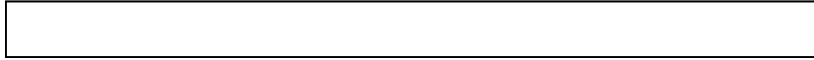
Your Inventory

cash register. So many people pick up a cute button to add to their purchase since the buttons are looking right at them as they pay.

I have a display suggestion for bumper stickers: use your wall space. I used a large sheet of Plexiglas that I bought at a surplus store. I'm honestly not sure where a person would normally go to buy something like that. If you can't find Plexiglas, I suppose a smooth wooden board would do just as well. Mount your backing board on the wall, and stick the bumper stickers to it. The main point is to attach them to something that isn't the wall. They make a great display, and they are easy to read. Just keep the loose ones behind the cash.

I added spell inks to this category because I couldn't think where else to put them. They're not really altar tools. But I still wanted to recommend them as a product as they were quite popular for me, particularly the dragon's blood ink. And if you're going to sell ink, you really should sell quills to go along with them. Or perhaps some fancy fountain pens. And don't forget the parchment paper.

Anything goes for miscellaneous, but don't stretch it too far. A local shop used to sell those kitschy little troll dolls. You know, the little plastic things with the wild hair. I could never understand why they felt those things were Pagan. I suppose everyone has their own tastes, but I really thought those dolls were a little goofy.



Chapter 6

Handmade Products

Unless you are particularly handy or live in an area that's heavily populated with talented Pagans, your inventory will mostly be made up of mass-produced and commercial products. Nothing wrong with that. You can spice up your selection with unique and unusual items by offering handmade items either made by others in the community or even made by yourself.

Made by Others:

Once your store gets established, you likely won't have to look too far to find local artisans with wares to sell. You could always post a notice in your shop stating that you are interested in carrying handmade products, just to get the ball rolling. Amateur crafts-people are sometimes unsure of whether or not to offer their items to a shopkeeper unless they know the person might be interested. After you have a few handmade items on the shelves, it will become obvious to anyone browsing that you are interested in such things.

Handmade Products

Before you begin taking in products, you should decide how you want to handle the business relationship with the artisan. There are basically two options: consignment or wholesale purchase. Both have pros and cons. With consignment, the person leaves the items with you, and you pay for them as they are sold. It frees you from the risk of unpopular inventory, but you will likely have to pay a higher percentage of the ticket price to the artisan.

Another possible draw-back to consignment is maintaining your inventory. It won't be a problem if you only stock a few of these items, but once you develop a sizable selection of handmade items on consignment, it can be a hassle to record every sale. I had more than one busy day made busier by having to make repeated notes with each sale every time I sold a consigned item.

I preferred the second option of simply buying the items outright from the crafts-person. Since I was paying up front, I usually got a better deal and therefore more profit with each piece. I was then taking the risk of having unsold inventory to deal with. You could always work out a compromise, too. Go with consignment at first to gauge customer interest, and then buy the items in full once you are confident they will sell.

When people bring you their work to sell, be prepared for some unrealistic price expectations. Certainly, you won't find this with everyone, but there are always a few who feel that their work is exceptional and that it is worth far more than you will likely ever sell it for. It may be difficult to tell someone that their beautiful creations aren't worth what they think, but don't let yourself be taken in either. Overpriced consignment items may sit on the shelf a long time, but at least you've not lost any money. Paying too much for something because you can't

Handmade Products

bring yourself to say no is a no-win situation. I fell into this trap more than once.

Don't expect handmade products to be perfect. In fact, most people like the individuality that comes with a slightly off-kilter item. One item that I had several suppliers for were hand-carved altar pentacles. One style was gorgeous and immaculately carved, and another was very rough. Though some folks turned their noses up at the rough one, it was the more popular item. Not to mention the fact that the more experienced carver expected a great deal more money for his pentacles, which made them high-priced by comparison. The rougher item was much more affordable, and people loved the rustic look.

As I just mentioned, you'll need to be tough when dealing with people. There is certainly nothing wrong with having different variations of the same items, but it can get out of hand when too many people are selling you the same products. Do you really want to sacrifice the space needed to display eleven different kinds of ceramic chalices? At one point, I had four different people making those carved altar pentacles I was talking about in the last paragraph. Even I had to admit that they didn't sell *that* quickly and had to tell two people that I couldn't buy any more of their products.

When you establish an agreement with someone, also work out how you will contact him or her for future deliveries. Will you call them when you need more inventory or perhaps they will stop in each week to see what you need? I had one young man who made beautiful necklaces, but I could never get a hold of him when I needed more. So I had to sit and wait for him to make an appearance when he happened to be in the area. You might also want to discuss how they will be sticking to their designs. Artists often change their focus or direction, which might

Handmade Products

leave you out in the cold if they decide to stop making certain items or certain styles. If they know you are concerned about this, they may be willing to give you some notice of design changes. You can buy extras of the older style while they are still available or even convince the artisan to continue with the older designs because your customers love them.

One more quick comment, if you find someone who makes decent wands, don't pass them up! Wands are notoriously hard to find through the usual mass-market channels, especially wooden ones. I suppose that a wand is just typically a handmade thing and there is no market for manufactured versions. I really don't know, but I was always looking for wands and rarely finding them.

Made by You:

Even if you don't consider yourself to be a crafts-person, there may be plenty of items you can make yourself to boost your inventory. Such work may also keep your fingers busy during slow days behind the counter and can create conversation with customers as they see you working.

Another benefit of creating your own pieces is that it allows you to customize products to suit your customers' requests. There are no limits to the kinds of items you could make, and I could take up another whole book with craft instructions.

I was playing around with some chain and beads and made a sort of Pagan rosary, with a pentacle instead of a cross. I thought it was quite nice, but really couldn't see selling such an odd item. One day, a customer came in and picked it up off the counter and felt she simply had to have it. I put a price to it and off it went. Even though that first rosary sold right away, I eventually decided not to make more of them. I'm positive that sale was a fluke.

Handmade Products

Here are some more ideas that even a person with several thumbs could attempt:

Cloth pouches. Two pieces of fabric (either rectangular or rounded at the bottom) sewn together and turned inside out so the seam is inside the bag. Add a string closure and you have yourself a bag for charms, stones, herbs, or just about anything. Very popular, and very easy to make. Adapt the design to be a little larger, and you've got some nifty Tarot card bags.

Jewelry. If casting your own sterling pieces is beyond your capabilities, you can still experiment with handmade jewelry. Some silk, leather cord, or silver chain with some pretty beads and a pentacle or ankh for a central pendant makes for an attractive and unique necklace. Wrapping silver wire around crystals can make lovely pendants as well, though it also takes a very steady hand.

Custom blends. Blends of oils, herbs, or incense can be made and packaged by you. Do a little research and devise your own purpose blends. You might want to be careful with herb blends for teas, as different herb combinations can affect people physically as well as magickally. Having customers drop dead from your products is quite bad for business!

Altar items. Get creative and read through some craft books for techniques for making items for altars. A bit of glass paint and some plain glasses can easily become gorgeous chalices. You don't need to settle for standard altar tools either. Anything attractive or decorative will be in great demand. Browse around your local craft stores and see what raw materials are at hand. You may get some ideas that way.

Handmade Products

Regardless of what (if any) products you choose to make with your own two hands, be careful not to turn your store into a workshop. Large projects, or items that require a lot of supplies and space, should be left at and worked on at home. Customers find it interesting to watch a person working at some craft, but will only wait for so long if you are up to your elbows in work and can't spare a moment to serve them.

Even if you feel your handmade items are works of art, keep your pricing reasonable. I know I said this in the section above, but it's an important point. Try to figure out what your materials cost per finished item, and factor in your time (within reason). Pricing your things high because of their unique nature will just put a damper on sales.

Of course, I've made it sound like anyone can produce his or her own exquisite items to sell. I'm trying to be positive here, but I should be honest that not everyone has great artistic talent. Make an honest judgment about your work or ask close friends for their honest opinions. It doesn't need to be perfect, but it should look somewhat skillfully made.



Chapter 7

Ethical Inventory

Now, I have only a few things to say in this chapter, but I do feel they need to be said. Clearly, it is completely up to you what you choose to stock in your store, but I encourage you to look beyond the stereotypical boundaries of so-called white and black magick when selecting inventory. I don't mean you should dedicate a shelf to do-it-yourself hexing kits, but don't shy away from things that have uses other than the obvious positive magick. No one can know all the uses for a magickal item, and you shouldn't presume to have such knowledge yourself.

A prime example is the inverted pentagram. Though I didn't go out of my way to stock items for Satanic practitioners, I refused to shun them as potential customers. I carried a few varieties of upside-down pentacles, and I did have some customers chastise me on carrying "black magick" items. Besides the fact that Satanism is not an evil path to begin with, there are other meanings to the inverted pentacle. There are some Wiccan traditions where the inverted pentacle means a person has achieved their second

Ethical Inventory

degree of training. I always pointed this out to customers who questioned my inventory.

Black candles are another item that some novices assumed were only used for negative spells and rituals. Black is a powerful color, and it's used in magick for protection and banishings. Nothing evil about that.

The important thing to remember is that just like with magick, inventory items are neither good nor evil. Don't pass judgment on something because of preconceptions about its use.

An exception might be books that specialize in hexes, curses, or other forms of manipulative magick. Unlike other ingredients or objects, books like this are not ambiguous about their orientation. I wouldn't carry them in my regular inventory, but did order them in for customers if they were requested. Was that wrong of me? Perhaps, but I couldn't bring myself to "preach" to my customers about what kinds of magick they chose to practice. I just didn't feel that it was my place to enforce my own will on others with regards to this type of item. I acquired these books if asked but never offered them on the shelves.

Also, is it ethical to guarantee that your products will get the customer what they are after? I know it's painful to turn away potential customers, but you shouldn't lead people down the garden path and convince them that buying this, that, and the other will surely make their spells successful. People unfamiliar with witchcraft don't understand many of the basic principals and usually believe that their spells will be wildly successful as long as they have the right ingredients. There is nothing wrong with letting novices shop to their heart's content, but don't fan the flames with false assurances of success.

Ethical Inventory

Doing spells for others

This isn't quite an ethics issue, but I figured this was the best chapter to fit this in. Some customers will inevitably request magickal services, and you should decide ahead of time if this is something you want to pursue. I'm not talking about your own custom oil blends or spell kits. I mean actually casting spells or performing other magickal acts on the behalf of a customer. I often helped people choose items for their own workings or helped them assemble items that would suit a particular purpose. But never did I cast a spell for a customer.

I've not decided on the ethical questions involved in doing magick for money. Exchanging spells, charms, or herbal medicines for other goods or money is part of our Pagan heritage. Hundreds of years ago, townsfolk would go to the local "wise woman" in search of blessings, charms, and the like. I'm positive that they would have offered something in exchange for these services. So, I personally feel that it is somewhat natural to offer one's services to others for either barter or cash.

The main problem with doing magick for other people is that if customers are paying for this service, they expect results. They won't likely be satisfied with the subtle results that experienced practitioners understand are the norm. In exchange for their money, customers will expect a dramatic and immediate response. Can you honestly expect to provide that on a consistent basis? Would you want to? Even if you feel that selling magick like this is acceptable in itself, you might not feel the same way about the requests that will be made of you. I can guarantee that the majority of your customers will want a particular person to fall in love with them. Few people would argue the ethical problems with *that*.

Ethical Inventory

These are just some of my own thoughts and opinions to get you thinking. Whether you decide to offer magickal spells or other services to your customers is up to you. I suggest you think about it first, so you can handle the requests when they start popping up.



Chapter 8

Tarot Readers

Tarot readers are a staple service for the Pagan shop. They're not necessary, but they fit in so well that many stores have at least one reader "on staff." Good Tarot readers (or people with other divination skills) can be tough to find. Since they can be an integral part of a shop, I felt that they needed a chapter to themselves.

