



Success Story

Renaissance Attire for Modern Adventurers

Established in 2005, Dancing Muse caters to adventurers both online and in person, offering historical and fantastical attire for enthusiasts of Renaissance fairs and pirate festivals. Beyond costumes, they carry footwear and accessories specifically suited to these immersive events. You'll find them in their Keizer Oregon store during weekdays, and mostly out and about for weekend event participation across the Pacific Northwest.



Merchant Profile



James & Janine Martin

Owners,
Dancing Muse Costumes

Keizer, OR

Contact

Web: dancingmuse.com

IG: @dancingmusecostumeshop

PayPal Products Used

- ✓ Zettle
- ✓ Checkout
- ✓ Pay in 4
- ✓ QR Code

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At large events, PayPal and Zettle keep up with all kinds of transactions without extra fees or penalties.

— James and Janine Martin
Owners, Dancing Muse Costumes

Tell us about yourself and why you started the business?

I am a 63-year young cosplayer that has been running my current business since 2005. In 1988, while attending business college, I received some advice that stuck with me all these years: "If you can't find a job, make a job." In the late 90's I started selling hosiery at sci-fi and fantasy conventions to cosplayers who forgot their hosiery or couldn't find any for their outfit. Now almost 30 years later, I run a historical cosplay costume shop that vends weekend events in Oregon and Washington state.

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Either learn bookkeeping or hire someone who has that expertise. You must track expenses, or they will eat your profits up before you go to the bank.

— James and Janine Martin

Owners, Dancing Muse Costumes

What PayPal products do you use and how do they help you run the business?

My wife uses Zettle on her iPhone for the tap feature and phone wallets while I use my phone as a Wi-Fi tether to the Zettle card reader and laptop. The flexibility of PayPal allows for seamless transactions regardless of location. My wife can easily complete sales at one event, and I can process a different transaction at an event several hundreds of miles away. This capability ensures there are no delays in payment processing, enabling us to conduct business efficiently and effectively. And we love that PayPal offers options like Pay in 4 and Pay Later; I think it can help people buy things they'll really be glad to own!

What have been some of your most memorable successes from running the business?

What I really treasure are the moments when we sell that pair of boots, cloak, or garb to complete a cosplayers outfit. I also love it when customers approach me to tell me they still use or wear something I sold them many years ago.

What have been some of the challenges you face?

The biggest challenges have been finding the right venues to sell our merchandise and getting on the wait list if they are filled with other merchants.



What advice would you give someone considering starting a business?

First, if you have a business idea, consider if there is a need for this in your area and ask if it will bring you joy. Second, use all available resources. Join the local Chamber of Commerce, visit the local Small Business Administration office, and contact your local SCORE office. If time permits, check out the free business classes offered by local colleges and take as many as you can. We gather tidbits of info here and there from all these programs and mold them into something that works for us. Finally, either learn bookkeeping or hire someone who has that expertise. You must track expenses, or they will eat your profits up before you go to the bank.