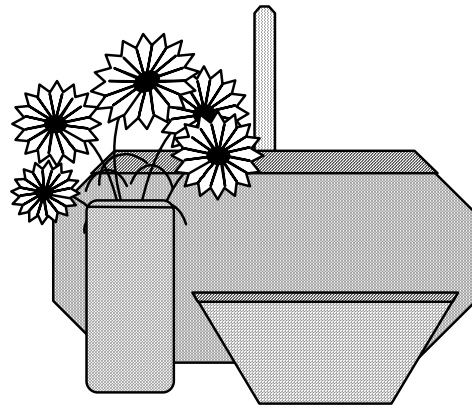


The Weaver's Friendly Handbook for

# Pricing and Selling

Handmade Baskets



Grace and Forrest Davis

The Weaver's Friendly Handbook for  
Pricing and Selling Handmade Baskets©

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Thank you Father, for this life. . . and the ability to think,  
write, and share with others.

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## Introduction

Chapter I helps place your weaving in the larger market by providing an overview of our basket industry. No two weavers are alike and you don't have to be a major basket producer to succeed. In Chapter II, we focus in on you as a weaver—your image and product—and, in Chapter III, offer two techniques designed to take the guesswork out of pricing your baskets. Your baskets have a tangible, measurable value and you can determine this value using our “Fair Price and Fair Price-Plus” models.

With the right price, your next step is selling your baskets, and we've catalogued seven separate mediums you can use alone or in tandem to keep your sales at an even tempo. Complete with practical tips and suggestions, we address direct sales, working with consignment shops, craft fairs, the “homestores” market, gift baskets, and the ever-expanding Internet. Should you sell baskets from your home or work with a local consignor? How much is too much when determining consignment commissions? How can we reach our customers through “homestores,” gift baskets, and the Internet? Each medium offers certain benefits and liabilities, and each has its own guidelines for success. Look for these guidelines in Chapter IV: Selling Your Baskets.

Finally, whether you're selling your baskets for a second income or simply to make room for the

new, we offer some advice given us by weavers from North Carolina to Michigan to Kansas. Be persistent, keep your perspective, and continue to grow. Every basket you weave brings you one step closer to your potential. . . and if your baskets are beautiful now, imagine how they'll be five, ten, or twenty years from now!

Welcome to a source certain to save you time and energy in your efforts to sell your handmade baskets. Like you, we're weavers. . . and like you, we often like to sell our products for fun, profit, or simply to recoup costs. Basketmaking is not a simple ten step procedure, but an elaborate step-by-step process requiring intricate twists, turns, and measurements using materials ranging from rattan reed to telephone wire. Skill grows with experience, and for every weaver who wants to sell his or her products. . . this booklet tells you how.

The most difficult step in basket sales is pricing the basket. Do we sell the basket for its true value (our labor + materials + costs)? Or do we settle for something less. How do we differentiate between a classic market basket and an intricate twill? Some have wooden handles, while others employ color and other distinctive decorations. And what of our time? What is a reasonable charge for your labor and talent?

To a large degree, the "right price" for any of your baskets hinges upon your image, your product, your customer, and your market.

## Chapter I

# Our Basket Landscape

Understanding our basket landscape means gaining an appreciation for the basket industry and where you fit in. The basket industry consists predominantly of individual weavers supported by medium-to-small sized supply companies, professional associations, and a loosely defined market with a variety of mediums.

This chapter gives you an overview of the industry at large—some individual successes, and some ways by which you can stay abreast of the industry's latest ideas. How you integrate into the landscape depends upon you and, in that sense, we conclude with a few suggestions concerning competition.

**Basket Industry Overview.** Individual weavers and small businesses comprise the bedrock of the basket industry. They are supported by various suppliers, a wide variety of professional organizations, and a market oriented more toward home furnishings than art. Most weavers view basketry as a hobby, not a business, and only sporadically market their baskets through friends, consignment shops, or local bazaars. Suppliers cater to these weavers through craft specialty stores and direct mail-order services. Only one basket

manufacturer seems to have recognized and exploited the market potential of the basket—David Longaberger, a Dresden, Ohio-based businessman credited with selling over five million baskets across the United States. Longaberger demonstrates that customers have an appetite for baskets and that one need only find a medium which reaches the market's primary purchaser, with the right product, at the right price.

**The Individual Weaver.** The basket industry is based almost completely on individual weavers and small businesses. Trained through classes offered by local community colleges or social organizations, weavers return to their homes to make and subsequently sell a wide variety of baskets through local fairs, their homes, and consignment shops. Suppliers provide weavers with mail-order reed, handles, and other accessories and, using various formulas, individual weavers set their prices.

Other weavers, however, pursue basket making as an art, with some enjoying particular success. One of the most successful has been weaver-designer John McQueen, who commands prices from \$4,000 to \$10,000 for each basket and has conducted showings at the National Museum of American Art in Washington, DC and New York's American Craft Museum.<sup>1</sup> Other artists, such as those attending a 1992 exhibition at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee set prices ranging from \$1,000 to \$8,000.<sup>2</sup> Using

both natural materials and such avant-garde materials as plastic tubing, lawn chair fabric, and telephone wire, these and many weavers are establishing basketmaking as an art form and basket art as an emerging market.

**Suppliers.** Numerous medium and small-sized companies supply weaving materials nationwide, a circumstance assuring weavers with a steady source of weaving materials and associated supplies.

In many cases, suppliers offer a discount for bulk purchases of reed, handles, dye, and other materials. Weavers preparing for fairs, shows, or offering classes in the local community can place large orders and either reduce their material costs or gain a modest profit from the sale of basket kits.

Most suppliers offer 1-800 service and will ship your materials nationwide within 3-5 days. Weaving publications typically include appendices detailing the address and phone numbers of suppliers. A quick search on the Internet promises numerous addresses as well, and usually offers on-line links to the supplier via electronic mail.

**Professional Associations.** Weaving associations serve to better connect individual weavers, basket designers, and industry suppliers with one another. Associations sponsor classes, promote the craft of weaving, and often host conferences where weavers, designers, and suppliers meet under the same roof. One of the most popular

of these associations is the Association of Michigan Basket Makers (AMBM).

