

# WHAT REALLY MAKES MONEY

*An Independent Review of Business Opportunities & Money-Making Enterprises*

## Tap Into One of These 5 Trends for 2021 to Create Your Next Side Hustle or Home Business

So we're coming to the end of 2020. A great relief for many, I expect. But just because the number of the year will change, the pandemic won't go away. Even if a vaccine begins to roll out it is going to take a long time for the virus to get under control. There have been some significant shifts in behaviour and attitude that will be here to stay.

These shifts are creating new trends and new opportunities to make money in the months ahead.

With this in mind, I've spent some time poring over a new report from Trend Hunter, who have gathered all the latest data to analyse the biggest trends for 2021. These guys almost always hit the nail on the head when it comes to business and economic predictions, and I never fail to use their annual report to inform my business plans.

To help you take advantage of this information, I've picked out the trends that I believe you can exploit yourself. There are five that I think could help you kickstart a money-making project next year – be it a home business, a low-cost start-up, or a side hustle alongside your job.

These are all adapted to the new reality of a pandemic world where the economic repercussions will continue long after a vaccine is found. And not only the virus but other ecological and economic

pressures that are influencing business and commerce right now.

### 1. Modern Beekeeping

Bees are in crisis. Numbers are falling dramatically. A third of Britain's bee population has disappeared in the last decade and 24% of Europe's bumblebees are under threat of extinction.

By default, humankind is in trouble too. As Albert Einstein one said: *"If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years left to live."* Bees are essential for pollinating 84% of crops we rely on for food.

Because of this huge ecological pressure, there has been a renewed interest in beekeeping – even on the rooftops of tower blocks in bustling cities. There have been beehives on Regent Street's roofs since 2009 and similar schemes on commercial roof space in other cities like Edinburgh and Exeter. Of course, it is also something attracting those with gardens and allotments.

This is helping the cause, because keeping bees helps to strengthen the gene pool by adding healthy bees back into the population. In turn, this will create more pollination across gardens and wild spaces. It's estimated that two hives can pollinate an entire

*please turn over...*

middle-sized garden full of plants.

As this trend continues, we should expect to see more and more services, businesses and products related to modern beekeeping. Not only the act of bee-keeping itself, but also honey products.

Ideas that you can consider include:

- » Turning home beekeeping into a business, selling honey, as well as renting out bees for pollination. You can even rent yourself out these days as a beekeeper.
- » Selling Raw honey – most supermarket honeys are heated, heavily filtered and treated to make them 100% safe, and free of any rogue bee legs and other bits that consumers dislike. But natural health aficionados love raw honey – that is, almost fresh from the hive. It is antibiotic and antimicrobial, with powerful effects on the body, from healing wounds to treating sore throats and stomach upsets. People with hay fever and other allergies often take local honey as a preventative. This is a product that can be sold at high prices in small batches.
- » Selling home beekeeping products and accessories on Amazon, eBay, Etsy and independent webstores. These include clothing, equipment, tools and other essentials. You can provide or sell kits that people put in their gardens to encourage bees to take up residence in the summer. These can include bee cocoons, nesting blocks, wood houses, flower seeds, and clay. Here is an example: [Bit.ly/33am3eK](https://bit.ly/33am3eK)
- » Creating videos, courses and membership sites for wannabe home beekeepers, everything from setting up the hive, to maintenance and honey extraction – as well as tips on running it as a business and marketing the honey.

## For More Information

As a basic guide to get you going, take a look at this article on The Spruce [Bit.ly/3fqc4ac](https://bit.ly/3fqc4ac)

Or here's another list of essentials on Tree Hugger: [Bit.ly/3fqcgGs](https://bit.ly/3fqcgGs)

## 2. Virtual Marketplace

The pandemic has been catastrophic for the events business, and in particular festivals, exhibitions,

markets and fairs.

It's particularly hard for small business owners who rely on having stalls at big events in order to sell products, engage with customers, test out new ideas and network with other sellers. These include farmers, artisan food producers, artists and crafters.

Already, many events have moved online, but next year expect a large number on virtual marketplaces for food, drink, art and crafts – as well as seasonal markets, for instance, Easter, summer and Christmas fairs.

## How Can You Profit From This?

Consider setting up your own virtual market, perhaps locally, or for a specific niche or category.

There are a few models most marketplaces use:

- » **Commission:** charge a flat fee or a percentage out of each transaction.
- » **Membership:** charge a subscription fee for joining a platform you create.
- » **Listing fee:** charge a fee whenever a business posts a listing.
- » **Lead fee:** charge business people or product creators for access to customers.
- » **Freemium:** let everyone on your platform buy and sell for free, but charge for additional features or priority (or use advertising to make money).

## For More Information

For different options for creating a virtual marketplace, take a look at this page by Share Tribe: [Bit.ly/3nSrlLU](https://bit.ly/3nSrlLU)

And here's an article on how to create an online marketplace using WordPress: [Bit.ly/2Htqfi2](https://bit.ly/2Htqfi2)

If the idea of creating a virtual marketplace seems too daunting, also consider ways you could sell your own products on virtual marketplaces. The advantage is that you can access markets around the country, and the globe, without needing to travel there or set up a physical stall.

## 3. Luxe Loungewear

We're all spending a lot more time at home, which means that instead of splashing out on 'dress to

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impress' fashions, people are buying comfortable, warm clothes for lounging around in.

These include pyjamas, hoodies, jogging bottoms, sweatshirts, onesies, Oodies, oversized jumpers...

But these don't always have to be boring, cheap clothes. Brands are getting in on the action by offering vintage or luxury versions.

*"The growth in luxury loungewear as a category coincides with the increasing value people are putting into their homes," says Molly Goddard, from luxury British loungewear brand Desmond & Dempsey. "As we are investing more time and money in our homes, we want quality loungewear to enjoy our space in."*

If you want to sell clothes online, then think loungewear next year.

- » One big trend will be 70s-inspired Terrycloth and 'popcorn knit' fashions. These are the bobbly-texture retro materials that you might remember from yesteryear.
- » Another is pyjamas that veer more towards daywear that someone could feasibly go outside in, or sit and have a Zoom chat in. Popular men's pyjama trousers now include pockets that close and fit mobile phones.
- » Look for logos. Sweatshirts with logos are really trendy, particularly retro ones or popular fashion labels.
- » A big trend for next year is 'cottagecore'. This is loungewear that suggests countryside lifestyles – baking bread, gardening, walking the dog.
- » Elevated tie dye is another trend at the moment, think early 70s hippy Grateful Dead T-shirts with melting sunset colours.