In a small town, you may not have anyone in the area who can read cards, but if you are in a larger city, there most surely will be a few. You might want to audition people beforehand to see what their techniques are like and how they relate to people. Personality plays a big role in whether a reader will be popular or not. Some people feel the need to impress their customers and come off as pompous or overdramatic while reading. Of course, a shy and stammering reader isn't any better. When you choose someone, make it clear that you haven't made a final decision and you may choose not to go with him or her. You really do need to see how these people relate to your customers before committing to anything. I

Tarot Readers

had an absolutely brilliant reader for a little while, but he approached customers like a used car salesman. It made me uncomfortable just listening, and I'm sure my customers felt the same. Another reader that I had looked promising until she started bringing her children with her on her custody weekends.

Aside from personality, how about your potential readers' ethics? You don't want some unscrupulous person tarnishing the otherwise excellent reputation of your fine store. Do they prey on the fears and problems of their customers in order to convince them to come back for continuous readings? Do they insist that they can solve their customer's problems, if only they purchase certain items from the store? Readers may do this thinking it a "favor" to you. Let them know that it's not necessary to push people to buy. Are their readings all doom, gloom, and disaster, intended to shock people?

What will your financial relationship with the reader be? They could pay you some amount per month for the use of the table and the space or perhaps a percentage of what they make per reading. They could also pay you nothing, but since they are plying their trade in your shop, I personally feel that they should pay something to the storekeeper. A further option is that *you* pay the *reader* and then allow him or her to read cards for free. I've tried this last option on special occasions and found that the customers loved the free readings, but too many people wanted one. The store got crowded with people standing around waiting to have their cards read. Too much of a good thing, I suppose.

Tarot card readers are more than store novelties. Make no mistake about that. A good reader who has been reading cards for a long time can have quite a following of loyal and regular customers. And in cases like this, the reader usually becomes a sort of

Tarot Readers

counselor to his or her customers. This can be great for repeat business, but you need to be prepared for the atmosphere this can cause. I went through several readers over my years at the shop, and the one woman I kept on the longest had a number of regulars. One customer would invariably arrive just before closing and request a detailed reading. Not only did she disrupt my day by forcing me to stay open longer, she also got so emotional during her readings that she often cried. Because she was there solely for the reader, she didn't even seem to notice that there was a store there, too.

While it may seem appealing at first glance to get a reader who has an established clientele, it may not provide you with the extra customers you think it will. While Pagans and non-Pagans alike enjoy a good Tarot reading, Pagans are not usually the type of people who *rely* on a reader for constant advice. People who visit readers on a regular basis may not be the people who are interested in your regular inventory. One of my readers had a number of regulars, and they almost invariably bought nothing when they came to the shop.

Another one of my favorite Tarot stories will illustrate the kinds of people who come for readings: One customer who had come into the store a few times wanted a reading. I had spoken to him on a few occasions and he was a little odd and very preoccupied with all sorts of conspiracy theories about political leaders and other celebrities. Well, during the course of his reading I found out even more about him. He was the Anti-Christ. Yes, *the* Anti-Christ. Even my seasoned reader was a little at a loss after this confession. He was the Anti-Christ and was in search of guidance in his attempts to escape from the Satanic army that was pursuing him. Thankfully there was only one other customer in the shop at the

Tarot Readers

time, and he was clearly amused by all this. But something like that could really turn people off, especially if they are already a little intimidated being in your store, which often happens with novices.

I keep referring to Tarot card readers specifically, but there is no limit to the kinds of similar services you can solicit for your shop. I had a man in my shop for several weeks who did past-life readings for customers. Customers really enjoyed them. You could also get people who read auras, palms, or any other type of divination. People like Tarot cards because they can see the cards laid out and that gives the reading a sense of authenticity and allows the customer to see the reading progress. Someone who just sits there and tells you things isn't as much fun.

If your shop isn't busy, you may be tempted to read cards for people yourself. I did this a number of times with some of my younger customers. Just a quick three-card reading, mostly for fun. The main problem with doing readings yourself is that they can take up a lot of time. The person you are reading for won't like being interrupted by other customers, and other customers won't like waiting to pay for their purchases because you are busy reading someone's cards.

Don't forget to plan some space for your reader. You'll need to have a large enough table to allow for expansive spreads. If your shop is small, you may need to have your Tarot table do double-duty as a display area on the days your reader isn't in. Leave plenty of room for a customer's chair. My own Tarot table was tucked into a corner, and some customers had a hard time pulling the chair out far enough for them to sit down.



Chapter 9

Classes and Workshops

Classes and workshops are bound to be popular and somewhat expected. People love to learn from books but will usually take an in-person class if the chance presents itself. This is especially true about subjects where books might be hard to come by (like Paganism and Wicca). Watch your customers and see what subject areas are getting asked about the most and develop a class for that. Beginner Wicca classes are a sure thing. But there is no end to the number of possible topics. I taught classes on the Gods & Goddesses, the Tarot, basic circle casting, and the standard introduction to Wicca.

Classes:

If you are not comfortable speaking in public, then you may not be too keen on the class idea. You could let the idea pass or you could look at this as a chance to develop some new skills and gain some confidence. But let's face it, teaching or speaking to groups isn't going to be everyone's thing. Even so, don't give up on holding classes just yet. Ask around

Classes and Workshops

and see if there are any knowledgeable people in the area who might be interested in teaching classes for you. You could offer them a discount at the shop in exchange for their services. Another benefit of having someone else do the teaching is that you aren't limited to your own knowledge when arranging classes. It also adds a little variety for potential students if you are offering a number of classes. People might get tired of listening to just you all the time. If you have someone else teach the class, find out some details on the material they plan on presenting. Some people are eager to teach others but are really still learning themselves. Make sure their knowledge meets your standards.

Classes that are free will always attract the most attention and will generate some goodwill among customers, but you'll find that some people look down on free things. You know the popular saying: "You get what you pay for." People put a greater value on something that has a price tag. Of course, that doesn't mean you should price your classes through the roof just so they look valuable. One other downfall to free classes is that if people haven't made an investment to go, there is a good chance they won't. I was offering free classes at my shop for a while, and since my store is small, I had to limit the number of people. I had sign-up sheet and did my best to make sure I didn't overcrowd my room. But then when class night rolled around, less than half the people who signed up actually showed up. I had turned away people because of my space constraints and ended up with only a few people anyway. From then on, I charged a small amount for all my classes and insisted that people paid when they signed up, rather than pay at the door. People were much more likely to arrive once they had forked over the money for the class. Once I learned who was serious about

Classes and Workshops

attending, I often waived the fee for them on later classes.

You could expand on any one-class topic and create a series of classes. If you design a series that really depends on your students attending each and every class, you could be in for difficulties. As I said earlier, it can be hard to get people to commit to one night, but several nights may be too much. A series of classes can still work, as long as each class is a distinct enough unit that people who miss a class can still enjoy the remaining ones. Have extra handouts ready for those folk who miss one class but return for following ones. They'll want to know what they missed.

Workshops:

Workshops are a little different from classes, as the point of the workshop is usually to *produce* something rather than just *learn* something. Depending on the nature of the task, you could have students bring their own materials or have them available at cost. If students are supposed to bring materials, you should still have some extras on hand just in case. I'm sure there will be at least one harried individual who either forgot or just couldn't find the right supplies before the day of the workshop. Workshops can be a successful alternative to classes for folks who don't like to speak to groups. Since you're all working on a project, it's a less intimidating atmosphere for talking.

Though I never did any workshops myself (my shop was just too small for them), I did have people ask about them. Here are a few of my favorite ideas:

Runes. Have students find twenty-six small round stones, or perhaps you could supply stones or small wooden tiles. Ink, paint, or even markers could

Classes and Workshops

be used to mark the sigils on each tile. It's a pretty simplistic task, but if you discuss the runes and their meanings as you go through each one, it can be educational as well. You could also show your students a few ways to read with runes once their sets are complete.

Dream pillows. You can supply the herbs and students can bring fabric and sewing utensils (needles, thread, scissors). Discuss dreams, herbs, or other related subjects while you sit around sewing pillows.

Books of Shadows (BoS). Simple black sketchbooks or notebooks can be the foundation for some very nice Books of Shadows, with either blank or lined pages. Pens or markers in silver and gold ink are becoming common in art or craft stores and work wonderfully on the hard black cover you usually get with sketchbooks. You might even provide a small page of poetry (maybe done with fancy font on the computer) that your students can place inside the cover. You could all brainstorm on the kinds of things one could include in a BoS and ways to keep it organized. For inspiration, you could use a computer to print out *Book of Shadows* in unusual fonts for your students to use as a guide.

Frankly, *any* craft item that you can think of could be turned into a workshop of some kind. Ask your customers for suggestions on what they would be interested in. As with the classes, you could always recruit other local craftspeople to lead these workshops if you find the required skills for some projects are too much for you. Keep in mind that any project that requires more skill than you have may also be too complicated or difficult for your customers as well.

Whether they are there for a class or a workshop, never let your customers/students leave without something that ties it all back to your store. Put

Classes and Workshops

together handouts with all the major points of the class or workshop (as well as the name and contact info for the store). Reference materials have a good chance to being kept at least for a little while, so make sure your store is prominently mentioned.

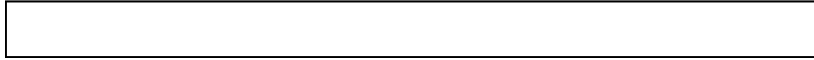
Since you are trying to promote your store through these services, it would be best if you could hold them at your shop. This may or may not be possible, depending on your location and store size. Not only do you need the open space for all the people, but you'll need to store chairs somewhere, too, unless you go with cushions on the floor for seating (which is what I did). If you're doing workshops, you may need extra table space as well. When your class is done, I'll bet more than a few people make a purchase or two since they're there anyway. So don't rush everyone out as soon as things finish up. Let folks linger a little, if you can.

If your store just won't hold enough people for a class, you could contact the local community center or school and see if they have classrooms or other spaces to rent, or you could arrange to have small classes at your home or the homes of Pagan friends. During good weather, you could arrange to meet people in a local park and have outdoor classes. These would do particularly well for nature-oriented subjects like herbs. Even a coffee-shop would do in a pinch for a small class. But in this case, make sure to check with the owner first. To reinforce the connection between the classes and your shop, make sure to have plenty of business cards or flyers to hand out.

You may want to keep your classes informal, with a free-flowing Q&A style or have it a little more structured with a set lesson plan. My Tarot class was completely free-form. I asked everyone to bring their decks, and we went through them all one card at a time, talking about the common elements between

Classes and Workshops

decks. I had no plan at all, and it worked great. If you allow the students to guide the discussion, still have some notes to help things along if nobody has anything to say at a particular moment. Nobody likes dead air. It's completely up to you. Check with your students afterwards and get their feedback. Few people will boldly tell you what you're doing wrong, but their comments might give some guidelines as to what they're looking for.



Chapter 10

Organizing/Promoting Events

This chapter will be useful only for those working in fairly large cities. You may be able to adapt these ideas for events in a smaller town, but you typically need a sizable population to support any kind of event. I don't have any personal experience with these types of events, but here are some suggestions that might prompt you to try something.

Some of these event ideas may require some investment on your part and may not necessarily make you your money back. The purpose of hosting events like this is promotion rather than profit. So for the larger events (like a concert) make sure you can afford to take a loss before you start any planning. Also make sure you have enough money to do it right. Cutting a few corners can be fine to keep an event within your budget, but your event will likely fail if you try to do too much with too little.

Besides the immediate promotion for your shop, consider these events as being beneficial to the

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local Pagan community. A stronger local community will lead to more customers in the future.