The AMBM boasts an international membership of some 1600—including members from as far away as Guam and Hawaii—and serves primarily as an information conduit between the membership and the industry at large. The Association publishes a quarterly newsletter which keeps members apprised of new techniques or member ideas and, annually, hosts a week-long conference offering classes, designer displays, and supplier presentations. According to the Wall Street Journal, 1994's 14th Annual conference or "Super Bowl of Basket Weaving" attracted some 1000 members and visitors.<sup>3</sup>

**The Longaberger Factor.** No single basket producer seems to dominate the basket industry like David Longaberger of Longaberger Industries, Dresden, Ohio. In 1978, Longaberger began marketing his baskets through home sales parties, a marketing medium pursued with success by both Mary Kay cosmetics and Tupperware. Longaberger reasoned that "people would pay more if they [knew] how the baskets were made" and he was right.<sup>4</sup> Longaberger has sold over five million baskets to date. His sales in 1992 exceeded \$200 million and, at that time, his market and 4000 employees were fueling a growth rate of nearly 40%.<sup>5</sup> He owes his success to his line of "collector" baskets and his "home party" marketing strategy. Says Longaberger, "we've found that only

20% of those customers visiting the store will make a purchase, but nearly 95% of those attending a party will buy something.”<sup>6</sup>

Longaberger popularity complements the basket industry in two major ways. First, popular basket sales have helped sensitize a relatively large population to the decorative and functional uses of the basket. Second, by promoting a high-quality, popular line, Longaberger has served to establish something of an industry standard in the eyes of many consumers. According to many weavers, potential customers often compare locally-produced baskets against Longaberger's in price, materials, and color.

**Finding Your Place in the Market.** As you can see from the sections above, the basket industry is unique in membership and size. To a large degree, we—the individual weavers—are the industry. No federal agency sets standards for our products and performance. We're on our own and, unless we choose to market our baskets beyond our local market, our competition is our neighbor weaver. And it's in this vein that we offer just a few words to consider.

On more than one occasion, we've seen weavers lose sight of their customers and begin to target one another. We've seen a supposed drive for profit push basketry to one side. And we've seen some hurt feelings, some slow to go away.

Realizing that our industry is largely local, that most of us weave for the love of weaving, and that few of our number will seek to expand production to the scale of Longaberger, consider these bits of advice we've gathered along the way.

- **Focus on the Positive.** Basketry is an expressive art form, tailored by the hands of the individual. Some weave functional baskets, others decorative. Some use color, others don't. Don't criticize your neighbor's work or support those who do. Every work has its positive points. Focus on these and you'll build a collection of mental snapshots certain to influence your weaving talents for the good.
- **Ideas are Infinite.** No matter how creative your latest basket idea, there are more on the horizon and you have little to gain by keeping your secrets to yourself. Share your tips with your fellow artisans and watch your neighbors reciprocate. Too often, we've seen an air of suspicion between weavers and a "non—quality" of communication suggesting an idea shared is an idea "lost."
- **You Can't Saturate the Market.** Weavers sometimes take the perspective that there are a finite number of customers in their area. And while this may be true in the extreme, it's hardly true with respect to the number of customers eager to purchase one or more baskets.

Virtually every home needs one or two, and this translates into a market demand in the thousands for even a small community. Our market is so large and the individual weaver's production capacity so relatively small that every weaver in a community can succeed. Slow sales do not stem from competition; they stem from a failure to use all the marketing media at your disposal. Broaden your outlets and your sales will meet your production capacity, regardless of competition.

So what's your place in this nationwide market? . . . Answer: whatever you build for yourself in your local community. Simple guidelines such as those we've cited above will help you foster a climate of success for yourself, your fellow weavers, and your customers. Given such a climate, your next step is establishing your particular image and product style, and complementing your baskets with an appropriate price.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Roxanne Orgil, "The Gallery: Boffo Baskets," *Wall Street Journal* (E), 24 Apr 92, p. A14.

- <sup>2</sup>Roxanne Orgil, "A Tiskit, a Tasket, an Art," *Wall Street Journal* (E), 8 Jan 92, p. A8.
- <sup>3</sup>Jim Carlton, "They're Not Crazy. These Folks are Just Bent on Making Baskets," *Wall Street Journal* (E), 14 Oct 94, p. 81.
- <sup>4</sup>Joshua Hyatt, "Urban Developer," *Inc.*, Vol 14, No 1, Jan 92, p. 80.
- <sup>5</sup>*ibid*
- <sup>6</sup>Sharon Nelton, "A Basketmaker with a Vision," *Nation's Business*, Vol 81, Jul 93, p. 14.

## Chapter II

# Building Your Foundation

Ever wonder why a diamond commands such high prices? A Rolls Royce promises four wheels and transportation, but it costs ten times the average automobile. Why the discrepancy? Or, closer to home, why do one weaver's baskets sell for twice that offered by another?

Scarcity, quality, and uniqueness help answer these questions to a degree but, in the final analysis, what people will pay for a particular item boils down to perception. People will pay what they believe is a "fair price," comparing the sale price with what they consider the "opportunity cost." That is, given the opportunity to purchase a basket for \$50.00 is, for many, the equivalent of a dinner for two at a nice restaurant. Will the customer perceive your basket as at least equal to dinner for two? Or will their comparison leave your basket hanging on the sales tree? This depends largely on you, and the perception of quality you've built around your skills and your product.

This booklet concerns pricing your baskets and offers two formulas to help you establish your baskets' value. But because the price of a "diamond" largely stems from the eye of the customer, we've added two sections addressing your image and your product. Pricing is relative. And if

you want to gain what your baskets are worth, you're going to need to focus on the "larger" sales package as well.

**Your Image.** Image building is not deception. It is an accurate portrayal of your skills as a weaver, and the time and devotion you've committed toward mastering an age-old skill. Weaving is not, in our minds, a *craft*—something most people can do with basic materials and an instruction manual. And weavers are not "*crafters*." Weaving is an art—a deliberate practice of expression with as many variations as there are people. Weavers are artists.

Your customer likely does not realize that there are, for example, some two dozen discreet steps in building the simple market basket or that color bands and vertical inserts require detailed planning. Your customer likely has little or no appreciation for baskets as he or she possibly knows little or nothing about their history. Your customer sees a colorful container with a hole on top, and you as a person who simply "whipped it" into existence. Education is the key in changing this perception and your image is the primary vehicle.

Here are some suggestions likely to assist you in communicating the truth of your skill which, taken together, will transform your image from crafts person to artisan.