These are all ideas you can use to source and sell clothes on Amazon, or eBay. If you can make your own fashions, even better of course. Bearing in mind the trend for logos and retro fashions, you might consider getting some basic items like sweatshirts or pyjamas, then getting them printed with a design you create or source from the public domain.

One option could be to set up your own specialist boutique shop selling loungewear. Try and focus on a specific style, theme or era.

Thanks to the online store builders like Shopify, Wix and Bigcommerce, it's now easier than ever to set up shop without any tech skills. *What Really Makes Money* recommends Shopify as the best overall eCommerce solution for its simplicity, range of themes and functionality.

## For More Information

If you want training, tools and support to set up your online clothes shop, here's where to go:  
[Bit.ly/3I03kJ1](https://bit.ly/3I03kJ1)

## 4. Live Coaching

One of the big developments in 2020, which will continue to flourish next year, is the live online fitness coaching industry.

The pandemic forced many tutors, trainers and consultants to quickly switch to online sessions – whether that was fitness workouts, Pilates or strength training.

While it was strange for many gym users at first, over the months people got accustomed to spending more time inside their homes doing fitness. This means that the public is generally much more open, and enthusiastic about, live coaching.

Because of this, manufacturers of fitness equipment also began to combine this live coaching element. For instance, some home-gym systems and stationary bikes started to be sold with live online class and coaching options so that customers could use them properly, with professional support.

We saw the creation of 24-hour live fitness portals, that people could access through the TVs in their living rooms, or their computers.

And you should expect to see increasing take-up of live training in 2021.

So how can you tap into this trend?

Well, the biggest app of the year was undoubtedly Zoom, which went from a relatively unknown little communications platform to THE most downloaded platform of the first lockdown. People flocked to it in order to talk to friends and colleagues during the lockdown. With such a surge in popularity, Zoom had to do a lot of work very quickly to make its service as secure and user-friendly as possible.

People then began to use zoom for events, where attendees were able to turn up at an allotted time, watch the presentation, and ask questions, just like a real class.

Then on 14th October, Zoom announced that it was creating a system to let people pay to watch zoom.

OnZoom, is tailored for live events for fitness events (as well as arts and music), as it allows you to sell tickets to up to 1,000 attendees.

Joseph Evans, head of technology at Enders

Analysis, says: “People are doing reiki sessions online, yoga online, medical consultations over video calls. That has got people very excited about the idea of being able to scale up what were events that were dependent on how many people you could get through your door.”

In other words, Zoom has enormous potential for you to create a live fitness coaching service on a scale you would never manage in a physical space.

If you have any experience in fitness, dieting, dance, alternative therapies and other healthy activities where people need guidance, then creating a class via OnZoom is absolutely something to consider in 2021.

## For More Information

You can find out about OnZoom here: [Bit.ly/3pZeXn0](https://bit.ly/3pZeXn0)

And you can access it here: [Bit.ly/3kYoTJV](https://bit.ly/3kYoTJV)

## 5. Grocery Pop-Ups

Now that people are travelling less and are stuck at home, they are tending to shop locally, seeking the most convenient place nearby to nip out and get essentials.

Meanwhile, during the two lockdowns, pubs, restaurants and cafés have switched to become pop-up grocery stores for their local communities.

Pop-up grocery stores offer people convenient access to fresh fruit and veg. They can appear anywhere, from residential areas, to local high streets, to community centres and hospitals.

As well as simply being convenient, these pop-ups can also offer exotic, rare fruit and veg from around the world that aren't normally available locally.

Greengrocers are often cramped, so these pop-up shops can also offer ‘socially distanced’ shopping where they are open by private appointment for a single shopper to get everything they need, without stress.

Even when restrictions are lifted, expect these pop-up groceries to continue.

To create your own pop-up shop, you should first decide on:

What you're going to sell – and what your angle, ethos or brand might be, for example, eco-friendly (organic, sustainable, low air miles), or exotic and rare.

Come up with a name, then set up a hit list of places where you can set up – for instance, there are many empty premises now from business that have closed or moved during the pandemic, where landlords might be eager for rental income.

Steps you need to consider:

- » Set a budget, working out your costs and profit margins.
- » Create a hit list of target for spaces.
- » Source your products.
- » Coordinate with the owner of the space you want to use.
- » Get any permits, licenses, and insurance.
- » Get hold of basic furniture to display your goods.
- » Design your pop up layout.
- » Get some materials printed (banners, flyers, tote bags).
- » Create a website (this will add credibility and allow you to communicate with customers, explain your ethos and sell online).

## For More Information

This useful website helps you find spaces to rent temporarily in big cities in the UK: [Appearhere.co.uk](https://appearhere.co.uk)

Here's where to get food licence registration: [Bit.ly/3fuYD8W](https://bit.ly/3fuYD8W)

## FREE MONEY!

# How to Get a Grant to Start a Business

If you're looking to set up a home enterprise, or you've just started one but you're struggling for money, then here's how to access free support, training and funding.

## The Big Idea

Times are tough. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to disrupt the economy, jobs and business.

But if there is a silver lining, it's this. Driven by an urgent need to keep the country going, the government is investing billions in propping up the economy. One of those measures includes supporting

people who want to set up on their own, whether it's as sole traders, home entrepreneurs or small local start-ups.

There is a lot of money being made available right now in the form of grants and awards (government and charitable). These differ from small business loans because you do not need to pay them back and there is no interest to pay. They can range from £250 to £500,000.

I have gone through all the existing opportunities and found the ones that are most likely to apply to readers of *What Really Makes Money*.

That is...

- » They're for people either seeking to start an enterprise, or who are in their first year or two of doing so. (I've avoided those that look for established small businesses, or who employ big teams of staff).
- » They're for the kinds of enterprises that are within most people's scope, for instance Internet publishing, food and drink, retail and community. (I've avoided those that go to innovative tech, or for businesses who want to employ teams, or that require big premises and large investment capital).

My list of recommended resources will save you a lot of time investigating and researching this yourself.

Help will depend on where you live and what kind of business you are in. For instance, one of the most popular kind of grant is for any business idea that helps others – either disadvantaged people, those in struggling communities – so if you have an idea with a strong cause or social benefit, you should certainly pursue this.

But there is plenty of money available for any business idea where you come up with an innovative service or product, particularly if it helps the environmental or energy sectors.

However, make sure you read the details carefully, as different grants and awards have different criteria for acceptance. You'll be eligible for some and not for others.