Moots

Of all the events I've listed as suggestions here, the moot is probably the simplest to undertake. It's also one that requires no financing on your part. A moot is a regular, and usually informal, gathering of Pagans. The purpose of a moot is pretty much just a time and place to be social with like-minded people. Moots can be a great success, even if you only have a handful of people who attend. Traditional locations are coffee-shops or pubs. If your area already has a regular moot, don't interfere and try to start another one just to have your own. Instead, make a point of attending the existing group whenever you can (and bring business cards!).

Most moots are monthly and held on a particular day of the week rather than on a set date. Our local moot in Toronto was held on the third Tuesday night of each month, for example. If you are hosting the moot, you really need to make a point of attending. You don't need any kind of topics or themes, but having a "leader" of sorts makes it easier for the group to function. Feel free to mention any new specials at the store, but don't turn your moots into advertising presentations. Make sure to promote the moot at your shop, so that new people can find out about it. Advertise the place and time for the first moot for a few weeks ahead of time to ensure you get a decent turn out. If only a couple of people show up, don't worry. It takes time to get the word out, and even a group of three or four people can maintain some interesting discussions.

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Book Signings

Publishers are always looking for ways to help promote their books and the authors who write them. Some publishers will cover the costs to have an author visit your store for a book signing, but in some cases they do not. It may also depend on the size of your store and your expected number of customers. A publisher might not be willing to fly a well-known author across the country to sign twenty books. If you contact a publishing house and they ask about this, be honest. The last thing you need is to have a tarnished reputation with a major book publisher or a popular author.

It's expected that you will have extra copies of the author's latest book for customers to purchase and then get signed (though some people will bring their own books). Try to estimate how many books you'll need and talk to your distributor. See if they are willing to take back any extras that aren't needed.

To encourage a large turn-out, advertise several weeks or even months in advance. Offering a discount on any books by your featured author is another good way to get people into the store that day. See if the publisher intends to promote your event. Coordinate with them to get the best possible exposure.

You could also just let major publishers know that you are interested in having a book signing, and they can get in touch with you when they have an author they are looking to promote in your area.

Fashion Shows

This is a somewhat specialized event that may or may not be a success, depending on your

Organizing/Promoting Events

community. Needless to say, this sort of event will work for you only if you have access to local Pagan clothing designers or seamstresses. I suppose you could purchase a selection of clothing from mail-order sources and model those.

But doing it that way will cost you a lot more money, and it won't be as much of a "community" event. If you are going to feature local designers, you can ask to borrow the clothing to save you the costs. The designers will be getting a lot of good promotion, so it's a reasonable suggestion.

My store was just up the street from some excellent local Gothic clothing stores that had a spectacular collection of handmade robes, gowns, dresses, and accessories. Of course, Goth does not equal Pagan, but I knew more than a few Pagans who loved the clothing at these shops.

Your store won't likely be large enough for an event like this, so start hunting up available space. Local community centers or a school gymnasium are always a good place to start.

Remember, Pagans come in all shapes and sizes, so try to choose your models realistically. We're not all a perfectly slim 6 feet tall. The designers supplying your clothes may already have some people who they use as models. Ask.

What kinds of clothes should you feature? This may partly depend on what your sources have to offer. Ritual robes and cloaks are an obvious choice, as well as other Pagan-friendly clothing styles (Gothic, Renaissance, Medieval).

More modern items like T-shirts can also be featured. You could even add some altar tools as long as they are large enough to be seen by the audience (swords or staffs).

Organizing/Promoting Events

Festivals

A festival can mean different things to different people, but this kind of event is typically pretty big, and you will likely need to recruit some fellow Pagans to help you get things organized. Frankly, festivals are such big events that I can only touch on some thoughts and ideas for them. I don't recommend you undertake a huge event unless you have a sizable population to draw from, sizable financial resources, and a sizable number of interested friends who can help you out. You may even want to join forces with other Pagan groups in your area (even other shops) and combine resources.

Festivals are typically outdoor events, and they usually span several days. There are some particularly large events that last more than a week. You'll need to arrange a *lot* of space (usually a parcel of farmland/woods that's several acres in size.) Accommodations will need to be considered. Rural locations don't always have decent hotels nearby. You'll have to set space aside for camping, which is the standard way to stay at festivals. Don't forget the portable toilets! Check with local zoning regulations and ensure you have all the proper permits for an event like this.

When you get a large group of people together in such an environment, a lot of entertainment and activities develop spontaneously among groups of people. But you will still need to have a full roster of things to do: workshops, rituals, talks, games, singing, music, bonfires, story-telling, drumming, crafts, and a selection of vendor tables. Of course, you'll have a vendor table for your own shop, but you might have to get a friend to help you with it. You will have enough to do keeping everything running. Since this festival is primarily a method of promotion for your shop, have business cards handy for everyone who

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comes by your table and have flyers available for attendees when they arrive.

You should decide well in advance what is going to be allowed and not allowed during your festival. Pets, alcohol, smoking, and public nudity are all things that are typically part of festival rules (either restricted or only allowed in certain areas).

Events like these require a good-sized crowd in order to be a success. Start promoting your festival even up to a year in advance. The more time and effort you spend letting people know about it, the more people will show up. You might even want to network with out-of-town people to help arrange carpooling. Anything that will make it easier for people to attend.

While most people do associate Pagan festivals with outdoor locations, you could always adapt a festival concept for an inner-city event, too.

Music Concerts

I love Pagan music and always look for ways to help promote it. I even ran an online radio station for a while. People tend to think of Pagan music as having lots of harps, high vocals, and lyrics about trees. In reality, there are great Pagan bands from all sorts of musical genres: rock, pop, alternative, and industrial.

Pick up a few CDs from your wholesalers or surf the net looking for Pagan bands. Many of them offer songs for download so you can hear what their style is like. Ask your customers if they have any favorite music groups or leave a sign-up sheet in your store for people to suggest a group.

Unless you are familiar with these types of events or the music industry, I wouldn't suggest trying to organize a huge, all-day, multi-band concert. Start off by contacting a band and arranging for them

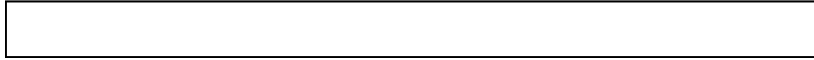
Organizing/Promoting Events

to come and play at a local bar, park, or other venue. Talk to the band and get their input, too. They have more experience than you do, so let them help out.

Workshops or Classes

See Chapter 9 for details and ideas for hosting or arranging Pagan workshops or classes. These types of “events” are very popular and are on a smaller scale that might be easier to handle for the new store owner.

Even for relatively informal events, you should try to get an agreement in writing if you are renting space from someone. Last minute changes could ruin months of preparation and promotion.



Chapter 11

Cards, Labels, Packaging

A Pagan shop is no different from regular shops when it comes to identifying itself. Business cards, labels, and signage are all valuable tools for letting people know about your shop. I mentioned back in Chapter 2 that though location is a vital aspect of getting your store seen and talked about, you will likely rely more on word-of-mouth. In a very small town, it won't take long for everyone to know about you, but in a larger city, you have a challenge ahead of you to get your name known among the Pagan population.

The best way to encourage visitors to talk about your store with their friends is to *make it easy for them*. Give them something to take away and share. Business cards are a must, but you can—and should—go beyond that.

Designing an artistic logo may be out of your reach, but you will need to at least settle on a font, or typeface, that you will use on all your promotional materials. You will have already thought about this sort of thing back in Chapter 3. The tone and image of your store should be reflected in the font you use.

Cards, Labels, Packaging

A name like “Satan’s Bookshelf” doesn’t really lend itself to a fine and dainty calligraphy font. I never had a graphic logo, but I used one type style on everything and it really identified my shop.

Business cards:

Word-of-mouth will spread faster if your customers can pass your card on to their friends. Make sure there are plenty of them in your shop and encourage customers to take a few. Carry some with you because you never know when an opportunity will arise for you to pitch your shop. I was sitting on the bus once, reading a Wiccan book and a girl next to me started up a conversation about it. I ended up giving her a card, and I know she came by the shop several times to buy books and supplies.

If you have a good quality computer printer, you can get templates and blank cards to print yourself. These are a low-cost alternative to professional printing, but home-made cards are flimsier and you can see a fine ridge of perforation around the edges. If you are still playing around with your logo or type style, these are a good choice until you finalize your design. You can be as creative as possible with your cards, but make sure to include the basics: name of the store, phone number, address, website (if you have one), and your own name if you want customers to get to know you personally. You could also add a blurb or catch-phrase about your store, your hours, a little map, or a brief list of what products you carry. Don’t forget the back of the card! If you are printing your own in small batches, you could also add an appropriate holiday greeting (“Happy Samhain!”), mention upcoming events, or sales. These are just ideas. You shouldn’t try to cram all these things on your

Cards, Labels, Packaging

cards. You'll have in-store flyers for extra information (see below).

Store Signs:

Store signs come in all shapes, sizes, and materials. You can easily break the bank if you go overboard on your signs. I can't tell you what kind of sign to get or how to design it. I would recommend getting a sign company to make your main outdoor sign. You want your store to give a good first impression and that's your signage. If your shop doesn't have a main floor entrance, then your signs are doubly important since they are the only things a customer is going to see as they pass by your shop. I was fortunate when it came to my store signs because my husband happens to be a professional sign manufacturer.

Besides your main display sign over your door or front window, I highly recommend an A-frame or sandwich board sign for the sidewalk outside your door. You'd be surprised how many people walk down a street and not notice the store signs above their heads. A sandwich board faces the flow of traffic, where your display sign does not. They are great attention-getters. Just make sure it is heavy, weighted down, or anchored so it doesn't blow away in strong wind. I had to chase my sign down the street on more than one occasion. Another nice touch to a sandwich board is a pair of plastic tracks, where you can slide a smaller sign in. You can use inserts to promote sales, news or in-store events. I used mine to let outside customers know when the Tarot reader was in.

My own signs weren't particular artistic or creative, but I felt that the prominent pentacle would get the attention of the people I wanted to attract. And if your shop is going to be open after dark, you should think about having a lit sign, or a spotlight to

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illuminate your sign. I didn't have this and always regretted it.

Bags:

Most stores have printed bags for customer's purchases, and they are a great way to get some exposure out on the street. You should think twice before trying this, depending on the logo and name of your store. Some in-the-closet customers might not appreciate having a big pentagram emblazoned across their bags. So if you do get bags printed up, you should have some blank bags on hand too. Thoughtful touches like this will make an impression. My own bags were purple to match the store, but were blank. It wasn't uncommon for a customer to hesitate when I offered a bag until I showed that they were blank.

Informational Hand-Outs:

I developed my most valuable give-away after watching customers try to write down details about their purchases on scraps of paper or on my business cards. Non-Pagans liked the magickal background info on the herbs and pretty stones they'd purchased and needed a way to remember once they'd gotten home. So I capitalized on that and strongly suggest you do, too. I created a tri-fold brochure that listed all the basic correspondences for the items that were for sale in my shop. It saved people the time and hassle of trying to make notes while shopping. Of course, when they left with these flyers, they also walked out with a reminder of my shop. A business card does the same thing, but these flyers were helpful and more likely to be kept and shared. Lots of people would pick up extras for their friends.

The front panel had the name of the store with the address. Each inside panel featured a type of

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item (herbs, oils, stones, colors). To round it out, I also included some details on the Sabbats and moon phases. Overall, it was a handy and quick little reference tool. The back panel had a little map to the shop, phone number, the hours, and my website. I saw plenty of new customers walk into the shop with one of my purple flyers already in their hands, likely shared from a friend. I would have to say these folded pamphlets were one of the best ideas I had with my shop.