- **Make Educating Your Customers a Goal.** Weaving has a long history and every basket has a past. Weaving requires a repertoire of intricate skills and every basket is a culmination of the same. Take the time to think through your baskets and their history, and prepare yourself for two-three presentations varying in length from a few minutes to upwards of fifteen minutes. Rehearse these presentations (without notes) and, as opportunities arise, deliver them to your target audience. For example, when talking with a customer viewing your baskets, consider any one of these discussion points:

1. **Basket Origins.** . .some have their roots in local history.

2. **Source of Supplies.** . . does your customer know that rattan comes from the jungles of Asia and coils like a snake on the jungle floor?

3. **Steps in Construction.** . . does your customer appreciate that there are often several different reed sizes in a basket and that planning original designs often is the most difficult preconstruction step? Are they aware of your time investment?

4. **Their Potential as a Weaver.** . . highlight the benefits of weaving as an art form and how your customer can learn as well. Highlight your education process, paying particular attention to the slow but steady acquisition of skills you've gained through time and patience.

Develop, rehearse, and present your presentations as often as you can. You'll get better with practice and in time will establish credentials as a subject matter expert. Offer to make coffee group presentations, school demonstrations, or host special classes at local community centers.

- **Teach Classes.** Choose your favorite novice basket and offer to teach others for the price of materials plus instruction. Many weavers have established their credentials in this manner, earning an appreciable instruction stipend in the process. You might not consider yourself sufficiently qualified to offer instruction, but consider this: you do not have to have every answer to qualify as a subject matter expert, you simply need to be able to walk your students through the construction of a simple basket—highlighting your training and experiences along the way.

Pursue this opportunity and watch your skills, credibility, and customer base grow. Start small, perhaps among some of your friends, and later move toward offering classes community-wide, either at craft shops, community centers, or even at your local community college.

- **Host Exhibits.** Banks, credit unions, restaurants, and service stores all enjoy a little variety on their premises, particularly when it doesn't compete with their primary business. Consider

taking your baskets on the local road by offering to display your products (along with relevant historical or other literature) in the lobbies of these businesses. Construct or buy some tasteful basket trees and prepare a poster or two. Write an explanatory letter asking for a face-to-face meeting with the business owner or manager. Baskets offer an air of culture many businesses appreciate.

- **Enter Competitions.** Many weaving associations host competitions within their membership and your participation could mean a prize and a boost in your credibility. Query your local association about upcoming events. Should they offer none, consider hosting your own concurrent with a local fair or other community event. Hosting an event requires judges, categories of consideration, and a few simple application rules. Some local educators could serve as judges, while categories and rules can be brainstormed between participating weavers.
- **Order Quality Cards and Brochures.** Every artisan needs a business card and not just any card. Strive to design a card which captures the essence of your weaving interest and creativity. Present yourself as the unique artisan you are and your customers will take you at face value.

Additionally, think about designing a brochure outlining the history or production steps of your particular baskets, something the customer can take whether he or she buys a basket or not. Make your brochure simple and educational, and try to include a picture or two.

Finally, don't try to save a dollar by using inexpensive paper. Business cards and brochures should be produced on top-quality parchment with a print quality that only comes from a professional printer. Both cards and brochures are surprisingly inexpensive and promise to pay dividends well beyond their minimal cost.

**Your Product.** While image ensures your customers appreciate your product for what it's worth, the product itself makes the difference between sales and no sales. We're asking customers to part with some of their hard-earned dollars for some of our hard-made baskets. Your product makes that exchange reasonable.

Finding a product style with which you're comfortable is important, as is complementing your baskets with simple extras. Choosing a particular basket product style or strategy allows you to focus on certain types of baskets, a practice certain to result in increasingly higher standards of quality with each weave. Garnishing your basket with stencils, flowers, bows, or other simple extras complements your image as an artisan and helps

ensure that customers you gain today will be certain to visit you tomorrow.

- **Product Strategies.** There are several product strategies you can pursue. We've seen many weavers simply weave what their heart desires, resulting in a basket inventory full of various shapes, sizes, and colors. Others have assumed an historical theme, making only those baskets they can credit to their local history and striving to match their production with authentic materials and techniques. Some attempt to cater to the perceived needs of their customers while some simply weave in hopes their potential customers will share similar tastes. Here are some product ideas you might want to pursue, any one or a combination of which can spring you forward to a reliable, profitable income.

1. **Theme Baskets.** Theme or seasonal baskets sell particularly well around Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Many weavers work to match their basket colors to the season. With a dedicated season for which to prepare, weavers can take their time during the off-season experimenting with new designs, colors, and gift ideas.

2. **Festival Baskets.** With a little color and imagination, you can design and weave baskets complementing a local festival or tradition. For example, Kansas weavers can decorate their baskets with sunflowers. Weavers in the Southwest can

experiment to achieve the soft colors and patterns characteristic of Southwestern decor.

3. **Basket Sets.** Three-four baskets sold as a set can make an appealing housewarming or other occasion gift. You can center your set around something basic—a market basket—and add others in similar styles and colors to round out the kit. Sets can sell better than singles as they're easier to integrate in one's home. And for the weaver, sets means standardization—which translates into greater production and operating efficiencies as you gain more experience.

4. **Potporri.** Potporri is exactly what it implies, a wide mix of basket styles and colors. This is our personal favorite as we enjoy learning and building new basket types. It may actually be your best strategy as it gives you access to a wider variety of customer tastes.

**Some Simple Extras.** Every weaver should strive to continuously improve his or her product in style and quality, and demonstrate this through a commitment to first-line materials, color choices, and guarantees.

- **Premium Materials.** Make it a habit to use premium quality reed and your baskets will reflect your decision years after their construction. Do likewise in purchasing handles or basket adornments. If you're using dried

flowers, wooden appliqués, or other materials, take the time to clean, prepare, and paint your adornments with the same degree of care you'd employ in building your basket.

- **Color Choices.** As suggested in Chapter I, we live in an age where more and more people are decorating their homes themselves. Showing some flexibility in color choices can make your baskets an important part of this trend. Consider building a small color-sample board for display alongside your baskets. Show the customer your willingness to weave baskets (or sets) tailored to the needs of their decor and you'll earn additional sales and follow-on references.
- **Offer Guarantees.** While some may shy away from such a suggestion, baskets made of premium quality reed and adornments are of such a durability that you can offer a lifetime guarantee from defects in workmanship with little or no worry. Offer a guarantee and, in the off-chance one of your baskets unwinds or breaks, repair or replace it with a smile.
- **Tag Your Merchandise.** It is amazing what a simple quality tag can do for your products. In some cases, it can transform a relatively simple basket into the quality merchandise one expects from a powerful merchandiser. In others, it can include certain basket details the purchaser will

desire as much as the product (history, artist, place purchased, guarantee). Like a business card, quality tags suggest seriousness. . . which implies reliability. . . which reinforces your image long after the customer is gone.