Some might also require you invest the equivalent amount in your business. For example, if you're given a £1,000 grant, you'll need to invest £1,000.

Some might also come in the form of subsidies and vouchers for equipment, tech, or recruiting an apprentice.

There is one more drawback to be aware of...

It does take time and effort to apply for free money, I'm afraid. There is no 'push-button' option where you get cash for nothing. You'll be required to fill in forms, write a proposal, show your business plan and economic projections. So it takes organisation, commitment and hard work to get together a good application.

However, for what might be a week or two's worth of your time, you could walk away with money in the bank.

You can use grants to:

- » Set up a website.
- » Develop a product.
- » Invest in marketing.
- » Rent a premises.
- » Buy equipment.
- » Hire an apprentice or staff.

You can also combine other funding with your grant, for instance, crowdfunding on platforms like Kickstarter, or getting a loan (although check the terms and conditions of the grant first).

I'll list the best specific grant opportunities I've found, but first, let me give you four constantly updated hubs where you can get the latest information on available grants, for where you live.

## **National Websites for Finding Grants and Awards**

If you want to search for grants and awards yourself, here is where to start:

### **UK-Wide**

The government's Finance and Support page will help you find grants: [Bit.ly/2J7vXXg](http://Bit.ly/2J7vXXg)

Select the 'grants' tick box then filter the opportunities by how long you've been trading, industry, number of employees, and region of the UK.

### **Scotland**

You can use this Scottish Enterprise website to find opportunities: [Bit.ly/3604z6U](http://Bit.ly/3604z6U). You can get advice here: [Bit.ly/377ILWh](http://Bit.ly/377ILWh)

### **Wales**

You can use the Welsh government's Funding Locator to find and apply for various grants from charities, the government and local authorities: [Bit.ly/372JBDA](http://Bit.ly/372JBDA)

## Northern Ireland

[Bit.ly/3kXir5T](https://bit.ly/3kXir5T)

The Established SMEs Funding section of Enterprise Ireland lists ways you can get grants if you've a small business already up and running. It also offers funding if your business idea has 'the potential to develop an innovative product or service'.

Now let's look at those grants on offer across the UK.

## Nationwide Grants

### New Enterprise Allowance

[Bit.ly/3m0muQj](https://bit.ly/3m0muQj)

This gives free mentoring and an allowance to unemployed people who want to start, or develop, their own independent business. To be eligible, you either have to:

- » Get Universal Credit, Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance (or have a partner who does).
- » Or be a lone parent, sick or disabled and on Income Support.

You can also get a grant to develop your business if you're self-employed and getting Universal Credit. They will give you:

- » A mentor who'll give you advice and support to help you develop your business.
- » Application for a start-up loan if your business is less than two years old.

Whichever situation you're in, you'll need to come up with a business plan, which you then have to get approved by your mentor. If they agree to it, then you can get up to £1,274 over 26 weeks.

You should speak to your Jobcentre Plus work coach if you want to apply for the New Enterprise Allowance to help start or develop your own business.

For more information take a look at this:

[Bit.ly/2KsGfSy](https://bit.ly/2KsGfSy)

### Arts Council England

[ArtsCouncil.org.uk](https://ArtsCouncil.org.uk)

If your enterprise is related to the arts – for instance, performance, music, film, theatre, creative writing – then consider applying to the Arts Council.

They have a rolling programme of grants that go to organisations and individuals – even for-profit companies. As long as you can show that your

project will enhance cultural life in the UK, it could be eligible.

You first need to set up an account on the Arts Council website. Then you'll need to complete an eligibility questionnaire. Bear in mind it can take up to 12 weeks to verify your registration.

Grant requests below £15,000 take six weeks to reach a decision, while grants over £15,000 take as much as 12 weeks.

### Grow It Awards

[Bit.ly/37563fm](https://bit.ly/37563fm)

This is an award to help you grow a new enterprise and get support, expertise, 12 months of free coaching, funding up to £15,000, and access to future investors.

You should consider this if your new business has a positive effect on people's lives and you can show that it is financially sustainable. That means having a realistic growth plan with dates and targets.

### The Prince's Trust Grants

[Bit.ly/374le8r](https://bit.ly/374le8r)

The immediate downside is that an exclusive Enterprise Programme is only available to people who are 18-30 years old. If you are lucky enough to be in that age category, or know somebody who is, then the awards go from £1,500-£3,000. You need to be unemployed or working less than 16 hours a week

### EUREKA Eurostars Programme

[Bit.ly/3nT15co](https://bit.ly/3nT15co)

This is a European Union funding project led by Innovate UK. They will give you money if you are a small to medium-sized business operating in the tech industry. It will offer 60% match-funded grants of up to 360,000 euros.

### R&D Tax Credits

[Bit.ly/374vIEJ](https://bit.ly/374vIEJ)

This scheme allows you to claim back up to 32% of your research development costs in cash each year. However, you must show your business idea is helping advance science or technology in some way.

### Creative England New Ideas Fund

[Bit.ly/2KCK7kb](https://bit.ly/2KCK7kb)

This is one to consider if your business is related to –

or extensively uses – video, film, animation or other forms of moving image. If so, then Creative England offer grants between £1,000 and £25,000 to support the development of new and innovative ideas. For amounts over £10,000 you must be a registered limited company.

## **Local Schemes**

One of the best ways to get a grant is to go local. When it comes to regional schemes, you will have less competition and more likelihood of success.

This list is not exhaustive, so please check out your local area for grants (use one of the four national hubs I have already listed in order to search). But to show you what's available:

### **Adur and Worthing – Small Business Grants**

[Bit.ly/3ftrs5v](http://Bit.ly/3ftrs5v)

The Small Business Growth Grant for micro businesses who want to grow, and who contribute to the local economy. There's up to £2,500 available. They also offer £1K grants if you're willing to take on an apprentice.

### **Arun, West Sussex**

[Bit.ly/3nPCbKC](http://Bit.ly/3nPCbKC)

They're offering £1,500 for people running a small business or start-up who are willing to take on an apprentice. On top of that you can apply for a grant of up to £2,000.

### **Chorley – Starting in Business Grant**

[Bit.ly/3m1Wzrx](http://Bit.ly/3m1Wzrx)

Available for anyone wanting to turn their business idea into a reality. You can receive up to £750.

### **Coventry and Warwickshire Business Support Programme**

[Bit.ly/2J3KO5l](http://Bit.ly/2J3KO5l)

This programme helps you access grants to help you start a business, as long as you can show growth potential.