I did have one more idea that I think would be exceptional, though I never did implement it myself. You'll likely get plenty of curious passers-by who are interested in learning a bit more about Wicca or Paganism in general. Having conversations with these folks is great, but why not have something for them to take when they leave.

If you have some writing talent, you could write up an informational article on Wicca and keep copies ready for giving away. Can't write? Well, take a browse on the Internet and you'll surely find some excellent resources to print out. Either way, add your shop name and contact info on there somewhere. I always meant to print something like this but never got around to it. If this works for you, maybe you could expand. Reference hand-outs on how to cast a circle, some basic Deity info, how to read tarot cards, or anything else people ask about. Having hand-outs like this shouldn't be seen as an excuse to avoid talking to people. If someone asks you a question, take as long as necessary to help them out and then make sure they leave with a flyer. Don't just give them the flyer and go back to work. You still need to chat people up.

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Labels:

Other ways to help your customers bring your name home with them is to customize some of your products under your own label. If you package your own incense, herbs, or oils, these are all great opportunities to customize some packaging. You don't want to crowd your labels, but if you have the space, make sure to add your store name and phone number or URL. If items from your store are given as gifts, no harm in letting the recipient know where they can come and shop for more of the same. Besides being another way to gain notoriety, even run-of-the-mill items take on a unique cast when they are marked with your own style.

Bookmarks:

How about bookmarks? I know when I buy a new book, I usually continue to use the bookmark that's included with the book (at least for the duration of that one book). A simple narrow strip of stiff paper or card stock works fine. Add a fun Pagan slogan on one side and your shop name on the other. Whenever someone buys a book, tuck a bookmark inside.

All of these ideas can easily be implemented on an average home computer with a half-decent ink jet or laser printer. If you don't have a computer, you may not be able to create any of these handouts with ease, but don't give up. Most large copy shops offer computer terminals for customer use where you pay by the hour. You might not be able to update your materials as frequently, but the promotional value of these hand-outs will be worth a little extra effort.



Chapter 12

Resources for Advertising

Trying to reach a Pagan audience through mainstream advertising can be difficult. Since Pagans exist in all walks of life, it's not always easy to find the right publications to reach your precise audience. Advertising locally is always a good option, but there won't likely be any particularly Pagan ways to do that, unless you live in a large city that has a sizeable Pagan population. With a lack of print resources available for advertising, I've focused more on the Internet.

In Print

Placing ads in print magazines is an excellent way to reaching a specific target audience, even if it's not local. Unfortunately, there just aren't that many Pagan magazines in print.

Some good examples are:

- *PanGaia* - a good, general interest magazine for Pagans
- *SageWoman* - a magazine for Goddess-worshippers

Resources for Advertising

- *NewWitch* - targeted to a younger crowd
- *Circle* - catering to people of many spiritual paths
- Full contact details for these publications can be found in the second portion of this book, under *Pagan Magazines*.

Most of these magazines have a classified ads section where you can place small text ads for relatively little cost. You will have to contact the magazines for the pricing on their larger display ad spaces. Even a small display ad can run you a couple hundred dollars for a single-issue run, but it might be worth the investment considering the nation-wide exposure.

If you're looking for local but non-Pagan print resources, you can easily place ads in whatever newspapers your city offers or any local magazines. Are there any smaller, independent papers that perhaps cater to the arts/music community? I hate to use stereotypes, but these sorts of papers are more likely to reach your desired audience than the local business paper.

Online

Most of these ideas are only relevant if you have a webpage to promote. The very nature of the Internet revolves around links between pages. If you have no page to link to, there won't be many places where you can be listed. Exceptions are webpages that list resources in your city. These types of pages are usually set-up like phone books and can list phone numbers and addresses, even if there is no website. A large city may have a dozen or more sites that catalog local businesses, but smaller towns may

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not have anything like this. If such a site exists, you may have trouble finding a suitable spot. Pagan shops don't really fit into any of the standard categories that retail stores fall into. When I got my phone line connected for my shop, I got a listing in the local yellow pages. The best category they had was *Eso-teric*. Now I ask you, who is going to look under *E* for a Pagan shop?

Of course, you can also use these types of local listings even if you *do* have a webpage. Wondering why you need a webpage? Go back and visit Chapter 4 (Setting up Your Website) for my thoughts on that.

The best way to gain exposure for your website on the Internet is to have oodles of people linking to you. Take some time and search the Net for any kind of Pagan site that includes pages of related links. Whenever you find someone who has a page for links to Pagan shops, drop them a note and ask to be added to their site. Unfortunately, there are an enormous number of websites that are virtually abandoned, and you may never be able to get in contact with the webmaster of a particular site. There is not much you can do about that.

There are a few sites that function as Pagan or Occult search engines, and it would be a very good idea to have your site listed in these places. AvatarSearch is the most popular one (www.avatarsearch.com). Some others are:

- Universal Pagan (www.universalPagan.com)
- AriadneSpider (www.ariadnespider.com)
- Mind n' Magick (www.mind-n-magick.com)
- SpiritLinks (www.spiritonline.com/links)

When you go to list your site at any of these search engines, you will likely be required to register first (usually a quick and free process). Make a note

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of your username and password! It can be difficult to get back in and modify your listing without this information. I've had that problem more than once because I can never remember how I signed up in the first place.

Speaking of search engines, there are plenty of huge non-Pagan ones that you need to be listed in. Google and Yahoo are the two largest. Please read Chapter 4 for more on making the best use of non-Pagan search engines.

One of the largest and most popular Pagan sites is the Witches' Voice (www.witchvox.com). While not really a search engine, they do provide an unbeatable collection of networking resources for Pagans. You simply *must* be listed there in their Shops directory, as well as in the section that is broken down geographically. They do not accept advertising at the Witches' Voice, but you can sponsor certain sections, which entitles you to a more prominent link position. Check their site for sponsoring costs.

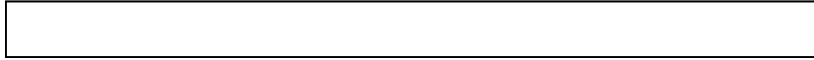
Under no circumstances are you to purchase a "mailing list" and send out emails in bulk. No matter how supposedly targeted the list is. This kind of advertising is called spam and it will crush your credibility faster than you can say "Fluffy Bunny."

One other avenue for advertising that I highly recommend isn't explicitly Pagan but *does* allow you to reach a specifically Pagan audience. I'm sure you've heard of the search engine Google. They offer an advertising program that is perfectly suited to the small-business owner. It's called AdWords. As you search around on Google, you can see prominent boxes of small text ads that are labeled "Sponsored Links." These paid-for links are assigned certain keywords, and the ads are displayed whenever someone is searching for those terms. You pay on a per-click basis.

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Full details on setting up an AdWords account can be found on the Google website, but I can give you a quick overview here. All you need to do is write a short but catchy ad (two lines) and include the URL to your shop's web page. Once your ad is created, you decide which keywords you want to trigger it. There are various tools available to you to check on the popularity of different search words or phrases, and it will even estimate how many clicks you are likely to get and therefore how much your ad will cost you. You can set a daily cost limit, which is very helpful in keeping your campaign expenses under control.

The cost per click will vary depending on the keywords you choose. The prices are set through a bidding system, where the highest bidder gets the top slot. Very popular keywords can cost you more than a dollar per click. Average keywords are more in the 5-20 cents range per click. Remember that your ad will display every time someone uses those keywords, but *you only pay if someone clicks*. Some obvious keywords for you would be Pagan store or Wiccan store, or keywords including the name of your city. I've used AdWords for some of my other websites and have had excellent success.



Chapter 13

Your Vendor Presence

Back in Chapter 10, we talked about promoting your shop by organizing various types of events in your city. But there is a good chance that there are already events going on in your area that you can latch onto without having to go through the effort of doing it all yourself. Watch your local community events calendar and see if you can find something that would provide you with a suitable audience.

Don't limit yourself to just Pagan events either. Psychic fairs or other New Age expos usually attract the kind of people who would be interested in at least some parts of your inventory. Even general craft fairs might be a good venue if you make some of your own products. Also, keep an eye out for events in other cities. As long as you have the means to travel a little, there is no harm in promoting your store to a wider audience.

When you hear about suitable events, get in touch with the organizers and see if they are allowing vendor tables. Most events have an area for folks selling things since attendees like the chance to shop

Your Vendor Presence

while they are out. The cost of the table space will likely be relative to the popularity of the show. Here in Toronto, there is a Psychic Expo held twice a year and it is very popular. Last time I checked, they were charging hundreds of dollars for a table, *and* you were required to have that table up and running for three days. It was too rich for my blood, especially since I would also have to find someone to mind the shop during that time, so I always declined.

Smaller events may charge only \$20 - \$50 for a table. Find out whether they supply the table and chairs for you. I found myself standing all day long at a Pagan workshop because I didn't know to bring my own chair. I think I found a box to sit on after lunch. It was a very long day, that's for sure. If they supply a table, ask for the measurements. You'll need to plan your inventory based on how much space you'll have to work with. I've made bad guesses to how large a table I would be getting and ended up with a very crowded table with not enough space.

Ask the event organizer who else is vending. They may not tell you, but it can be important information when deciding what to bring. You want to stand out, so if there are other jewelry sellers, you might not want to focus on jewelry. If there is another general Pagan-type table, you could ask the organizer not to place you right beside it.

My first recommendation is to bring more than you think you will sell. Unless you have a friend willing to shuttle between you and your shop with more products, you are stuck with whatever you bring with you. You *can't* afford to sell out and have a nearly empty table before the event is over. It looks terrible, and people will remember you as the shop with paltry offerings.

I always found that unusual, interesting, and eye-catching items sold the best. Jewelry, pins, and

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bumper stickers, various altar tools, and artwork did well. Bags of herbs or bottles of oils are not likely to reach out and grab someone's attention. Of course, it depends on the nature of the event. A psychic fair would likely bring you people after Tarot cards, scrying balls, and pendulums. An event catering to more New Age people might be looking for more crystals, candles, and incense. Handmade items would be appropriate for a general craft fair. Make sure to have herbs and oils at a holistic health event.

Plan your layout beforehand to make the best use of your table space. Keep extras in a box under or behind the table to keep your display from looking too cluttered. To add some extra space and dimension to your display, think vertically rather than just horizontally. I had a pair of triangular shaped shelf units that sat on the rear corners of the table, and they worked wonderfully. By having some items displayed upwards, people could really see my table from a distance. Not to mention all the extra room I had for my products. Those shelves really made my table stand out among all the flat displays.

Have a stack of business cards. A *big* stack. Sometimes people will want several to hand out to their own friends, study groups, or covens. If you have been using any other sort of flyers (like the tri-fold flyer I mentioned in Chapter 11), bring plenty of those, too. My husband is quite the baker, so I usually had a plate of free cookies, too. Never hurts to appeal to people's stomachs. If you try this, I suggest choosing a variety of treat that won't make a mess. Cookies covered in loose icing sugar are not a good idea. I speak from experience on this.

Be prepared to haggle a little. A fair or expo is a different environment than a store, and people may behave a little differently as well. Some folks will see your table as a kind of garage sale and expect to get a

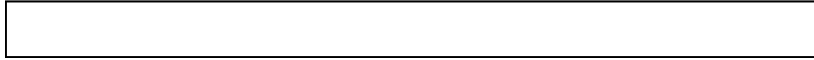
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deal or bargain. Don't turn up your nose unless they make some ridiculous offer. Shave a little off the price, especially if they are buying more than one item. Or have some smaller items on hand that you could toss in for free to sweeten the deal. Items like pins or bumper stickers work well for this.

If you send out mail-order catalogs or maintain a mailing list of any kind (paper mail or e-mail), this is a good chance to get some new names. Offer a draw of some kind. Print up entry ballots and get names and addresses (and e-mail addresses, if you wish). A recently published book or new deck of Tarot cards makes a great prize.