A solid basket sales foundation is like a finely woven tapestry, with each action you take a single thread in the larger fabric.

Working to establish a solid image means giving something of yourself to your friends and community. Take time to research the history associated with your baskets and remain eager to share with interested customers what it takes to build a beautiful basket.

Working to make your product as attractive as possible means taking the time to consider and employ many little extras. Guarantees, uses of color, and quality adornments may seem small additions to your art, but they promise to separate your products from many in the mainstream and help you maintain the reputation you've worked hard to build.

## Chapter III

# Pricing Your Baskets

Pricing reflects a delicate balance between your image, your product, and your market. It reflects a fair price for a quality product, as judged by your target customer. Consequently, determining the price of a basket is no easy task. If your image is strong and you are credited with being a subject matter expert, your baskets can command a higher price. If your quality exceeds others or if your customer is relatively upscale, again you can command a higher price. Determining the balance between these three variables is the key to proper pricing, and an action for which corporations spend millions in marketing research.

Individual weavers lack the resources to conduct elaborate market surveys and, in most cases, are not interested in finding exactly the “top” price. We just want a fair price for our work and art. Toward this end, we offer the following two pricing models: The Fair Price Model and its variant, The Fair Price-Plus Model.

**The Fair Price Model.** This particular pricing model makes several assumptions. First, the weaver is a local artisan with a market within his or her community. Second, the weaver works from the home. And third, the weaver purchases weaving supplies from commercial distributors, but dyes his

or her own reed. The model consists of five simple steps (see the appendix for basic worksheets).

1. Determine the cost of your materials.
2. Place a value on your labor.
3. Calculate your fixed costs.
4. Calculate your variable costs.
5. Calculate the sum for your basket price.

Each of these five steps can easily be expressed using the table below. We'll use this table as an example in the step explanations that follow.

Item: 8" x 12" Market Basket with "D" Handle

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total

Table 1: Fair Price Model Worksheet

**Step 1: Determine the Cost of your Materials.**

Basket materials include reed supplies, handles, reed dye, basket stain, and any adornments. Pricing handles, dye, and adornments is easy as they usually are purchased as single units. Reed is a different matter as it often is purchased in one-pound coils and seldom do we use a complete coil in a basket. Rather, we use a variety of reed sizes from a variety

of coils. In calculating the cost of reed, we need to establish our “reed cost average.”

To calculate the average cost for reed, first list the per-pound cost of each reed coil you use in preparing your baskets. Most weavers use a combination of flat, oval, and round reed in various sizes. Tally the total cost and divide that sum by the number of unique coils. Your answer is the “average reed cost” per pound.

We use essentially seven types of reed in our baskets and pay an average cost of \$5.50 per pound. We determine the value of reed materials in any one basket by weighing the basket on a sensitive kitchen scale. \$5.50 a pound translates as roughly \$.35 cents per ounce. Our standard market basket weighs about 10 ounces and therefore requires roughly \$3.50 worth of reed.

Dyed reed is significantly more expensive. If your basket consists mostly of colored reed, determine the cost per-pound and calculate your total cost per the example above. If you use partial color, include one coil of colored reed when determining your “reed cost average” and you’ll end with a fairly reliable estimate of your true costs.

Basket stain costs vary from person to person as weavers seldom follow identical techniques or use the same materials. For example, some use Minwax and mineral spirit mixtures while others prefer walnut husk stains. Determining your

cost in this area is best calculated by keeping track of your use over the course of several baskets. Start with a standard amount of stain and its cost. Keep track of the number of baskets each stain batch covers. Divide the stain cost by the number of baskets covered to figure your average stain cost.

Finally, if you gather your own materials, don't dismay. You might pay little for the tree bark or vines, but you pay plenty in your time, gasoline, and other resources. These are important costs, and we'll capture them as we work to establish a fair price for your labor.

Using our example of the Market Basket, here's how our Fair Price Worksheet looks so far:

Item: 8" x 12" Market Basket with "D" Handle

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total
Reed/\$3.50				
Dyed-Reed/\$.50				
Handle/\$2.50				
Stain/\$.75				
Sub-Total: \$7.25				

Table 2: Fair Price Worksheet with Materials Cost

**Step 2: Place a Value on Your Labor.** This is the most subjective of the pricing variables as it requires you to first, determine the average number of hours needed to produce a particular basket and second, place a dollar value on your experience and skills.

Determining the average number of hours for each basket produced is relatively simple. As you build each basket, record your start and stop times in a separate notebook. Periodically average the times required for each particular type of basket. Keep these records handy as they'll prove useful in not only determining your average time per product, but helpful in explaining your prices to merchants and customers later.

In placing a dollar value on your time, experience, and skills, consider this:

- Minimum wage employees earn roughly \$5.00 per hour; many skilled employees earn upwards of \$25.00 per hour. The former is an entry-level wage; the latter represents years of experience and training.

- Weavers with one-two years experience are necessarily entry-level artisans.

- Though entry-level, inexperienced weavers possess a skill well beyond that required for most minimum wage jobs, suggesting that the weaver's basic value of labor should exceed the minimum wage.

Considering these factors, our judgment suggests entry-level weavers should value their labor at \$7.50 minimum. Weavers with greater than two years experience should value their labor at \$7.50 plus 10% or 75 cents for each year beyond entry-level. Following this rationale, weavers with five years experience should value their labor at \$9.75 per hour and weavers with 15 years experience should value theirs at \$17.25 per hour. Inherent in this formula is the assumption that the weaver is continuing to learn, grow, and improve in even the most basic techniques. (For quick reference, see our Labor Value table in the back of this booklet.)

These same dollar figures apply when using your time and energy to gather natural materials for your baskets. Baskets made from birch, oak, vines, or other durable materials promise a quality we cannot match with imported reed. The time and resources needed to gather these materials will result in a much greater labor cost and a relatively more expensive basket, but this is the cost of quality.