### **Crawley, West Sussex – Business Support Grants**

[Bit.ly/3fsvw69](http://Bit.ly/3fsvw69)

This is for start-ups and small businesses who need

to get their new businesses off the ground. Amounts of £2,000 are available, provided they are match-funded.

### **Elmbridge, Surrey – Start-Up Fund**

[Bit.ly/2UVleC5](http://Bit.ly/2UVleC5)

A grant to help new local start-ups (under six months old) with marketing, promotion, equipment and other expenses. Grants of £1K available.

### **Cheshire West and Chester – Business Start-Up Grant Scheme**

[Bit.ly/39a3awh](http://Bit.ly/39a3awh)

A £260 start-up grant for new businesses or enterprises not older than three months. Amount maximum of £250.

### **Cumbria Business Start-up Support Programme**

[Bit.ly/33fQbWi](http://Bit.ly/33fQbWi)

If you're starting a business or are in your first three years of trading, you can get training, help with your business plan and access to £2,000.

### **East Sussex**

The East Sussex County Council and Regional Growth Fund offer grants ranging from £10,000 to £25,000 if you can match funding of 60% of what they give you. Meanwhile, Locate East Sussex provides support and funding for local small business, with grants between £10,000 and £25,000. They also have a Creative, Cultural and Digital Support Programme up until December 2020 with grants between £1,000 and £3,000.

### **Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Enfield**

[Bit.ly/39cNEQu](http://Bit.ly/39cNEQu)

Wenta offer grants for new businesses of up to £3,000 – covering these three areas of the UK.

### **Lancashire**

Ribble Valley Borough Council offer grants for entrepreneurs who have a new business. They are also offering access to free coaching, workshops and more. You can apply for that here: [HyndburnEnterpriseTrust.co.uk/](http://HyndburnEnterpriseTrust.co.uk/) Or over in Pendle, grants £2,000 to £10,000 are available if you have a business over six months old that you want to grow and expand.

## **Mansfield, Nottinghamshire – Business Start-Up Grant**

[Bit.ly/3kZLYvY](https://bit.ly/3kZLYvY)

This is a £1,000 grant for start-up costs, including equipment, advertising, building a website and more. Up to £1,000 in funding is available.

## **Merseyside – Regenerus Start-up Grant**

[Regenerus.org.uk](https://regenerus.org.uk)

This programme includes workshops and one-on-one assistance from a business adviser to produce your business plan, along with a start-up grant of £250.

## **Orkney, Scotland**

[Bit.ly/35WMqqr](https://bit.ly/35WMqqr)

If you live in this area there is a £1,000 grant to help with any start-up costs. However, your plan must be that this will be a full-time business rather than a side hustle.

## **Reigate & Banstead, Surrey – Business Support Grant**

[Bit.ly/3pVaYYT](https://bit.ly/3pVaYYT)

Companies with less than four employees are eligible to apply for a £1,000 grant.

## **Scarborough, Yorkshire – Business Start-Up Grants**

If your start-up is less than 18 months old, you can apply for £1,000 for equipment and machinery, to carry out improvement of premises, or for marketing.

## **Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Revenue Grant**

[Bit.ly/3759LWk](https://bit.ly/3759LWk)

If you are a start-up in Stoke on Trent/Staffordshire, you can get a £1,000 grant if you can match it with £667 of your own money.

## **Tower Hamlets, London**

[Bit.ly/3nREBbM](https://bit.ly/3nREBbM)

To be eligible for up to £5,000 you need to first attend the council's four-day start-up programme.

## **West Dunbartonshire**

[Bit.ly/2HB9MIU](https://bit.ly/2HB9MIU)

Up to £500 is available as long as you can supply a

business plan and proof of trading.

If you cannot spot your region or town here, don't despair. Use Google to track down what's available near you.

For example, if you have your location activated, then try 'startup business grant near me' or 'start up grant + [your location]'.

## **Summary:**

During this pandemic, the government, arts organisations, local authorities and charities are all keener than ever to support people who:

- » Are seeking to make money independently.
- » Are looking to get off unemployment and start their own business.
- » Are going to contribute to the economy, both locally and nationally.
- » Are offering something of social or cultural worth.
- » Might eventually employ, inspire and mentor people in the future.

Even if you've not even started on your business yet, you absolutely should look at the available grants or rewards. See if you can tailor your business plan and ethos towards those requirements.

And if you're starting your business, even if it is going well, make sure you look into these grants, as it is, effectively, free money lying around for you.

However, if you cannot find a local grant, you are not eligible, or you fail in your attempt, then here's a different way to get free money.

# **How to Get Your Business Idea Funded by the Public**

A platform called Patreon allows you to get funded by the public as you create and launch your business. The idea is that they pay you a specific amount every month to support your product or idea – in return, you offer them some content each month.

For instance:

- » A story about what you've been up to – perhaps a progress report or newsletter.
- » 'How to' advice, tips and shortcuts.
- » Webinars, tutorials, workshops, images, clips, photos and other pieces you've gathered in your research.
- » Previews and tasters of what you're developing.
- » A video presentation

By creating this content, you can get paid to develop your new business idea with money that you don't need to give back. This means you can earn an income even before you launch.

The more supporters you gather, the more funding you get. And all you need to do is create your piece of content once a month!

This approach is ideal if:

- » You have an idea for an information publishing business in a specialised niche, for instance, diet and fitness or personal finance, and you want to develop it and grow an audience.
- » You are creating a product, for instance, a book, course, gadget or film, and you want to share behind-the-scenes developments in order to fund it.
- » You're a writer, historian, filmmaker, musician, artist, geographer or poet looking to share your work with a wide audience and start making money from it.
- » You're a campaigner for a cause, be it a local cause, a charity, or a political aim, seeking to spread the message.

You don't get all the money of course. Patreon will take a 5% commission from you. Also, you're responsible for paying for the patron's credit card transaction fee per donation, which is around 4%.

It means that, roughly, you're getting 90% of every contribution from your patrons.

To get started, go to [Patreon.com](http://Patreon.com) – then register on the site.

A few basics to remember...

- » Put a vlog (video blog) on your Patreon page to explain who you are and what you are trying to do. It makes it instantly engaging, credible and personal. Think of it as a pitch for investment.
- » Make sure your video and the explanation copy on your page have a clear aim and subject matter. What is it you are trying to achieve, and why is it so important for you, for society and

for the potential patron?