Don't chain yourself to your table either. Depending on the layout and scheduling of the event, you may be able to move around and visit with the other vendors. Some events schedule time only for shopping between talks or workshops, meaning you will have free time at some points in the day. Use the time to get to know the other vendors, even if they are your competition. You can never make too many contacts when in business. With some luck, you might find a few new artisans who would like to sell their products in your shop. If nothing else, you might see some new products that you could look into for your own inventory. I wouldn't suggest asking other vendors where they order their products from. Most won't be too quick to help out the competition unless their business is fundamentally different from yours .

Even if you're not selling much, don't let it bring down your mood. Stay cheerful and chatty no matter what. Talk with passers-by and look like you're having the time of your life. The day may be long when there are few sales, and you might feel like hiding behind your table with a good book (or even a bad book). That will just make things worse. Who wants to shop around a grump?



Chapter 14

Public Relations (PR)

Public relations can be a tricky area, and I confess that I am no expert. Traditional business books can help you write press releases and other means to get your name into the press. The basic idea of public relations is to put you and your store in the public eye through the news and other media. The wonderful thing about this kind of publicity is that it's free, unlike regular advertising.

My own first experience with PR came when I was contacted about doing an interview about Tarot reading and divination for the local daily newspaper. The interview was conducted over the phone, but a photographer did come and take some photos of the shop and me. I must say it was quite exciting. The final article used some other psychic's photo as the main illustration, but most of the quotes within the article were mine (along with references to my store). I must have grabbed ten copies of the paper that day. You just can't beat free exposure like that.

And it continued from there. A producer from a local morning TV show saw the article and that

Public Relations

prompted her to get in touch with me for a television interview. They even wanted me to bring a selection of products for a display table. It all went pretty smoothly until I backed myself into a grammatical corner when asked about the chalices. I said, “During rituals, sometimes water or wine is....” I then proceeded to stammer words like *drank*, *drunken*, and *drinken* because I couldn’t put my finger on the correct way to finish that sentence. Sigh. If you get nervous when speaking in public, you might want to think twice about going on a *live* TV show.

Between the newspaper article and the TV appearance, I can’t say that I became a celebrity. But there were a number of people in the store over the next few weeks who commented on having seen me or read about me. Folks were impressed to see a “real” Pagan on television who talked about “real” Paganism. Did I get a lot of new customers from my appearances? I have no idea. I’d like to think so. If nothing else, these things just added to my personal credibility and made great references for future projects.

In my case, I got this exposure through no effort of my own. Pure luck, I suppose. You’ll more likely have to take the first steps to get the ball rolling for your store. The most common approach for getting the attention of local news is to issue press releases. These are just informative notices about things happening in your store. Let reporters know that you have something newsworthy to offer.

Tips on writing a good press release:

Stick to newsworthy information. A new series of free classes on the Tarot would be appropriate. Announcing that you got your latest shipment of dragon’s blood resin would not be considered news.

Public Relations

Don't be flowery or poetic with the text. Be professional, factual, and to-the-point. Stick to the basic information.

Give all the contact information you can (phone, fax, email, address). Don't make it difficult for a reporter to follow up on your release.

Send it to the right place/person. Do your best to get a contact name at the newspaper or TV station you are sending your release to. Call first if you need to.

Don't overdo it. If there are a lot of classes or other events going on in connection with your store, you could group them together into a couple of releases. Excessive letters or faxes will eventually start to look like "junk mail."

When you're fishing for some exposure, I suggest approaching newspapers or local TV stations during any holiday season that has Pagan origins. Offer to talk or write about the history and origins of the holidays. Halloween is a stereotypical witchy time of year, but it's also the best time to offer to dispel some myths about the holidays. Newspapers are always looking for seasonal material, and if you can spread some facts about Paganism, so much the better.

I'm sure you've heard the expression, "There's no such thing as bad publicity," meaning that getting your name out there is of value no matter what the context is. I'm not sure how true this is. I think that Paganism is already struggling under a sizable blanket of bad press, and we don't need any more of it.

I heard about some other store owner down in New Orleans who actually hired people to picket his shop with Biblical signs and other Christian-based proPaganda, just so he could be featured in the news. I don't condone this sort of showboating, but I did

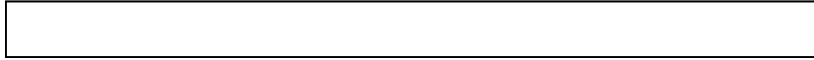
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think it a funny story to share. I suppose it's a good example of "thinking outside the box" and coming up with something unusual to get attention.

You could issue press releases to the newspapers or even magazines announcing any classes, workshops, or events being hosted by your store. Your news itself might make a short public-interest article for a reporter or it might just prod their curiosity to find out more about you, your store, and what you represent.

Once a local reporter has gotten to know you and worked with you, you could find yourself on file as the local expert on metaphysical topics. Finding a knowledgeable person to quote in this area can be tough, so I would imagine that any reporter would be quick to secure a solid source for future material.

As with most other aspects of business, don't forget the Internet! While local PR is great for getting immediate customers, getting your name known on a wider scale certainly can't hurt. Writing essays or articles for various Pagan websites is a good way to get your name out there. The Witches' Voice (www.witchvox.com) is a good place to start as they are always looking for essays. Be sure to include the name of your shop in your byline bio (and a link to your website).



Chapter 15

Your Role

You will be much more than just a cashier behind the counter. Whether you like it or not, people are going to come to you for advice. And not just magickal or spiritual advice, but you will likely hear more personal problems you ever imagined. Not everyone who comes to your shop will be an experienced Pagan who knows what they are after. You will likely get a lot of people who are having troubles in life and have turned to magick out of desperation or perhaps an easy fix. As a result, you may find yourself in the role of counselor. I had more than one person reduced to tears as they told me their tales.

No matter how desperate people are, never take advantage! Never promise them that buying expensive items will solve their problems. *Never ever.* How you handle these situations is up to you, but you might want to think about this beforehand so you don't get too flustered when someone comes needing help. Outline a basic spell or ritual for them perhaps or try to give them some non-magickal advice. Whatever. But don't foist expensive items on them just

Your Role

because you know they'll do whatever you say. On the other hand, I don't mean you should refuse to sell them anything. Just don't exploit the situation.

Aside from heart-rending personal problems, you will also get the occasional (or perhaps frequent?) tale of strange and psychic abilities. I found that many of these people really just want to tell their stories to someone who won't automatically think they're crazy. I had one young man who said he didn't believe in coincidences. As the discussion continued, he let me in on a secret. He could control the weather by the cereal he chose for breakfast in the mornings. I think that was the hardest straight-face I've ever had to hold. I'm sure he was completely serious and was letting me in on a very important fact of his life. The rest of the conversation was pretty much one-sided, with me smiling and nodding. The point is that you should always be respectful of people, even those who may be slightly delusional. I should clarify here that many people with stories of extraordinary abilities are genuine, and you may get the opportunity to learn some very interesting things from people who have unique gifts.

Looking the part.

Don't feel that you have to look witchy. Dressing in long, black gowns, dripping with silver jewelry is a beautiful look, in my opinion, but it's not a requirement. I wore my regular clothes (usually jeans) all the time. I didn't have the money to Goth up my wardrobe, even if I wanted to. Some people commented that I wasn't what they were expecting, and I liked that I was showing people that Pagans are everyday folk like them. But I did wear my silver pentacle necklace whenever I was at the shop. I looked at it as an ID badge. Of course, I usually wore it outside

Your Role

the shop, too. I always thought of it as subliminal advertising.

People asked for my help all the time: What's the best herb for this? When should you do these kinds of spells? I usually knew the answers, but when I didn't, I didn't try to bluff my way out of it. I'd help as best I could, and then try to look up the info in my book collection behind the counter or in any of the books on the shelf. If you don't know the answer, admit it, and try to recommend where your customer might look for the information. If you find yourself shrugging your shoulders too often, it's time to do a little studying.

No matter how well-stocked your shop is, there will always be requests for things you don't have. Be helpful anyway and try to offer suggestions where they could try to find the items. Even if it's your competition. Don't send everyone away, but customers will remember a helping hand. I used to carry a number of basic herbs but certainly not a complete selection. I never hesitated to point people down the street to a great little herb store. I may have lost a customer or two, but most people came back. Especially when they realized how much more expensive things were at that other store. My point is, a helpful store owner will end up with more customers in the long run, even if you have to send people away for what they need on occasion. Keep notes about what people are asking for and try to improve your inventory.

Your store can be a source of education for anyone even the least bit curious. Even when people come in with ridiculous and naïve questions, take the time to set them straight. I admit that I messed with people from time to time. The blank Books of Shadows sometimes caught people off guard. They'd come to the front with a bewildered look on their faces,

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wondering why they couldn't see anything. "Once you're initiated to the third degree, then it will become visible," I'd tell them. Or that the dragon's blood ink really had dragon's blood in it. Oh, don't be so shocked. It's just too tempting sometimes. But don't worry: I never let anyone leave the store with those notions. I always let them in on the joke and explained things in full.

Though it may be tempting, don't trash-talk your competitors. My main competition was truthfully not very popular but survived because it was the oldest occult store in the city and was well-known. Lots of people would comment how much nicer my shop was, how much cheaper my products were, etc. I loved hearing it, but I did my best not to join in. I'd sometimes mention that I'd heard similar things from other customers, but I kept my own opinions out of it. It would be professional of you to do the same.

Let your customers do their browsing in peace. You can point out as they walk in that you are there to help and that they should come to you with any questions they might have. But after that, leave them be. Even a successful shop will find itself empty, and customers can feel a little awkward when they are the only ones shopping. Don't make them any more self-conscious than they already are by watching them. Look busy at the counter, arrange inventory, work on a craft of some kind, or even read a book.

When You Are Not Enough

I was the sole employee of my shop for the longest time. A friend of mine offered to run the shop on Sundays, so I could have a break. That was the only "staff" arrangement I ever had. The legal ins and outs of hiring staff are beyond me to explain, so I

Your Role

recommend checking a more conventional retail book on how to go about it properly. Since I have little experience in this area, I'll keep it brief. But I did discover one unexpected employee resource that I want to share. Volunteers.

As the reputation of my store grew, I had a number of younger people (teenagers) who were so enthusiastic about my shop that they offered to work for free. All they were after was the experience and the "prestige" of working at the local witchcraft shop. Most teens are somewhat lacking in the employment references department, so you will have to trust your own judgment. I don't recommend you hand over the store key and leave a teen in charge of your store. But having an extra pair of hands on busy days can be quite a help. Volunteers could help with customers, run the cash, pack up extra herbs or incense, or put price tags on new inventory.

If this appeals to you, you could consider putting a notice on your bulletin board that you are looking for part-time volunteer help. Some people might resent that you are not paying, but I'm sure there will be a number of young people who jump at the chance to get some work experience. You could always sweeten the deal with a discount. Not only do you get extra help without the extra cost, your volunteers are likely to talk about their exciting new positions at your store, and this could lead to new customers.



Resources for the Pagan Store

Some tips when using this section of the book:

The listings of inventory that each vendor carries is *just a sample* and may not be complete. I can't list each and every single item that a distributor has on hand. Make sure to get a recent catalog or wholesale URL.

Some of these companies are retailers as well as wholesale distributors, but many only deal with other stores. If you see an address near you, don't assume that there is a store location there where you can go and browse.

You may need to supply vendor ID of some kind before getting access to a distributors wholesale price list/catalog. Don't assume right off the bat that the prices on a website are the wholesale prices. As I mentioned in the point above, some of these companies deal in retail and their sites may have the retail prices up front.

In the cases where I have personal experience with a wholesaler, I have made a mention of that

Resources for the Pagan Store

along with my opinions. I cannot vouch for the quality of products or service from any companies that I've never dealt with.

