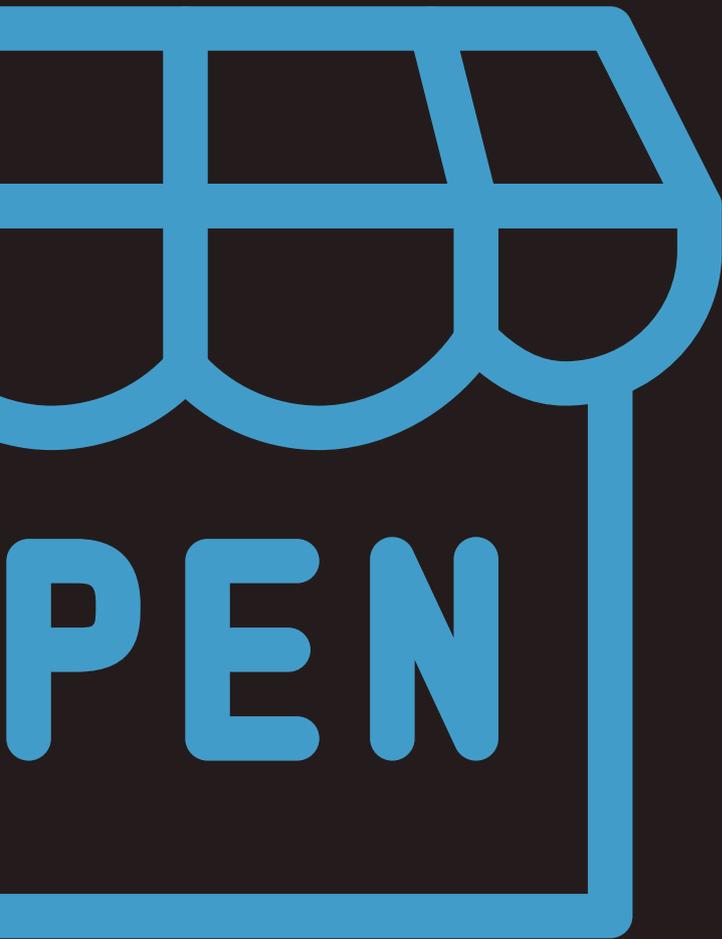


Adding e-commerce to your existing business



Grow your business
online and avoid costly
mistakes by starting with
an e-commerce plan that
suits your business needs.

Introduction.

These days most people are comfortable with purchasing goods and services online. E-commerce is growing fast and traditional businesses are sometimes struggling to keep up.

This guide will answer some of the common questions about adding e-commerce to an existing business. You'll discover that you can leverage your existing branding and customers to sell online successfully.

Here's what you're going to get in this guide:

- Find out about opportunities that selling online can bring
- Learn about the advantages you already have as an existing business and how to use them
- How you can get online and start selling the right way, without wasting time and money



In 2016, total retail sales across the globe will reach \$22.049 trillion, up 6.0% from the previous year

<https://www.emarketer.com/Article/Worldwide-Retail-Ecommerce-Sales-Will-Reach-1915-Trillion-This-Year/1014369#sthash.Ofg38n49.dpuf>

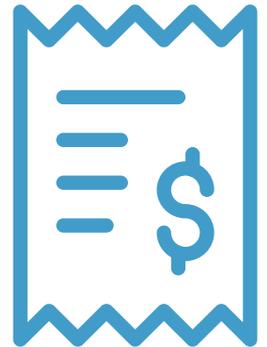
Let's look at some advantages e-commerce can bring:

Would you like to reach more customers?

E-commerce can help you reach a greater amount of people.

If you have a traditional brick and mortar business you might be constrained by your physical location. For example the street your business is on might not get much foot traffic. Or the town you are located in might have a small population.

You know you have a great product or service but you need access to a bigger market. The right type of e-commerce solution can help you reach more people and grow your business.



Shoppers use mobiles and computers – you need to connect with them there.

An e-commerce website can be a great addition to a physical store if done right. Online marketing has evolved to the point where you need to be online and in front of your customers.

You can create an email database. Collect people's email addresses and continue to market to them. Email marketing is a very effective and cheap way to market to customers and keep them coming back.

E-commerce tools and online marketing can build you an effective multi-channel marketing plan. It can then compliment your bricks and mortar business.



Let's look at some advantages you already have:

Instant feedback

You can talk to your customers, whether in your shop or on the phone. E-commerce website owners find it hard to get feedback. If people don't like their site or product they just leave the website.

With a physical store you have the customers attention. You can ask them why they purchased a product or service. If people keep asking if you stock a particular item, you can get it in stock.

You can see the type of person that usually buys from you and then market to similar people in future.