- » Remember, people are funding you towards reaching a certain goal – for instance, a book, film, product or service, but that they want to be part of the process. SO come up with some monthly rewards that you can deliver for specific amounts of money per month.
- » Offer a very low amount for no rewards, for instance \$1 (or £1 equivalent), but make sure you still send those people free content as you need to build a relationship with them, so they'll eventually buy products or services from you.
- » Make sure you put in a more ambitious 'higher tier' request, as you never know who will go for it. For instance, £50 or £100 a month.

To get traffic to your Patreon site, set up a Facebook Page, Twitter account and Instagram account. Begin to share photos, thoughts, clips and links on those networks to promote you and your Patreon page.

If you don't want to go down this route, you could attempt to pitch your business, service or product to the public via a crowdfunding platform.

- » **KickStarter.com** They take 5% fee of the funds collected, plus their payments processor will take fees of 3-5%. This is only if your project gets funded.
- » **CrowdFunder.co.uk** Crowdfunder charges a payment processing fee of 1.67% on the amount you raise, plus 25p and VAT on each pledge made.
- » **IndieGoGo.com** There is a 5% platform fee and 3-5% per processor fee. Campaigns with bank accounts outside the US will also have a \$25 bank transfer fee.
- » **GoFundMe.com** Right now this UK-based platform is offering free crowdfunding for anyone who needs to raise funds to start a business as a result of the coronavirus crisis.

**PRO TIP!** For the ideal start-up, I recommend seeking out a grant and then using crowdfunding through Patreon, Kickstarter, Crowdfunder or Indie Gogo to find match-funding, or simply increase your investment capital.

# The New-Age Boom

## How to Profit from 2 Red Hot Alternative Health Products for Stress and Anxiety

### The Big Idea

A lot of businesses are struggling right now because of the pandemic. However, there are some areas that are flourishing, particularly those that offer ways for people to reduce stress and anxiety in these trying times.

Dr. Venky Shankar, research director for the Center for Retailing Studies at Texas A&M University in the USA, says: *“The medical industry is seeing a 34% spike in anti-anxiety medication. And all kinds of products, from stress-relieving toys to virtual reality headsets and meditation masks, are seeing a surge in popularity.”*

Many people are turning to New-Age products and services as a gentle, safe way to try and stay positive and calm. These include healing crystals, therapeutic incense, aromatherapy, reiki and meditation. They were already in an uptrend before the pandemic, but sales have spiked since the first lockdown.

For instance, at the end of October, the *Guardian* reported on how global anxiety was driving a ‘crystal boom’. The article profiled 58-year-old Brian Busse, who prospects for stones in the Colorado Mountains. He describes how demand is soaring thanks to the pandemic, which is creating isolation, job insecurity and health worries.

Retailers in the USA say that there has been as much as a doubling in sales, as people seek comfort and healing in these trying times. One small crystal shop, run by a mother and daughter, saw an additional \$2,000 in monthly online sales after the first lockdown. *“Sales have increased as if it was Christmas time,”* says owner Diana Prado.

One of the biggest drivers of sales is a new wave

of younger people (mid-20s to late 30s) who are now getting into crystals, and buying them online. This has created an eTail boom for healing stones – particularly those that are said to reduce stress, like lepidolite, amethyst and rose quartz.

So in this issue I’d like to show you some ways you could harness this trend to create an ethical online side hustle.

- » This is not about delivering therapies yourself, so you don’t have to undergo training, or pass qualifications.
- » You don’t need to be into New-Age ideas and lifestyle in order to do this, as you’re primarily selling products into a specialised niche, but you must be open-minded about alternative therapies.
- » Even if the pandemic subsides, anxiety has been a rising problem in society for decades. Back in 2016 the *Telegraph* reported that anxiety was now a modern epidemic greater than depression. And in 2013, the *Guardian* reported on ‘Britain’s silent epidemic’, citing the statistic that a third of the population will suffer from an anxiety disorder at some point in their life.

You could choose one of these product areas, or combine them to create a bigger business with a wider range.

### PRODUCT ONE:

## Crystals

Many people believe that gemstones and crystals can affect the body and mind in positive ways.

Examples include:

- » **Aquamarine**, with properties of calm and courage.

- » **Amethyst**, which aids focus and clarify of mind.
- » **Rough Blue Calcite** soothes frayed nerves and anxiety.
- » **Blue Tiger's Eye** helps people slow down and relax.
- » **Fluorite** helps draw off negative energies and reduce a sense of chaos.
- » **Snowflake** teaches you to evaluate your emotions and behaviours.

However, what's great about this product niche is that crystals have value even without the belief in their healing powers. On their own they are beautiful, distinct and unique objects. They can decorate homes and clothes, become jewellery or candles, and they make great gifts,. meaning that the customer base is not purely New-Age types or hardcore believers.

People love to collect crystals, and with different forms creating different effects, customers will continue to return for more.

What's more, crystals can be used in different ways:

- » Crystal chakra wands are used to redirect negative energy).
- » Crystal jewellery allows people to wear them close to their body at all times.
- » Crystal stones can be kept in pockets, purses and drawers, then brought out to be rubbed.

Here are the crystal products you can sell:

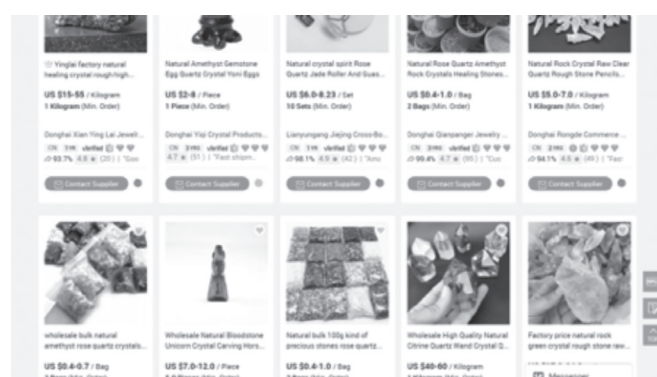
## Stones

- » **Tumblestones** – Small, polished rocks and minerals. Easy to carry around or give as gifts. They're very collectable. Different stones have different healing qualities.
- » **Rough crystals** – These are in their natural state, so they haven't been smoothed or polished. They vary widely, as no two pieces are ever identical. As with tumblestones, the alleged healing powers differ between each stone.
- » **Crystal packs** – Bundles of different tumblestones or rough crystals can be combined to tackle different maladies, for instance, stress, loneliness or insomnia.
- » **Worry, palm and thumb stones** – These have been shaped so that the stone is smooth and can be rubbed in the palm or between thumb and forefinger.
- » **Wands** – These long stick crystals are designed

for scanning the body for blockages and allow healers to pinpoint certain areas.