As you go through the various catalogs or websites, you may find the same items available from many sources. I tried not to include sources that just duplicate the same inventory as others, but considering that shipping can be a large part of your order costs, it can be very helpful to find a supplier that is close to you. It's not always about finding *new* inventory, but also about finding more convenient sources for it.

Most of the resources listed here are in the USA, but watch for some Canadian companies, and some from overseas.

Some outlets have web pages but no email addresses. In order to reduce unwanted emails (i.e. Spam) some companies use online forms for email contact instead of giving out their addresses. So if there is no email address listed here, you can still likely contact these companies through the Internet by visiting their websites and filling out a contact form.

Watch out for middle-men who claim to be wholesalers. You'll always get the best prices if you go to the source (or as closely as possible). I know there are a lot of smaller shops that offer "wholesale" prices on items that I recognize immediately as coming from another major wholesaler. Why pay for a middle-man's profit? Get your wares directly from the wholesaler. Products from AzureGreen are the most commonly seen in this kind of arrangement.

That said, there are some instances when a middle-man may be the better choice. Sorry to be confusing, but who said running a store was simple. Some larger wholesalers require large minimum purchases. If you can get those same items through a smaller

Resources for the Pagan Store

distributor, you may pay a little more per item, but you may also get by with a smaller number of items. This can be a better arrangement if you just don't have the cash to buy \$500 worth of pendants all at once.

Terms

Just a quick aside to explain the different terms that wholesalers might offer. Your first order may be cash or credit card only. After that, you should be able to establish an account for your store and be billed for your orders. Standard terms are Net 30, or sometimes Net 15. That just means you have to pay the entire invoice in full within thirty (or fifteen) days. You don't usually have the option of paying in installments. Ask about whether you can get a discount for quick payment.

General Pagan Supplies

AzureGreen

PO Box 48

Middlefield, MA 01243-0048

USA

Phone: 413-623-2155

Fax: 413-623-2156

Website: *www.azuregreen.com*

E-mail: *AbyssDist@aol.com*

- Books
- Magazines
- Calendars
- Music
- Tarot cards
- Cauldrons
- Athames
- Chalices
- Incense cones & sticks
- Incense burners
- Oils

General Pagan Supplies

- Herbs
- Herbal accessories
- Resins
- Smudge sticks
- Charcoal tablets
- Bumper stickers
- Jewelry
- Crystals
- Statuary
- Artwork
- Pins
- Books of Shadows
- Candles
- Candle holders
- Robes
- Runes
- Besoms
- Wands
- Bowls
- Bells
- Pendulums
- Embroidered patches
- Scrying balls
- Boxes, bags
- Spell inks
- Quills

AzureGreen is offers a full-range of Pagan products, supplies and equipment. They carry many hard-to-find items, as well as the basic items that round out a shop's inventory.

Personal Experience / Comments: I used Azure-Green for the bulk of my inventory simply because they carry everything you could want. Check your orders right away, as breakage does happen during shipping. They were always quick to refund or give credit when that happens.

General Pagan Supplies

Capricorn's Lair

2446 & 2450 Washington Blvd.

Ogden, Utah 84401

USA

Phone: 801-334-6039

Fax: 801-334-9443

Website: *www.capricornslair.com*

E-Mail: *capswholesale@aol.com*

- Jewelry
- Oils & accessories
- Herbs & accessories
- Chalices
- Incense
- Incense burners
- Resins
- Charcoal tablets
- Statues
- Books of Shadows
- Book stands
- Bells and gongs
- Decorated boxes
- Candles
- Bath salts, soap
- Tarot decks
- Runes
- Altar shrines
- Altar tiles/patens
- Offering bowls
- Wax seals
- Quills and pens
- Wands
- Athames
- Crystals, stones
- Altar cloths
- Carpets, rugs
- Cauldrons

General Pagan Supplies

- Spell kits
- Body jewelry

Capricorn's Lair is another huge supply house that offers all the inventory items you could need. You can see their products at their retail website (above) but with a retail ID, you can get access to their wholesale website.

The Magical Blend / Le Mélange Magique

1928 St. Catherine Street West

Montreal, PQ H3H 1M4

Canada

Phone: 514-938-1458

Website: *www.themagicalblend.com*

Email: *tmb@themagicalblend.com*

- Books
- Calendars
- Tarot decks
- Other oracle decks
- Athames
- Swords
- Bath products
- Jewelry
- Candles
- Oils & accessories
- Altar Tiles
- Incense cones/sticks
- Incense burners
- Resins
- Charcoal tablets
- Cauldrons
- Bells
- Books of Shadows
- Runes

General Pagan Supplies

- Crystals, stones
- Herbs & accessories
- Spell kits
- Bolines
- Patches
- Bumper stickers
- Windchimes
- Sweetgrass, smudge
- Witch balls

The Magical Blend carries many of the same items as AzureGreen, but their Canadian location may be appealing to some store owners.

Abaxion

(for orders)
PO Box 1444
Magalia, CA 95954
USA

(all other correspondence)
PMB 216
236 W East Ave, Suite A
Chico, CA 95926
USA
Fax: 530-230-2719
Website: *www.abaxion.com*
Email: *abaxion@abaxion.com*

- Chalices
- Athames
- Swords
- Cauldrons
- Altar cloths
- Books of Shadows

General Pagan Supplies

- Altar/wall plaques
- Boxes, bags, bottles
- Offering bowls
- Robes, clothing
- Bells
- Altar kits
- Quills, pens, ink
- Sand timers
- Windchimes
- Altar tables
- Jewelry
- Candles & holders
- Stones, crystals
- Wands
- Books
- Incense & accessories
- Oils
- Herbs & accessories
- Statuary
- Scrying balls, mirrors
- Tarot cards
- Pendulums
- Runes
- Postcards
- Bumper stickers
- Keychains
- Household décor items
- Bath products

Abaxion doesn't really offer "wholesale" prices but they do give discounts for volume orders when ordering multiples of the same items. You'll need to contact them for specific details. They have an enormous inventory, so it may be worth the effort.

General Pagan Supplies

Bell, Book & Candle

115 West Loockerman St

Dover, DE 19904

USA

Phone: 302-678-4545

Website: *www.bellbookandcandle.biz*

- Books
- Herbs & accessories
- Candles & holders
- Chalices
- Robes, clothing
- Music CDs
- Altar tables, boxes
- Incense
- Resins
- Smudge sticks
- Stones, crystals
- Athames
- Besoms
- Books of Shadows
- Jewelry
- Statuary
- Oils and blends
- Cauldrons
- Tarot decks
- Runes
- Pendulums
- Wands
- Quills, pens, ink
- Mirrors

General Pagan Supplies

Specific Pagan SuppliesAlchemy Works

374 Latta Brook Rd.

Horseheads, NY 14845-3102

USA

Phone: 607-737-9250

Website: *www.alchemy-works.com*

Email: *admin@alchemy-works.com*

- Herbs (bulk)
- Resins (bulk)
- Seeds (bulk)
- Oil blends

Alchemy works has an inventory of herbal and plant material specifically for magickal uses, including some very hard-to-find herbs. They do not have overall wholesale discounts, but offer price breaks on quantity orders.

Ancient Circles

1250 Blosser Lane

Willits, CA 95490

USA

Phone: 800-726-8032

Fax: 707-459-0261

Website: *www.ancientcircles.com*

Email: *ancient@pacific.net*

- Jewelry
- Torcs, headpieces
- Capes, cloaks, gowns
- Masks
- Drums

General Pagan Supplies

- Rugs
- Scarves and other fabrics

Ancient Circles has an unusual mix of products, with a Celtic and fairy flair.

Bell Pine Art Farm

82535 Weiss Rd.

Creswell OR 97426

USA

Phone: 1-800-439-6556

Website: *www.bellpineartfarm.com/*

- Goddess statuary

Bell Pine Art Farm has a unique line of somewhat abstract Goddess statuary, many of which are designed to represent various phases and times in a woman's life. They also have animal designs and statuary for families.

Euroboom

PO Box 176

Stn Delorimier

Montreal, PQ H2H 2N7

Canada

Phone: 866-858-0402

Fax: 514-858-1262

Website: *www.euroboomposters.com*

E-Mail: *stuff@euroboomposters.com*

- Posters
- Postcards

General Pagan Supplies

- Keychains
- Stickers
- Related display items

Euroboom has an interesting selection of occult- and fantasy-themed artwork, though the majority of their catalog is movie or music related. They also have a few specialized display items for posters and postcards.

Personal experience / Comments: There were only a dozen or so designs that suited my store, but the art was of excellent quality. Their print catalog was a blurry black & white set of photocopies which really didn't do the items justice.

Fragrance Factory

12 Peck Ave

Pompton Plains, NJ 07444

USA

Phone: 973-835-2002

Fax: 973-835-3540

Website: *www.fragrancefactory.com*

E-Mail: *info@fragrancefactory.com*,
sales@fragrancefactory.com

- Oils (bulk)
- Incense (loose, bulk)
- Unscented sticks
- Ziploc bags
- Display racks
- Empty bottles
- Droppers
- Burners
- Storage boxes

General Pagan Supplies

Fragrance Factory specializes in scented oils and incense. Both can be purchased in large quantities to be packaged by you, saving money and giving the opportunity to customize packaging.

Personal experience / Comments: I found the service to be quick and friendly at the Fragrance Factory. No bells and whistles at their website makes for easy ordering. I think these guys are the only people on the planet who sell Ziploc bags long enough for incense sticks.

Frontier Natural Products Co-op

PO Box 299

3021 78th St

Norway, IA 52318

USA

Phone: 800-669-3275

Fax: 800-717-4372

Website: www.frontiercoop.com

E-Mail: customercare@frontiercoop.com

- Herbs (bulk)
- Resins (bulk)
- Herbal accessories
- Essential oils
- Mortar & pestles
- Tea accessories

Frontier Co-op specializes in bulk herbs and other natural products. You have to join the co-op, but the payments are minimal. Though their focus is health and cooking, they do carry nearly every herb a Pagan could want.

Personal experience / Comments: Their catalog was thorough and complete, and I enjoyed dealing with Frontier. The herbs were always fresh and very

General Pagan Supplies

aromatic. When shipped, the herbs were well packed and were never crushed.

Heaven & Earth

PO Box 249

965 Route 14 South

East Montpelier, VT 05651

USA

Phone: 802-476-4775 (800-942-9423)

Fax: 802-479-5923 (888-400-6288)

Website: *www.heavenandearthjewelry.com*

E-Mail: *info@heavenandearth.ws*

- Semi-precious stones (bulk)
- Crystals (bulk)
- Jewelry

Heaven and Earth has a large selection of crystals and stones that can be purchased by the pound. Their jewelry is a mix of spiritual and New Age imagery in both gold and silver.

Just Wingin' It

PO Box 20994

Riverside CA, 92516-0094

USA

Phone: 909-369-3336 (888-430-4594)

Fax: 909-369-3044

Website: *www.jwi.com*

Email: *jwi@jwi.com*

- Pendulums
- Jewelry
- Bumper stickers
- Windchimes

General Pagan Supplies

- Note cards
- Candles

Just Wingin' It specializes in angels and other spiritual items, but there are a few products in their inventory that I think would appeal to Pagans as well.

Kamala Oils

635 Chicago Ave

Evanston IL, 60202

USA

Phone: 847-424-1963 (877-424-1963)

Fax:

Website: *www.kamalaoils.com*

- Custom oil blends
- Herbs and accessories
- Incense and accessories
- Bath and body products

Kamala's products are a little costly, but they are well-known for their high quality. There are a large number of blends available. Their website is a little disorganized.