Granting 2.5 hours to weave our sample market basket and assuming entry-level skills, our Fair Price Worksheet calculations now look like this:

Item: 8" x 12" Market Basket with "D" Handle

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total
Reed/\$3.50	2.5 hours @ \$7.50			
Dyed-Reed/\$.50				
Handle/\$2.50				
Stain/\$.75				
Sub-Total: \$7.25	Sub-Total: \$18.75			

Table 3: Fair Price Worksheet with Labor Costs

**Step 3: Calculate Your Fixed Costs.** Fixed costs are those costs you incur whether you produce baskets or not. Examples usually includes resources such as scissors, shaping tools, buckets, tape measures, special storage containers, books, patterns, and other items peculiar to your weaving needs. They can also include belt sanders (if you sand your handles), special saws (if you gather and make your own materials), cards, and brochures.

Calculating your fixed costs per basket means taking your total inventory cost and dividing that sum by the number of baskets you intend to weave over a certain time period, and it can get pretty complicated (especially if you include depreciation on machines like sanders and saws).

For the home-based weaver, we recommend a simplified process. Tally your fixed costs and divide the sum by the number of baskets you likely will produce over the next five years (our estimate of the life of a belt sander). This will keep your fixed costs low per basket and ensure you recoup your costs over time.

Our example below assumes the weaver has roughly \$90.00 invested in tools and, over the next five years, will order three sets of business cards (3 X \$40.00) and print two separate brochures (\$50.00). Our example weaver intends to make 100 baskets each year for the next five years. This computes as a fixed cost of \$.62 per basket. Continuing with our Worksheet example:

Item: 8''x 12'' Market Basket with "D" Handle

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total
Reed/\$3.50	2.5 hours @ \$7.50	\$.62		
Dyed-Reed/\$.50				
Handle/\$2.50				
Stain/\$.75				
Sub-Total: \$7.25	Sub-Total: \$18.75	Sub-Total: \$.62		

Table 4: Fair Price Model with Fixed Costs

**Step 4: Calculate Your Variable Costs.** Variable costs are those you incur based on circumstances. Examples include delivery charges, special order requirements, fair booth costs, or any taxes peculiar to your area. When calculating local delivery costs by auto, assume your cost to be roughly \$.30 cents per mile, which accounts for gasoline and fair wear and tear on your vehicle. Special order requirements can include special stains or colored dyes. In this case, add the complete cost of the materials to your basket price (unless you can use the excess in making other baskets) and advise your customer of the additional charge. Don't assume the burden for local taxes. Add shipping and tax costs verbatim.

Fair booth or consignment shop costs are an expense often overlooked, but ones you should figure in as a variable cost. In calculating this cost, divide your booth or shop fees by the number of baskets you intend to sell at that particular event or over a particular period of time. Add this figure to the basket price you would charge if you sold the basket from your home. This might add \$2-3.00 to the price of each of your baskets, or, in some cases, demonstrate to you that the variable cost is not worth the sales medium. Ensure you include these calculations, however. To do otherwise means your first two sales go toward fees and you weave two baskets for free.

You may have other variable costs not mentioned here but certainly worth your attention. These could include advertising costs, patterns and reference books, or second attempts to make a special order basket that just isn't working. Remember, your prices should reflect *all* your costs.

Assuming a local delivery of our market basket, we now have all the costs associated with weaving our market basket and can calculate a Fair Price.

Item: 8" x 12" Market Basket with "D" Handle

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total
Reed/\$3.50	2.5 hours @ \$7.50	\$.62	local delivery : 6 mi x\$.35 = \$2.10	
Dyed-Reed/\$.50			tax @6%: \$1.72	
Handle/\$2.50				
Stain/\$.75				
Sub-Total: \$7.25	Sub-Total: \$18.75	Sub-Total: \$.62	Sub-Total \$3.82	\$30.44

Table 5: Fair Price Model with Variable Costs

Using this Fair Price model will help you gain an appreciation for your costs in producing individual baskets and, over time, help you identify measures you can take to keep costs down. The model allows you to calculate your potential gain from the sale of a certain number of items and, if you're concerned about whether you'll have enough materials for an upcoming class or fair, you can always consult your materials column to determine how much reed you'll need. Employ this model across a wide-range of baskets and you'll likely discover something interesting as well. Smaller, intricately woven baskets often are valued at or near larger baskets due to the time involved in weaving.

**The Fair Price-Plus Model.** The Fair Price-Plus Model is identical to the Fair Price Model with two exceptions. Under some circumstances, the Fair Price model will not prove effective in determining a fair price and may, in fact, suggest a price well above or below fair market value. This is true in areas where the cost of living well exceeds the national average as well as in areas deemed economically depressed. Most affected is your labor costs and, possibly, your variable costs. With respect to variable costs, simply add the new costs to your basket price total. In recalculating the value of your labor, however, we recommend the following easy steps.

First, contact your local Chamber of Commerce and inquire as to the average wage per hour for entry-level workers. Second, take the

entry-level wage and add 50%. And third, use this number to recalculate the value of your labor, adding 10% for each year of your experience beyond two years. Follow these few steps and your basket prices will align with the local economy and your sales should match those your fellow weavers enjoy elsewhere.

**Some Conclusions.** Three factors largely determine your success in basket sales: your image, your product, and your price.

Customers seek a fair price for a quality product, but often are unable to gauge the value of your baskets. Communicating a clear, competent image will go far in convincing them that your baskets are unique creations well worth their dollars.

And for their dollars, they deserve quality—premium materials, first-quality colors, and a guarantee of workmanship. Employ these principles in combination with a particular theme, festival, or in the production of basket sets to better ensure steady, profitable sales.

Your price is critical, however, as the customer will compare what you ask against what they could purchase with the equivalent dollars. Remember the dinner for two analogy? Your customers will view your basket's value at or above similar comparisons when they understand something about weaving, your product's particular

history, and are confident your price represents a Fair Price.

Use the Fair Price Model as a baseline in determining what to charge for your baskets. . . and don't be shy in explaining why your prices reflect actual costs. Explaining your costs gives you the opportunity to highlight your quality standards, consistent with your image, which promises you greater sales.

## Chapter IV

# Selling Your Baskets

With the proper image, product, and price, your baskets will sell themselves. . . almost. You've one step left in this process: finding the right market medium or mediums for your baskets. This chapter helps you decide which of the various mediums is right for you—from direct sales, to the craft bazaar, to dealing with consignment merchants. Each medium has its strengths and weaknesses and, with a little effort, you can find and employ those best suited to your particular circumstances.