- » **Eggs and spheres** – The more pointed end of the egg is sometimes used in reflexology or acupressure, while both shapes allow people to gain comfort by gripping the stone in both hands.
- » **Pyramids** – This shape harks back to ancient Egypt, where pyramids were said to represent the rays of the sun.
- » **Pendulum** – A cone-shaped rystal pendulum can be used for 'dowsing' or dangling over the body – as well as worn around the neck like jewellery.
- » **Key ring** – This allows the user to have the stone at all time with their car and hour keys.
- » **Candle holders** – These are carved so that there is a hole in the middle into which you can place a tea light candle. The resulting effect is designed to soothe.

To source them go to Alibaba. There is a huge array for sale at this Chinese wholesaler, from the rough crystals to the more polished, shaped versions. You can buy per kilogram or in bags.



You can then sell the small stones for around 99p-£1.50 per stone. Bearing in mind you can buy a bag for less than \$1 (75p) there is huge potential mark-up here.

## Jewellery

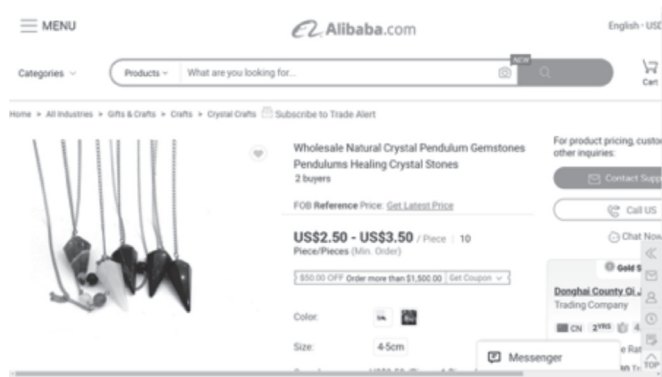
You can also turn the stones into jewellery:

- » Bracelets
- » Necklaces
- » Pendants
- » Earrings

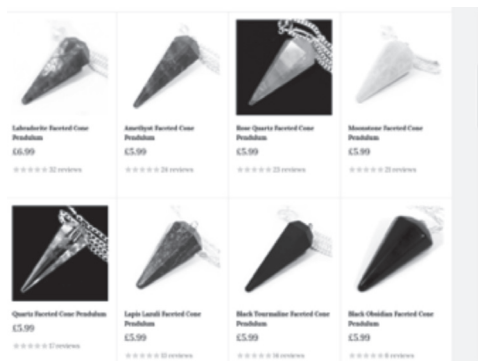
If you're into crafting, you can make these yourself as a rewarding project that will make you the biggest mark-up. Not only is it cheaper to make them, but you can sell them at higher prices because they are unique and handmade in Britain.

Or source whole pieces on sites like Alibaba. For

instance, you can get these pendulums for \$2.50-\$3.50 (or £1.89-£2.64):



On this popular crystals and gems site, The Psychic Tree, these are selling for £5.99+ (as shown below), so you're looking at a mark-up of £4.10 – £3.35 per pendulum:



## Water Bottles

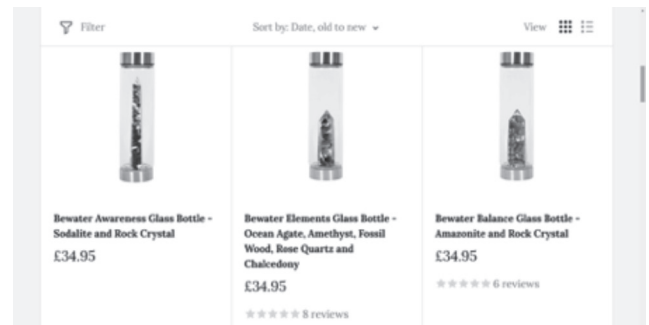
You can also sell crystal water bottles – which can be glass or plastic.

These have crystals loaded into a chamber in the base, which then interact with the water in the bottle before you drink it. These chambers are replaceable. What's more, customers can buy multiple chambers so that they have a choice of what they can load, depending on what results they're looking for.

Here's an example on the wholesaler website Alibaba, retailing at around \$19 (£14):



As you can see here, they can sell for £30+ through online shops.

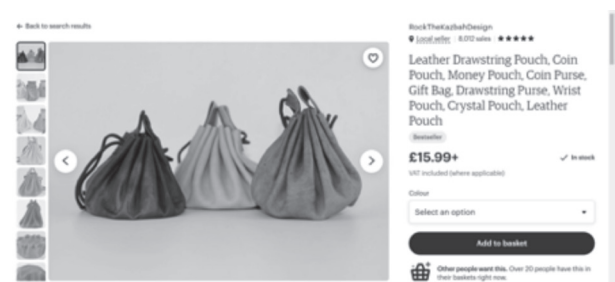


Or they're slightly cheaper on Amazon, at around £25 – however that is potentially £11 per sale (before any costs).

## Bags

Another good item to sell is bags and pouches for carrying crystals. Collectors will want some way of carrying them around, so this is the sort of item many will add into their basket when buying their crystals.

Find a luxury material like leather or silk and make them yourself, or source them online.



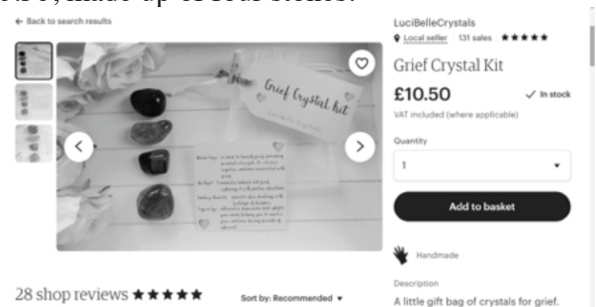
## Bundles

You can package your products or stone types into bundles to tackle problems for instance:

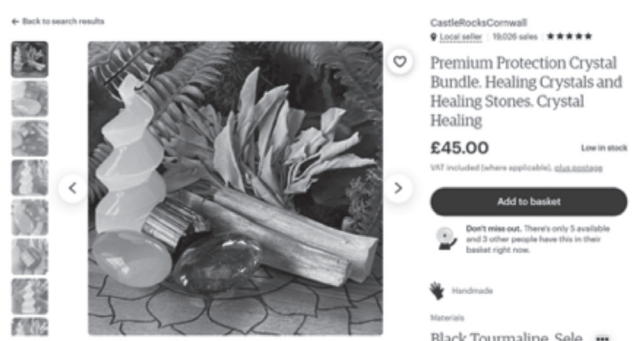
- » Reducing anxiety
- » Better sleep
- » Fertility Boost
- » Grounding
- » Weight loss

To do this, collect different stones with different properties that complement each other.