Kheops Int'l

541 RR 8

Ham-Nord, PQ G0P 1A0

Canada

Phone: 888-944-2152

Fax: 819-344-2033

Website: *www.kheopsinternational.ca*

E-Mail: *sales@kheopsinternational.ca*

General Pagan Supplies

- Decorative boxes / bags
- Greeting cards
- Figurines / statuary
- Incense
- Incense burners
- Oil burners
- Oils
- Candles
- Candle holders
- Wind chimes

Kheops carries a *very* unique line of beautiful glass products and a mix of New Age and Eastern spiritual statuary.

Personal experience / Comments: The items carried by Kheops were quite extraordinary, and I've not found another source that carries anything like them. These were the only wholesaler I dealt with that sent a rep to my store on a regular basis to help me with my orders.

Keystone Products

2197 Canton Rd, Suite 110

Marietta, GA 30066

USA

Phone: 770-427-9500 (800-270-0650)

Fax: 770-427-9599

Website: *www.keystoneproducts.com*

Email: *keystoneproducts@mindspring.com*

- Incense and accessories
- Oils and accessories
- Candles
- Burners
- Resins
- Charcoal tablets
- Displays and supplies

General Pagan Supplies

Keystone has a selection of packaged incense brands, mostly of Eastern origin and scent.

Lazy T's

Phone: 888-878-0373

Fax: 818-951-8007

Website: *www.lazyts.com*

Email: *sales@lazyts.com*

- Tarot bags and pouches
- Incense
- Gift cards
- Pillows

A mix of New Age and Pagan products, mainly decorative items. Not a huge selection, but the items are unique.

Lightstones

3210 Valmont, Suite B

Boulder, CO 80301

USA

Phone: 800-82-PEACE

Fax: 303-440-0309

Website: *www.lightstones.com*

- Mini candles
- Incense and herbal blends
- Feng shui products
- Crystal items
- Buddhist statues
- Windchimes

General Pagan Supplies

Lightstones is more of a New Age supplier, but they do carry a number of items of interest to Pagan customers.

Personal Experience / Comments: I didn't order a great deal from Lightstones, but their mini candles just flew off the shelves, as did the mini sage smudge bundles.

Lost Mountain

PO Box 429

Fairfax CA, 94978

USA

Phone: 415-454-3750 (1-800-800-6319)

Fax: 415-456-2801

Website: *www.coolstones.com*

E-mail: *lostmntn@coolstones.com*

- Stones
- Crystal figures
- Jewelry

Lost Mountain has several lines of shaped crystals and stone totem figures.

Peterstone Jewelry

7 North Williams St.

PO Box 1008

Selbyville, DE 19975

USA

Phone: 800-397-8787 (orders)

or 302-436-0200 (main office)

Fax: 302-436-0300

Website: *www.peterstone.com*

E-Mail: *pck@peterstone.com*

General Pagan Supplies

- Pendants
- Rings
- Chains
- Earrings
- All in sterling silver

Peterstone carries high-quality silver jewelry in Pagan designs, with several varieties of pentacles and other symbols. Make sure to ask for their *metaphysical* catalog, as they do carry a large number of non-Pagan designs as well.

Personal Experience / Comments: I loved the jewelry at Peterstone, but their minimum orders for wholesale accounts was a little high for me. I often purchased their pieces through other distributors (like AzureGreen).

Sacred Source

PO Box 163

Crozet, VA 22932

USA

Phone: 804-823-1515 (1-800-290-6203)

Fax: 804-823-7665

Website: *www.sacredsource.com*

E-Mail: *spirit@sacredsource.com*

- Statuary
- Wall plaques
- Jewelry

Sacred Source is the main manufacturer of Pagan statuary. They have some items that are suitable for outdoor use, as well as indoor altar decorations.

Personal experience / Comments: The prices are a little high at Sacred Source, but I have to admit their products are very nice. You can find images

General Pagan Supplies

from all different pantheons, rather than just the standard Greek, Celtic, and Egyptian.

Tanzyr

PO Box 4275

Winter Park, FL 32793

USA

Phone: 407-830-7660

Fax: 702-974-8474

Website: *www.tanzyr.org*

(metaphysical wholesale)

or *www.tanzyr.com* (complete catalog)

E-Mail: *tanzyr@aol.com*

- Pendants
- Charms
- Jewelry findings

The products at Tanzyr would be of most interest to those people who *make* jewelry. Their jewelry pieces are designed to be incorporated into larger pieces. Their inventory is spread over several websites, so make sure you are accessing the right one.

Thistle & Ivy

300 Lawnview Way

Greensburg, PA 15601

USA

Phone: 724-989-6-0688

Fax: 724-219-4390

Website: *www.thistleandivy.com*

Email: *info@thistleandivy.com*

- Greeting cards
- Art prints

General Pagan Supplies

Thistle and Ivy carries many unique and hand-crafted items. They offer only wholesale pricing on selected items in their inventory, namely the artwork and other printed items (cards, books).

Wellington Fragrance Company

8515 Ronda Dr

Canton MI, 48187

USA

Phone: 734-254-0043 (800-411-3593)

Fax: 734-254-0073

Website: *www.wellingtonfragrance.com*

E-Mail: *support@wellingtonfragrance.com*

- Essential oils (bulk)
- Oil blends (bulk)
- Empty bottles
- Droppers
- Oil flavorings
- Incense (loose, bulk)
- Unscented incense
- Massage oils
- Candle and soap additives

Wellington offers quite a wide selection of scents to choose from. You can purchase the oils in large quantities or in individual 1oz bottles.

White Light Pentacles / Sacred Spirit Products

PO Box 8163

Salem MA 01971-8163

USA

Phone: 978-745-8668

Fax: 978-744-3296

Website: *www.wlpssp.com*

Email: *customer_service@wlpssp.com*

General Pagan Supplies

- Candles
- Incense
- Books of Shadows
- Jewelry
- Cauldrons
- Athames
- Chalices
- Altar plaques
- Runes

At the time of this writing, White Light Pentacles was redoing their website and not all their products were easily located for browsing. I suggest getting their paper catalog until their site is complete.

Wiccaworks

4645 Commodore Ave.
Spring Hill, FL 34606
USA

Phone: 352-688-1469

Website: *www.wiccaworks.com*

E-Mail: *wiccaworks@yahoo.com*

- Ceramic goblets
- Ceramic altar pentacles
- Jewelry
- Other ceramic items

Wiccaworks sells a variety of handmade chalices, including a very unique mini size. Their jewelry consists of stoneware and pewter pendants.

General Pagan Supplies

Willowroot Real Magic Wands

PO Box 576

Benicia, CA 94510

USA

Phone: 707-745-4470 (800-554-0113)

Website: *www.realmagicwands.com*

Email: *Willowroot@aol.com*

- Wands, in sterling, bronze, pewter
- Jewelry

Willowroot has a stunning line of intricately designed wands, in metals and gemstones.

Publications

Magazine websites are notoriously bad for keeping their sites up-to-date with regards to their publications. Even if you see a website that looks stale, get in touch with them anyway to make sure they are still publishing. Just because the site says the “current” issue is from 2002, doesn’t mean they’ve gone out of print.

Sagewoman Magazine

PO Box 641

Point Arena CA, 95468-0641

USA

Phone: 707-882-2052 (1-888-SAGEWOMAN)

Fax: 707-882-2793

Website: *www.sagewoman.com*

E-mail: *info@sagewoman.com*

- Published quarterly
- Stories and articles related to Goddess-worship and feminine spirituality

General Pagan Supplies

Pangaia

PO Box 641
Point Arena CA, 95468-0641
USA
Phone: 707-882-2052
Fax: 707-882-2793
Website: *www.pangaia.com*
E-mail: *info@pangaia.com*

- Published quarterly
- A general interest magazine for Pagans.

NewWitch

PO Box 641
Point Arena CA, 95468-0641
USA
Phone: 707-882-2052
Fax: 707-882-2793
Website: *www.newwitch.com*
E-mail: *info@newwitch.com*

- Published quarterly
- A magazine specifically geared to a younger generation of Pagans

Note: it's not a typo that the previous 3 magazines all have the same contact information. They are all published by the same company.

Beltane Papers

PO Box 29694
Bellingham WA 98228-1694
USA
Phone: 360-647-1264
Website: *www.thebeltanepapers.net*
Email: *belane@az.com*

General Pagan Supplies

- *Published 3 times a year*
- A women's spirituality magazine.

Circle Magazine

PO Box 219

Mt. Horeb, WI 53572

USA

Phone: 608-924-2216

Website: www.circlesanctuary.org/circle/

E-mail: circle@mhtc.net

- Published quarterly
- General interest Pagan magazine

Magickal Blend

MB Media

PO Box 600

Chico CA, 95927-0600

USA

Phone: 530-893-9037

Fax: 530-893-9076

Website: www.magicalblend.com

E-mail: info@magicalblend.com

- Published monthly
- A New Age magazine covering all manner of spirituality and metaphysics

Pentacle Magazine

78 Hamlet Rd

Southend on Sea

Essex SS1 1HH

United Kingdom

Website: www.pentaclemagazine.org

(their website has much more content than just the magazine itself and is quite hard to navigate)

General Pagan Supplies

- Published quarterly
- An independent and general interest magazine for UK Pagans

Publishers

As a general note about ordering from book publishers, you will likely find better terms/prices by ordering through a distributor rather than going directly to the publisher. Smaller publishers are fine to deal with, but the larger ones would rather not deal with small orders, and you will have to order your books in *very* large numbers in order to get half-decent discounts.

Llewellyn Books

PO Box 64383

St. Paul, MN, 55164-0383

USA

Phone: 1-800-THE-MOON

Fax: 651-291-1908

Website: *www.llewellyn.com*

E-mail: *sales@llewellyn.com*

Llewellyn publishes all manner of books on Wiccan, Pagan, witchcraft, and New Age topics.

US Games

179 Ludlow St.

Stamford, CT 06902

USA

Phone: 203-353-8400

Fax: 203-353-8431

Website: *www.usgamesinc.com*

E-Mail: *sales@usgamesinc.com*

General Pagan Supplies

US Games is the foremost publishers of Tarot decks in the world. Though other book publishers have started putting out decks, US Games remains the central source for Tarot. They also have a variety of non-Tarot divination decks.

Red Wheel / Weiser Books

PO Box 612

York Beach, ME 03910-0612

USA

Phone: 207-363-4393

Fax: 207-363-5799

Website: *www.redwheelweiser.com*

Red Wheel carries a mix of Pagan and Wiccan titles, as well as books of other spiritual paths. They have books that go beyond the standard intro material that some publishers favor.

New Page Books

3 Tice Rd, PO Box 687

Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

USA

Phone: 201-848-0310

Fax: 201-848-1727

Website: *www.newpagebooks.com*

Their catalog is a mix of Wiccan and Pagan titles, as well as some non-Pagan books as well.

Spilled Candy Books

PO Box 5202

Niceville, FL 32578

USA

General Pagan Supplies

Phone: 850-974-0619

Fax: 850-897-4644

Website: *www.spilledcandy.com*

Email: *orders@spilledcandy.com*

Most of their titles are Pagan fiction, though they also have a growing number of excellent non-fiction books as well (including this book).

Crossing Press

PO Box 7123

Berkeley, CA 94707

USA

Phone: 510-559-1600 (1-800-841-BOOK)

Fax: 510-559-1629

Website: *www.crossingpress.com*

Email: *order@tenspeed.com*

Crossing Press is a division of Ten Speed Press, and they have an excellent selection of spirituality and Pagan titles.

Book / Magazine Distributors

Most book distributors carry the full catalog of titles from several publishers, which can number into the thousands of books, magazines and related items. I cannot list everything that these distributors offer, but you can get catalogs and listings directly from them. You can also contact the specific publishers to find local distributors near you.