Baskets weavers use a variety of mediums to market their products. For the individual weaver, mediums most often include sales from the home, sales from bazaars or craft fairs, and consignment of goods to a craft or specialty store. For those with greater production energies, some weavers suggest at least four other mediums: sale of “gift baskets,” sales through home furnishings specialists, marketing via the Internet, or sales through “home parties,” as does Longaberger.

Mediums such as “sales from the home: and “home parties” generally speak for themselves as, in each, customers are acquired through the personal relationships of the weaver or host—the greater

one's range of acquaintances, the greater one's potential for sales. With the remaining sales, however, sales are not so simple. Consignment merchants are interested in the "bottom line" or profitability of the basket and generally not its artistic appeal. Craft fairs and bazaars attract a certain type of shopper—one usually interested in a bargain—and can be a tough market for some weavers. "Homestores" or interior design merchants can be an ideal conduit for sales, but breaking in can be difficult. The Internet makes an exceptional medium for reaching customers worldwide, but requires a willingness to accept out-of-state checks, ready access to a computer, and an additional regular rental expense if you contract for extra on-line storage. Considering the weaving tempo of many basketmakers, the Internet might be more of a marketing medium than some of us need or want.

In the following sections, we'll outline each of these mediums, some of the peculiarities they bring, and some actions you can take to make them profitable avenues.

**Direct Sales From The Home.** While we discourage hanging a shingle outside your front door, we do encourage you to maintain at least some of your baskets in your home. Baskets make great conversation pieces and, with friends or relatives, you've always got an audience ready to take an interest in your work. Show and explain your baskets to company as the conversation focuses in

that direction and, over time, you'll see friends and relatives returning time and again to purchase a "special gift" for a teacher, friend, or co-worker. You'll even see friends of friends start to approach, as well as past recipients. Good news travels fast.

Here's another idea. We know of an artist in North Carolina who holds an annual "open house" in her home with exceptional results. Usually around Christmas, she sends flyers to her friends, neighbors, and associates inviting them to enjoy some refreshments and view her work. She holds her open house over a single weekend. Her advertising costs are minimal and her refreshment costs acceptable. In the two years we've watched her, she's earned over \$2000.00 at each event.

**Home Parties.** Pioneered by Tupperware, Longaberger, and others, the "home party" marketing medium ensures the merchandiser of profitable sales to a captive audience. But is it appropriate for the individual weaver? We're not sure.

On the one hand, it is clear that people attending home parties do so at the invitation of the host, usually a friend or relative. And everyone knows the host earns a percentage of sales, right? And everyone wants to help their gracious host or hostess, right? Sure. And this probably explains the success of the home party. We know our home has several products we purchased to assuage the feelings of a host or hostess, rather than satisfy an irresistible thirst for a product. Weavers sponsoring

home parties might elicit the same feelings from local customers, feelings the customers will only discuss when safe at home. . . and feelings that could damage basket sales over the long run.

On the other hand, home parties can be a great medium if handled with care and taste. Our friend mentioned in “direct sales” above limited her party to once a year and it worked wonderfully. You might consider doing likewise, either alone or in combination with your fellow weavers.

Organize one of these parties for your friends and give them a demonstration of basket weaving or, better yet, make it a basket weaving home party, giving everyone the opportunity to make a simple basket. You'll likely sell many of your show samples for your efforts, earn a few dollars through the sale of basket supplies, and—who knows—maybe gain a few more weaving companions from your closest friends and relatives.

**Consignment Shops.** Many weavers consign their products to specialty shops focusing on tourists or the local population. Sales vary with the region, season, consumer target, and consignment shop theme. For example, weavers consigning in gift shops in or near the Smoky Mountains during the summer months (where baskets complement the local heritage and tourist traffic is particularly heavy) will sell more than those consigning within urban areas with no distinct tourist patterns. Conversely, those focusing on an upscale customer

in urban areas can achieve greater sales (and command higher prices) if consigning through home furnishing shops or art galleries.

Consignment shops typically base their fees on product sales price, floor space, or both. Sales price fees range from 25-50%, while floor space often ranges from \$50-100 per month. Some employ a combination, charging a flat fee for floor space and a nominal (perhaps 10%) additional fee per product.

In our view, weavers probably are best served by seeking a “flat monthly rate” instead of the sales price percentage. Using the Fair Price Model discussed in Chapter III, you can see how a fair price for your work comes very close to what many customers are willing to pay. Forfeiting 25-50% of the fair price to pay for consignment means you work for significantly less; raising the price to account for the consignment fee means fewer sales.

In considering consignment to a local merchant, remember that the character and experience of the proprietor is fundamentally important. We recommend you ask the proprietor these questions before you commit:

1. Has the proprietor accepted baskets in the past? If so, did the weavers follow a particular theme and how does the proprietor characterize their success?

2. What type of customer frequents the premises? Tourist? Affluent? Antique shopper? Average age? Male or female?

3. Does the owner object to the placement of brochures, business cards, or other literature alongside the baskets?

4. To what extent does the management assume liability for consigned baskets against theft or damage?

5. Is there a minimum commitment period and/or a penalty for early withdrawal?

6. Will the proprietor give you the names and phone numbers of other consignors so you may ask them their views?

Sorry to say, but some consignment shops will consign your baskets (for a monthly fee) fully knowing your product might not sell in their store. Asking the questions above will allow you to gauge the proprietor's knowledge of his consignors and customers. If he or she can't answer these questions beyond "yes-no" or "good-great," or if they object to your placement of literature linking your customers to you directly and disavow any responsibility for your products' security, you probably should seek another outlet. We've known weavers who've paid \$40.00 a month to essentially "store" their baskets in a consignment shop. Find the right merchant—one who knows his consignors and customers—and you've likely found one worth your investment of time and trust.

**Craft Fairs and Bazaars.** Perhaps the most popular means of marketing baskets is the craft fair

or bazaar. Sponsored by community business organizations, fraternal groups, or churches, these typical two-three day events promise a rush of customers and a festive atmosphere. Sponsors charge vendors fees ranging from \$75-100 for booth space (often 8 feet by 8 feet) and leave booth decoration and direct sales to the vendor. Success in this medium often varies with the Fair theme. For example, Fairs promoting local crafts and heritage tend to foster greater sales than those promoting entertainment (bands and amusement rides).