For example, here's a bundle for 'grief', priced £10.50, made up of four stones.



Or you can go really premium and combine stones with sage and incense (see the next section) to create a high-priced product like this one (£45), designed specifically for people during a pandemic:



The seller writes: “I wish I could wave a magic wand and remove this awful virus from existence but I can’t! What I can do is offer a crystal protection kit. This kit will not kill the virus; it can’t do that. It can help you mentally, energetically, spiritually and emotionally.”

It includes:

- » Natural black tourmaline
- » Selenite twist
- » Gem rose quartz palm
- » Madagascan smoky quartz palm
- » White sage cluster
- » Palo santo

**TIP:** When you create bundles like this, make sure you present them beautifully and write some copy to get across the value of what’s in it – including the properties of each stone or ingredient.

## Guides

You can also create your own guides for beginners, including information like:

1. How to find, collect and sell crystals.
2. The different properties of each type of stone.
3. How to use or place the crystals for best effect.

These can be sold from your webshop or used as a free ‘front end’ in order to find new customers. You could offer it for free download, in return for an email address, on your social media, website, email, or create a ‘squeeze page’ that you put online to attract new potential buyers.

## PRODUCT TWO:

# Incense and Sage

The burning of incense for spiritual, religious and ritualistic reasons has been around for thousands of years.

Incense sticks are infused with essential oils and herbs. The smoke you inhale is said to help clear the mind, reduce heart rate, boost focus and concentration, and help you sleep. Different types of incense will have different effects. These come in all types and scents, from brands like Chakra, Goloka, Hem, Masala, Satya, Stamford.

It’s also important what time of day you burn it, and what you use to burn it (more in a moment).

Burning sage, known as ‘smudging’ is a similar ritual. You light a stick of sage, then move through your home, clockwise, allowing the smoke to drift into all the spaces.

People use it to get in touch with their inner spiritual self, but also to get rid of negativity, for instance, past traumas and bad experiences.

There is a bit of science behind this. Certain types of sage contain thujone, which is mildly psychoactive. A 2016 study in the USA showed that white sage is rich in compounds that activate receptors in the brain, responsible for elevating mood levels, reducing stress, and alleviating pain.

Some research suggests that sage also contains compounds that could ease insomnia and soothe anxiety.

So these products are perfect for troubled times, when people are stuck at home, not able to see their loved ones, with worries on their minds. Burning sage or incense can create a calming ambience in the home and help them relax.

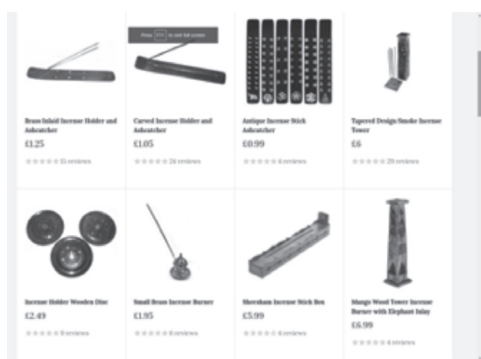
This product area complements the crystal niche perfectly, and the same kind of people buy both products, so they could be combined. Or you could focus on incense and sage only.

It might surprise you just how much you can sell to a customer. There are a huge amounts of accessories and refills that make repeat sales easy, and which also allow you to create higher-priced bundles of products.

## Burners

There are different ways to burn incense. The first

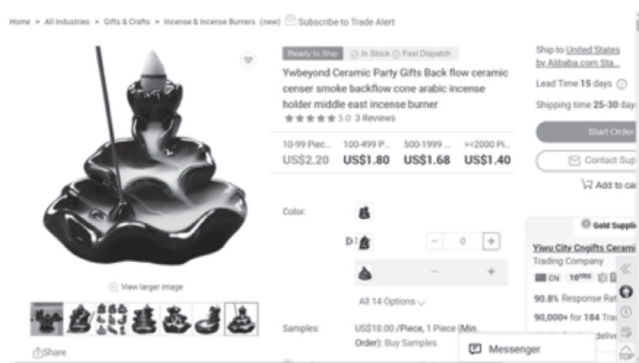
is through a classic stick holder like the ones below, which range from very cheap at £1.24 to fancy towers at £6.99:



More profitable (and interesting) are ‘Backflow burners’. These contain incense cones, rather than sticks. They are designed so that the smoke flows downwards, pooling like mist.

Cones put out more fragrance but burn for 20 minutes compared to an average of 40 minutes for a stick.

Backflow burners can be sourced on Alibaba, like this one, which you can get for just \$1.80 (£1.36) if you buy 100 pieces:



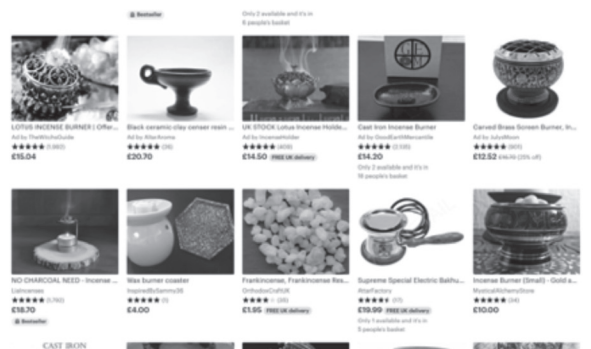
I have found the exact same model is selling on a UK webshop for £7.99. That’s a huge mark-up of £6.63 per piece.

## Resins

Resin incense is made from small beads of sap from trees such as copal, dammar and styrax. They are coloured and infused with essential oils, aromatics, dried flower petals and woodchips, to create a special blend.

When you heat this blend, an intensely scented smoke fills the room.

Unlike regular incense, this needs to be burned in a heatproof container – which is where you can make a profit. These ones below range from £10-£19.99:

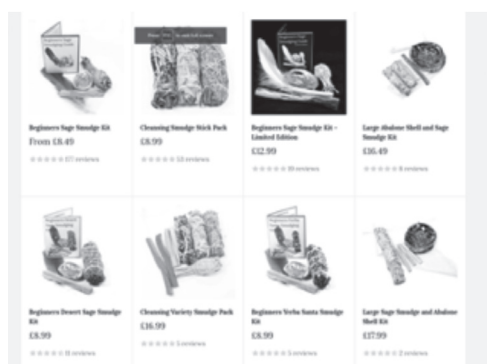


You can source these on Alibaba.