General Pagan Supplies

Counter Culture Books

The Long Barn

Sutton Mallet

Somerset TA7 9AR

England

Phone/Fax: 01278 722888

Website: *www.counterculture-books.co.uk*

E-Mail: *info@counterculture-books.co.uk*

DeVorss & Company

PO Box 1389

Camarillo, CA 93011-1389

USA

Phone: 800-843-5743

Fax: 805-322-9011

Website: *www.devorss.com*

Email: *sales@devorss.com*

Hungry Mind Books

Phone: 800-959-6267

Fax: 818-998-8657

Website: *www.hungrymindbooks.com*

Email: *orders@hungrymindbooks.com*

New Leaf Distributing

401 Thornton Road.

Lithia Springs, GA 30122-1557

USA

Phone: 770-948-7845

or 800-326-2665 (orders only)

Fax: 770-944-2313

Website: *www.newleaf-dist.com*

E-Mail: *newleaf@newleaf-dist.com*

General Pagan Supplies

Phoenix Distributors

In Canada:

303-9775-188th St

Surrey BC, V4N 3N2

Canada

Phone: 800-563-6050

Fax: 800-298-4422

Website: *www.phoenixdistributors.com*

In USA:

PO Box 1589

Blaine WA, 98231

USA

Phone: 800-563-6050

Fax: 800-298-4422

Website: *www.phoenixdistributors.biz*

Quanta

51 Morbank Dr.

Toronto, ON M1V 2M1

Canada

Phone: 1-888-436-7962

Fax: 416-298-6127

Website: *www.quanta.ca*

E-Mail: *quanta@rogers.com*

Personal Experience / Comments: I dealt almost exclusively with Quanta for books. They have great service and ship orders quickly. An excellent choice for Canadian shops.

General Pagan Supplies

Music

Serpentine Music

PO Box 2564

Sebastopol, CA 95473

USA

Phone: 707-823-7425 or 800-270-5009

Fax: 707-823-6664

Website: *www.serpentinemusic.com*

E-Mail: *order@serpentinemusic.com*

Earth Tones Studios

23 Alafaya Woods Blvd. #324

Oviedo, FL 32765

USA

Phone: 407-366-5013

Fax: 407-366-5034

Website: *www.Paganmusic.com*

E-Mail: *earthtones@Paganmusic.com*

Artists

Artists usually carry their artwork in a variety of formats, so you will find that these resources offer more than standard prints. You'll find they have note cards, greeting cards, prints, posters, mouse pads, and any number of other items. I don't have specifics listed because they tend to change frequently, depending on the muse of the artist.

Mystical Art by Sabrina

337 Bird St

Birdsboro, PA 19508-2605

USA

Website: *www.theinkwitch.com*

E-Mail: *InkWitch@inkwitch.com*

General Pagan Supplies

Sabrina's artwork is all in black and white, and done with pen & ink. Her subject matter is varied, and includes Sabbat illustrations, Gods and Goddesses, fairy folk, and other Pagan concepts.

Joanna Powell Colbert

JPC Artworks

PO Box 73

Lummi Island, WA 98262

USA

Fax: 360-778-0203

Website: *www.jpc-artworks.com*

Joanna's full-color artwork has been seen in magazines such as *Sagewoman* and *Pangaia*. Her art is mainly Goddess imagery.

Jessica Galbreth

Phone: 866-286-2115

Website: *www.enchanted-art.com* (retail),

Or *www.eawholesale.com* (wholesale)

E-Mail: *enchantedart@aol.com*

Jessica Galbreth's artwork is mainly Goddess and fairy material, with some prints with other fantasy subjects.

Land of Myth & Not

PO Box 941720

Simi Valley, CA 93094

USA

Website: *www.lomanwholesale.com*

Phone: 888-339-5330

Fax: 805-523-0005

General Pagan Supplies

This particular wholesaler specializes in art-work and related products, which is why they are listed here rather than under Pagan Products.

Store Supplies

This section is not specifically Pagan, but I've included a few resources for retail supplies to help you get started. Local yellow pages or Internet searches will help you find retail supplies near your location.

Naythons Display Fixture Company

919 Wallace St.

Philadelphia PA 19123

USA

Phone: 800-422-1270

Fax: 215-235-8882

Website: *www.naythonsdisplay.com*

Email: *info@naythonsdisplay.com*

Nu-Era Retail Store Fixtures

611 N Tenth St, #400

St. Louis MO 63101

USA

Phone: 314-231-3662

Fax: 314-231-3917

Website: *www.nu-era.com*

Email: *service@nu-era.com*

Store Fixtures Online

Phone: 800-210-5720

Fax: 800-210-8829

Website: *www.storefixtures-online.com*

Email: *shopping@storefixtures-online.com*

General Pagan Supplies

Bags on the Net

1401-3 Church Street

PO Box 404

Bohemia, NY 11716

USA

Phone: 888-NET-BAGS

Fax: 631-589-2593

Website: *www.bagsonthenet.com*

Email: *info@bagsonthenet.com*



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[A Field of Jonquils](#) by Selene Silverwind

Two people on similar spiritual quests find themselves mysteriously crossing over into each other's dreams and realities.



[A Reverence for Trees](#) by Lorna Tedder

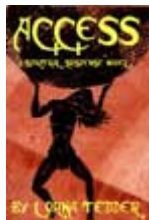
A love story about healing and forgiveness.

Read it FREE at www.spilledcandy.com/!



[A Witch's Diary:](#) [Lessons for the Advanced Student](#) by Lady Lilith

Part Book of Shadows, part diary, part guide for leading your first coven, this book offers lessons for the advanced student.



[Access:](#) [A Spiritual Thriller](#) by Lorna Tedder

An End Times thriller filled with time travel, reincarnation, biological warfare, a spiritual journey, and a love story between the savior of the world and her protector.



[Astral Grail, The:](#) [A Novel Approach to Astral Projection, Tarot](#) by D. Jason Cooper

If you're learning the Tarot or just wanting to deepen your divinatory skills, this non-fiction fantasy is a novelized record of astral projections guided by ritual and an oath to make these projections into an Omega Quest.



[Coven of the August Moon](#) [\(an anthology\)](#) by Agona Darkeagle

A teen's coven—and her faith—helps her deal with her dangerous father, a haunted past, intertwined past lives, and a local mystery.



Drawing the Three of Coins:

How to Open & Run a Pagan Store

By Terri Paajenen

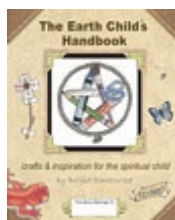
Doesn't everyone of us want to start our own witchy, pagan, metaphysical, or New Age shop? Here's advice from someone who has!



Dream of the Circle of Women

By Dahti Blanchard

Can the daughter of a witch find answers to long-hidden mysteries--including her mother's death--before she loses her own life?



Earth Child's Handbook, The:

Crafts & Inspiration for the Spiritual Child

By Brigid Ashwood (formerly Smallwood)

Includes coloring pages, activities, paper altars, and lots more!



Embracing the Goddess:

One Catholic's Path to Spiritual Enlightenment

By Talitha Dragonfly

A combination of personal journey & Book of Shadows. The author's path takes her from Catholic to Agnostic and finally to the Goddess.



Flying By Night:

A Coven of the Jeweled Dragon Mystery

By Lorna Tedder

A polyamorous witch is accused of murdering her two husbands and must flee an ancient enemy as well as a burned out detective who will lose everything in the process of finding her—and himself.



Gifts for the Goddess on an Autumn Afternoon

By Aislinn Bailey & L. Tedder

65 Autumn-related ways to get closer to Spirit, including tips for home & hearth, health & beauty, sharing with friends, pagan children, and sky and garden



[Gifts for the Goddess on a Hot Summer's Night](#) **By Shannon Bailey & L. Tedder**

66 Summer-related ways to get closer to Spirit, including tips for home & hearth, health & beauty, sharing with friends, pagan children, and sky and garden.



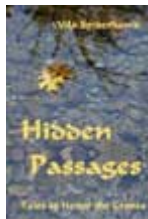
[Gifts for the Goddess on a Cold Winter's Eve](#) **By Shannon Bailey & L. Tedder**

66 Winter-related ways to get closer to Spirit, including tips for home & hearth, health & beauty, sharing with friends, pagan children, and sky and garden.



[Gift of the Dreamtime:](#) [Awakening to the Divinity of Trauma](#) **By S. Kelley Harrell**

Exploring her past as an incest survivor, her bouts with depression, and crippling inability to pursue her dreams, the author uses shamanic practices rooted in Native American, Celtic, and Aboriginal culture. Combines her personal journey with instructions for similar meditations to help the injured child in all of us look at the hurt, understand it in a spiritual context, and forgive both ourselves and others.



[Hidden Passages:](#) [Tales to Honor the Crones](#) **By Vila Spiderhawk**

Tales to honor the Crones. An anthology about girls and women of different cultures and epochs, each of whom seeks and finds wisdom with the help of one or more Crones.



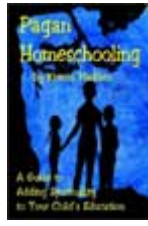
[If Mermaids Could Dance](#) **By Lady Lilith**

19 original tales and myths about Goddesses, fairies, witches, and mermaids. Includes spells and charms from the author's personal Book of Shadows. Ideal to read to children.



[Once Upon a Beltane Eve](#) **By Selene Silverwind**

Discover the wheel of the year, its rituals and meanings, along with two young lovers in a futuristic society where paganism is widely accepted ... except by a few dangerous types.



Pagan Homeschooling: **Adding Spirituality to Your Child's Education**

By Kristin Madden

Spiritual, magical, and emotional development of the child, from conception to adolescence. Includes games, activities, rituals, and meditations. Expanded and revised edition.



Pagan Parenting (REVISED): **Spiritual, Magical, and Emotional Development**

By Kristin Madden

300 pages packed with tips, quizzes, crafts, and rituals for the home-schooled child as well as any child growing up in a pagan environment.



Pelzmantel:

A Medieval Tale

By K. A. Laity

The Grimm Brother's "Allerleirau" is retold from the view-point of the princess' caretaker, a crone who infuses the story with tales from medieval Ireland and Scandanavia, herbal cures, and magick. Extensively researched.



Prophet's Lady, The: **A Novel of Reincarnation & Love**

By Vicki Hinze

Previously published by Kensington as *Maybe This Time*, this is a spiritual romance of reincarnation and getting it right.



Reclaiming the Magic

By Lorna Tedder

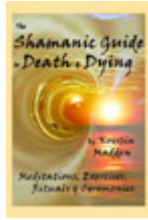
A writer's guide to success, aimed specifically at writers, and at everyone in general. Includes sections on working while grieving, de-stressing your life, and making your work space healthier.



Ring of Fire: **A Novel of the Oracle of Delphi**

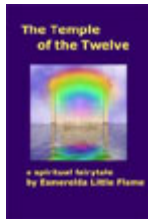
By Marlene Haleff

Temple politics, the ever-present threat of barbarian hordes, and an unseen but ultimate betrayal leave the High Priestess and Oracle of Delphi with no choice but to invoke the terrifying Ring of Fire.



**Shamanic Guide to Death
& Dying, The:**
Meditations, Exercises, Rituals, & Ceremonies
By Kristin Madden

Journeys of a shamanic "Deathwalker" who assists the dying, the dead, and the grieving.



Temple of the Twelve, The:
Novice of Colors
By Esmerelda Little Flame

A spiritual fairytale using colors as Gods and Goddesses, each teaching the young priestess a vital lesson.



Wild God, The
By Gail Wood

Rituals and meditations for working with the Sacred Masculine.



Witch Moon Rising
By Maggie Shayne &
Witch Moon Waning
By Lorna Tedder

Wiccan women face questions of love and ethics in 2 short novels. Includes 40+ spells, rituals, charms from the authors' personal Books of Shadows.