And for all its potential as a robust medium, craft sales and bazaars can be a tough market for the serious weaver. First, many customers don't come to a fair to purchase quality merchandise. They come for entertainment and, if in the market for merchandise, often have a "bargain" price in mind. Second, fairs and bazaars are the domain of crafters, folks who make various interesting yet inexpensive decorative goods for the home. Baskets are not crafts in this sense, but their side-by-side sales may lead the customer to a different conclusion. Third, bazaar booths are relatively small, a fact which not only constrains your space but sometimes intimidates customers who would like to simply browse.

Toward overcoming some of these obstacles, we recommend you consider some of the following tips we've gleaned from our participation in craft fairs.

1. Make your booth comfortable to the eye and feet. Take the time to build or purchase some quality shelves or basket trees, and try to match the character of your baskets. If your baskets are Americana, complement this with some flags or other memorabilia, wooden tree stands, or even some soft patriotic music. And don't forget your customer's feet. A simple throw rug can add new dimensions to an 8X8 booth, transforming it from a vendor outlet to a comfortable piece of your workshop.

2. Focus on educating your customers, not on making sales. Remember, most people don't know the first thing about baskets. Educate them as to the basket's construction, history, and uses, and sales will follow.

3. Hide the cashbox. Walk through any bazaar and you'll see someone sitting behind a cardtable, hands on their lap, waiting to count the money that's not coming in. When your customer sees your booth, he or she should see tastefully presented baskets, not someone eager to take their dollars. The cashbox makes many folks uncomfortable and, at first sight, they politely smile and continue walking.

4. Don't take slow sales personally. Despite our affection for baskets, there are some who simply are not interested and will tell you as much if given the chance. Take your motivation cues from your

heart, not the eyes of your customers. Understand that weaving is an ancient art which some will never comprehend. Don't make excuses for your product or yourself. Besides, good always overcomes bad in the aggregate.

**Gift Baskets.** Though not an exclusive basket product, gift baskets can prove a medium by which you can market your baskets in combination with other goods—possibly earning profits through sales of both the basket and basket accessories. Gift baskets usually take on a particular theme—fishing, golfing, picnicking, natural foods—and can be marketed locally, by mail-order, or through contacts with corporate gift coordinators. Depending on contents, basket style, and basket quality, gift baskets can command prices from modest to several hundred.<sup>1</sup>

Several factors, however, make this medium somewhat challenging for the individual, home-based weaver. First, according to one gift basket small-business owner, the key to producing profitable gift baskets is purchasing inexpensive basket imports and decorating them with bows and other decorations. Contents counts, as the consumer is not especially concerned with basket quality. Second, gift basket sales seem to do best within the corporate “gift giving” market. This factor forces you to engage in corporate “gift coordinator” lobbying either in person or by catalogue, incurring an overhead expense which could make your final basket sales inordinately expensive. Finally,

because gift basket contents are the key feature, you must design and advertise unique *theme* baskets, an action which includes new issues and concerns such as designing expertise, purchase and storage of inventory, and food product liability. Taken together, the gift basket medium probably is for the more aggressive weaver and may prove too troublesome if you're seeking primarily to sell baskets. But it could be worth exploring if you have the time, drive, and marketing patience.

**Home Furnishings.** One Better Homes and Gardens survey of 8,600 people concluded that the "do-it-yourself" trend among homeowners is not simply a passing phenomenon but a widespread, long-term movement.<sup>2</sup> More and more people are seeking to give their homes an individual touch and are seeking specialty, color-coordinated decorator items in the process. Kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom accessories are becoming very popular and manufacturing "homestores" are rushing to fill the demand.<sup>3</sup> Basket sales have not figured prominently in the demand for home furnishings, but considering the industry's current incapacity to satisfy a broad range of decorator tastes, perhaps the basket's absence is due more to non-availability than lack of demand.

Baskets can complement the decorator tastes of every individual with respect to style, color, and shape. Given a fabric or color sample, you can build any size basket with color-coordinated reed or attached accessories; given an intended use

(bathroom, kitchen, living room), you can further design and build functional baskets for anything from napkins and candy dishes to two-tiered toilet paper dispensers. In sum, this particular medium—marketing baskets through homestores with the promise of matching unique color and use tastes—seems especially suited to the individual weaver.

Using this medium requires coordination with home furnishings businesses (toward establishing arrangements similar to those of consignment shops), interior design specialists, or other businesses catering to the unique furnishing desires of the consumer. To do so, first initiate contact with a brief letter explaining your product and how it will complement the business' sales. Ask in your letter if you can have an appointment with the manager or owner and follow-up with a phone call requesting the same one-to-two days after letter delivery. Arrive at the business with some color samples, a display board, a customer order form, and some basket samples.

This is a simple, easy concept with tremendous growth potential, if you're willing to do the important groundwork first. Here is a sample presentation you might give to a local homestores merchant.

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### **Sample Presentation**

We will offer four different basket styles, color-coordinated to the tastes of the customer within a nine-color range. We have designed our product package to meet the demands of the average two-three person household. Our package includes:

-For the foyer, a Letter Basket. Roughly 3" x 8", this basket offers a convenient place to store outgoing or incoming mail. It includes a wire handle for hanging or can stand alone on a shelf or entry table.

-For the kitchen, we offer a napkin basket. Complete with wooden handle, this basket allows the napkins to be stored flat. A host or hostess can pass additional napkins to guests simply by passing the basket by its handle.

-For the dining room, a Market Basket. Measuring 8" x 12", this traditional wooden-handled basket makes an excellent display when filled with flowers or fruit. It also makes a great kindling box or magazine basket.

-For the deskside in the kitchen or study, a Trinket Basket. Some 6" in diameter, this round basket serves as "catch-all" for keys, chains, or other small items.

All baskets are color-accented with two-five strips of dyed reed and are finished in an all-natural, walnut husk stain. Wire handles are painted flat

black. Wooden handles are sanded smooth and polished with wax or tung oil.

Your customer chooses the basket color accents from among nine choices. The choices include hunter green, burgundy, brown, navy blue, red, medium blue, black, rose, and turquoise. Dyes for these colors come pre-mixed and are available through most basket supply channels.

We believe this product will prove especially popular as a housewarming or other special occasion gift, as well as with customers desiring a color-coordinated look. Armed with a wallpaper, curtain, or furniture fabric sample, we believe most customers can find a matching color or colors within the range we provide. The product is very durable, leaving us to feel confident in offering a lifetime guarantee in workmanship.