## Sage Kits

For burning sage, (smudging) people need a sage stick, or sage bundle, and also something to extinguish it in. Traditionally, people use a seashell or bowl of ceramic, clay, or glass to hold burning sage or capture ash.

So you can sell bundles of sage, or full kits that come with a guide, sticks of sage and shell. As shown below these can go for £8.49-£17.99:



## Creating Your Business

There are three main ways you can sell your products:

- » Your own webshop, using Shopify. You’ll find more information about Shopify on the *What Really Makes Money* website. It’s an easy way to create your own webshop without programming or design skills. The benefit of this approach is that you can keep your profits and sell independently. The downside is that you need to find customers, which isn’t the case if you use platforms like Amazon, eBay or Etsy.
- » Amazon and eBay. You can source products on wholesale sites like Alibaba, white label them, then sell them as your own product, with the items dropshipped to your customers.
- » Etsy – if you make your own kits, bundles, jewellery or designs, then Etsy is a really hot

place right now, as I revealed in *What Really Makes Money* earlier this year.

Wherever you sell your New-Age crystals and Incense products, I'd highly recommend that you add some extra elements to your business.

Create a website that explains who you are, what your ethos is, and further elaborate on the power of natural healing. This will boost your credibility and differentiate you from the competition.

On the website, make sure that there is useful, practical information that helps people avoid fear, anxiety and panic using New-Age healing practices.

For instance:

- » How best to use crystals, incense and sage burning.
- » Meditation and breathing exercises.
- » Relaxation techniques.
- » Diet and nutrition tips.
- » Ways to get better sleep.
- » Reflexology.
- » Aromatherapy.
- » Herbalism.
- » Chinese medicine.

You can put this information into blog posts and send out an email each week (make sure there is a sign up option for an email service on your homepage).

By delivering information on a regular basis you can retain more customers, develop a relationship with them and keep them coming back for more products, replacements and refills.

It will also allow you to branch out into other alternative healing and self-care products that the same audience will enjoy, from bath oils and aromatherapy candles to sleep masks and light boxes.

## UPDATE!

# From Lego Loot to Star Wars Fortunes – Why Old Toys are Still Big News

**I**n the October issue of *What Really Makes Money*, I told you about the money to be made in classic toys. In the 21st century, Lego rose in value faster than gold, and it's still a goldmine for people who can put together themed kits, find rare items, or buy

up those new sets that are likely to rise in value quickly.

If you can find original *Star Wars* merchandise, even better.

In November 2020, the BBC reported that a collection of vintage *Star Wars* toys found in a garage in Stourbridge got more than £250,000 at auction.

A neighbour left the contents of the garage to an elderly couple in their will. When they were sold, they reached levels that surprised even the auctioneer.

The top seller was a Jawa figure in a vinyl cape, which fetched £22,000 on its own.

Last year, a rare and unopened *Star Wars* toy – a Tie Bomber – was found in a loft in Leicestershire, which went for £2,100, which was 10 times its pre-auction estimate.

A collection of original toys got around £24K in total at the auction.

And in 2016, a Boba Fett figure from the 1970s in its original packaging sold for £26,040 at an auction in Teeside.

Goes without saying that if you have any original *Star Wars* toys in boxes, you should check their value.

You can make some pocket money from loose figures if they are in good condition – or a lot more if you find one of these in your loft or garage.

- » Boba Fett with rocket firing mechanism (1979) – up to \$45,000 (\$10,000+ loose).
- » Yak Face (1985) up to \$2,300 (\$300 loose).
- » Blue Snaggletooth (1978) up to \$700 (\$200 loose).

Also check if you have a Han Solo with an unusually small head – this is a figure that was withdrawn so they could create an improved version, so it's worth \$50 loose, or up to \$2,500 in the box.

There were also versions of Obi-Wan Kenobi, Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader released with light sabres that telescoped, rather than being just solid bits of plastic.

If you have one of those, it could be worth \$10,000 even as a loose figure.

More likely, however, is that you might be able to get your hands on one of these:

## The Kids' Cards That Have Skyrocketed 10,000% in Value

Remember Pokémon trading cards?

They were released in 1996, which – mad as it sounds – is now almost 25 years ago.

Now they are collectables, with sets went out of print a long time ago, making them hugely valuable. This is why first editions have shot up in value by 10,000% and even later sets are rising steeply.

For example, the Pikachu Illustrator card recently sold for \$233,000. A 1999 Holographic Shadow-less First Edition Charizard is worth between \$150,000 to \$200,000. And in 2018, a man appeared on a USA TV show claiming to have a bunch of Pokémon cards in his hands that were worth half a million dollars.

It turned out that his entire collection was worth \$5 million.

OK, so those are the jackpot amounts for super rarities, but even a card with 10,000 in circulation (Charizard Holo cards from 1999) have been fetched \$5,000-\$10,000.

Being so limited, their value will continue to increase.

So if you can snap up Pokémon cards now for the right price and condition, then you simply need to hold on to them as the price goes up.

Because it was a global franchise, Pokémon cards are known all across the world, so there is no shortage of buyers, or demand. The market is very liquid with a lot of trading going on.

Use [PokemonPrice.com](http://PokemonPrice.com) to find out what the prices are right now.

You don't really need to know anything about Pokémon. It's not much different to buying stamps. You look for what is rarest and most valuable, for your price range, then just buy the cards and wait for the price change.

When that happens, list it online and wait for the offers.

Here are the most valuable as of March this year:

- » Pikachu Trophy cards.
- » Pikachu Illustrator card.
- » Distributor Meeting cards.
- » Master's Key cards.
- » 1998 Kangaskhan Trophy card.
- » Tropical Mega Battle cards.

» University Magikarp cards.

» Base Set cards.

Keep a look-out for any card that says 'Wizards of the Coast' at the bottom, as that means it's from 1999 or early 2000, and could be worth good money.

Also look for:

- » A first edition stamp below and to the left of the artwork. It looks like the number '1' inside a circle.
- » An art box that has no shadow underneath it.

As well as rare cards, you can seek out limited edition box sets, which are also going up in value over time.

## And Finally... A Pre-Christmas Treat!

A quick heads-up: instead of the regular *WRMM* issue in December, look out for your bumper copy of *The Canonbury Compendium* – this twice-yearly special report contains all the best money-making research, ideas and practical plans from across ALL our publications and experts.

My very best regards



Nick Laight

Publisher

*What Really makes Money*