Material and labor estimates of a four-basket package suggest we can offer the product for \$\_\_\_\_\_ or \$\_\_\_\_\_, wholesale and retail. (show your Fair Price Worksheets) Our ability to provide custom, "color-coordinated" baskets matching the consumer's tastes possibly could support prices 15-20% higher.

Customers order the entire package or an individual basket from among these colors (show color sample board) using this easy-to-follow form (show form). We can receive the orders from you

daily over the telephone or in person (or via e-mail, fax).

Do you see the sales potential we see in this product? How soon can we set up a display in your store as a trial run?

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Tailor this presentation to your own product (or use our suggestions) and market your skills to one or more "homestores" in your local community. We're confident the right display, product, and homestore environment can translate as steady sales and profits for you and your merchandiser sponsor.

**Internet Sales.** Search the Internet and soon you'll discover several burgeoning sites devoted to basket weaving, weaving supplies, and basket sales. The Net promises simple access to literally millions of customers world-wide and can be relatively inexpensive to join.

You need at least three things to be an Internet merchandiser: access to a computer; a "homepage," and an Internet access provider. Home computer systems are your greatest expense as new systems (with printer) average about \$3500.00. Buying a used system and upgrading it with additional memory is also a reasonable option.

Your "homepage" is the site you maintain on the world-wide web and can be as colorful and creative as you choose. Many web sites offer free

instruction in building your own “homepage” and there are multiple “homepage” builders willing to build something fancy for a fee. We recommend you learn to do it yourself. Maintaining a basket sales “homepage” requires regular changes and the computer language needed to translate your ideas to the net site is not difficult to master.

Finally, you'll need an Internet access provider through which you gain access to the world-wide web and the web gains access to you. Many providers offer their customers a small amount of computer storage space as part of the monthly service fee (suitable for a family homepage), but will offer additional memory for a few extra dollars. How much memory you need depends on the size of your ambitions—pictures of any sort require relatively large amounts of memory.

**Summary.** How you choose to market your baskets depends largely on your location, market, and temperament. For the gregarious, direct sales, home parties, and bazaars may prove the most effective. For those less eager to make contact with the customer, working through consignment shops, homestores, and the Internet may prove best. Which medium(s) is best for you depends, again, on you.

What seems clear, however, is that many weavers enjoy experimenting with the variety of mediums available, maintaining consistency with one or two for the sake of steady sales, while trying

new ones as the opportunities arise. We prefer this approach. Above we've highlighted only seven. . . and the possibilities are endless.

Did we mention catalogue sales? sales through schools and clubs as a fund-raiser? or through a weaver's cooperative? Has anyone explored mediums such as floral shops, candy stores, or office supply outlets? When was the last time you saw baskets for sale at the fruit stand (build your own fruit basket)?

Basket mediums tend to reflect the weavers they support, infinitely varied and always evolving.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Amber Michelle, "Here's How to Make the \$110 Italian Gourmet Basket," *Gifts and Decorative Accessories (G&DA)*, Vol 94, No 5, May 93, p. 240; "The Profitable \$35 Gift Basket," *G&DA*, Vol 93, No 6, Jun 92, p. 178; and "Here's How to Make Gift Baskets," *G&DA*, Vol 94, No 8, Aug 93, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Pat Corvin, "Domestics—It's Spruce Up Time for Customers," *Discount Merchandiser*, Vol 35, Issue 5, 5 May 1995, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Wilke, "Homeward Bounding," *Advertising Age*, Vol 66, Issue 16, 17 Apr 95, pp. 1, 53.

## Chapter V

# Conclusion

In the course of this brief booklet, we've outlined how you can price your baskets and market them through various mediums. We've talked about your image as a weaver and how this image catapults your sales forward as you reach out to the customer with education and interest. And we've talked about your product, the various shapes it can take, themes, or how you can tailor it to the customer's tastes. What we really haven't talked about is weaving and the connection between the weaver and the basket.

Strange as it seems, the baskets you weave are a part of you. They reflect your personality, creativity, and preferences for color and shape. When you finish a basket, you feel good about it and you want others to feel good about it too.

And for the most part, this is what weavers experience and what continues to motivate them to measure, cut, wrap, and tighten the strands and spokes comprising that odd container we call the basket. We've about ten thousand "Smithsonian" caliber weavers across the continental landscape and, if we keep weaving forward, more and more of these individuals will bubble to the top.

We hope our words will encourage you to continue moving forward. Basket sales are not the end state. They're simple refueling stops along the way. Good weaving to you.

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## Labor Value Table

Fixing a dollar figure on weaving labor is tricky business. Our intent here was to establish a baseline, a foundation from which we could make judgments and calculations. We believe a good baseline is \$7.50 and a 10% raise each year is fair or reasonable.

What we didn't try to quantify, however, is the differences in training and skills between weavers with different or even the same number of years experience. Some weave for full-time employment, while others only as a hobby. Some master new techniques with ease, others take more time. Do their equal "years" of experience equate to equal labor values? Probably not.

Use this model as a guide in determining the value of your labor, but don't become a slave to numbers. If you believe your years of experience do not equate to the value we've fixed at that experience level, choose a level at which you're comfortable. If you believe your image, product, and sales mediums will support values higher than your experience level, again, adjust accordingly.

Many will argue that the value of a basket is determined by "what the market will bear." We're not so concerned with weavers earning incomes above what we would estimate using Fair Price Models. We're concerned about the weavers who can't seem to fix a value on their baskets and consistently sell themselves short. This table is primarily for them.

Years Experience	Labor Value
2 or less	\$7.50
3	\$8.25
4	\$9.00
5	\$9.75
6	\$10.50
7	\$11.25
8	\$12.00
9	\$12.75
10	\$13.50
11	\$14.25
12	\$15.00
13	\$15.75
14	\$16.50
15	\$17.25



Basket Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
Subtotal:  
Other:  
Tax:  
Total:  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials	Labor	Fixed	Variable	Basket Total
Sub:	Sub:	Sub:	Sub:	

Basket Type: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subtotal:  
 Other:  
 Tax:  
 Total:  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grace Davis is a weaver, designer, and instructor with a degree in Fashion Merchandising. Her key interests include twills, cat-head designs, and learning new weaving techniques.

Forrest Davis is a career Army officer with a bachelors degree from the University of Texas at El Paso and a Masters of Science in Administration from Central Michigan University. His baskets are simple and sturdy.

Grace and Forrest live in Arizona with their two sons, Stephen and Timothy.