Branding

You already have a brand and brand awareness. Your customers are already aware of your business. Even people who don't buy from you have probably heard of you. It can take a long time for a online-only business to build awareness.

Loyal customers

You probably have customers that come in regularly to browse through the new stock. Happy customers recommend your store to other people locally.

Trust

Online trust can be difficult to earn. Because you have a physical location then online shoppers will be more inclined to trust you. They know there is a store where they can go to ask a question or return a product.



62% of smartphone users have made a purchase online using their mobile device in the last 6 months.

<http://www.outerboxdesign.com/web-design-articles/mobile-e-commerce-statistics>

How can I use online selling in my business?

Businesses, like people, are all unique. Clothes don't come in one-size fits all. At least not anything that looks good, and neither should e-commerce solutions.



If you have read my **Choose the right e-commerce plan for your businessguide** you would have seen there are many types of e-commerce solution.

Start with the right solution for your business.

If you start with the right solution for your specific business requirements you are already off to a great start. Service business need a different e-commerce solution to one that ships goods. There is an online selling method for every type of business.

Businesses that sell services can sell blocks of time or appointments can allow people to book online.

Companies that sell consumables can sell subscriptions online and ship a package of good every week or month. This has been done with great success selling goods like shaving blades, ready to eat meals or socks.



Use a platform that can grow with your business.

While you should start simple when selling online you will need a platform that can grow with your ambitions.

Not all e-commerce platforms are created equally. A good e-commerce solution can integrate with your accounting software, track inventory and give you new ways to reach your customers. You can even run a Point Of Sale (POS) system from your e-commerce website.

Not all e-commerce websites can offer these features. Don't get restricted by choosing the wrong e-commerce platform.



Sounds good so far, but I have a few more questions

E-commerce isn't a good fit for my business or you've tried it and it doesn't work.

If you start with the right solution for your specific business requirements you are already off to a great start.

Many e-commerce solutions are in-flexible. You have to either live with the features your have or they cost a lot to modify.

Choose an e-commerce solution that also can grow with your business and is able to be modified to your exact needs.

Can't I just sell on Ebay / Trade Me / Amazon or some other marketplace?

Sure, you can. Quite often selling on marketplaces can be a great way to get started or validate a product or business idea

However. You are building your store on rented land. The marketplace owns the website and makes the rules.

You are bound to their terms and conditions. What if they decide to raise fees. This could destroy your profit margins.



You are stuck with the features that they supply too. You can easily and quickly out grow a marketplace that doesn't offer the right solution for your business.

One last downside is you don't own your customer list. The customer belongs to the marketplace. You can't build an email list or re-target customers with online advertising.

Aren't e-commerce websites are expensive to set up?

This used to be very true. Creating your own e-commerce website cost many thousands of dollars. You either had to hire a developer who could build one or you would have to buy an 'off the shelf' system.



Both can be expensive to maintain or make changes to.

Now there are many open source systems available to use. Open source is a software term. It basically means the software is free to use or modify as you see fit.



Open source software has many upsides. It is maintained by many programmers around the world that give their time for free to improve the software or create new features. This ensures there is no single point of failure.

It isn't owned by one person or company so the company won't go out of business and stop updating the software your e-commerce website runs on leaving you with a dud.

E-commerce solutions can be built on open source software faster and more cheaply than before.

Open source software is more flexible. Because the code is known to everyone, new features can be added more easily.

This is key to building an e-commerce system that is a good fit for your business plan.

The software can be modified to work with your existing accountancy or Point Of Sale systems and it can even replace your point of sale system.

How do I make my e-commerce project a success?

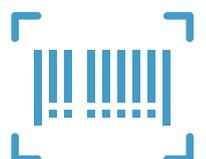


1. Make a budget - You need to put aside some money and keep to that budget.

2. Start small - Especially if you have a limited budget. Just sell your most popular products or services. You can always expand later.

3. You'll need to market - Take advantage of having a physical location.

4. Make a plan - Plan what you will sell. Plan who will take care of the website. Plan how you will ship your products.





EG Web Design has helped many clients find success with the right e-commerce solution for their unique business type.

If you are struggling to create an actionable e-commerce plan for your business this is for you.

Get your own personalised e-commerce business plan.

What you'll get:

I will give you your own personalised e-commerce plan tailored to your business.

I will even let you know which components you will need to build it.

You will have an actionable plan you can use to build a successful e-commerce website. Obligation free!

- **Stop losing customers to online stores**
- **Grow your market share**
- **Save money and time by starting with the right e-commerce solution**

[>> Click here to get your FREE e-commerce plan! <<](#)

Plus. You are going to receive the

Starting an Online Store Checklist

A quick checklist to ensure you cover all the bases before you get started selling online.

**WooCommerce is
currently powering
roughly 30% of all
online stores.**

<https://wptavern.com/woocommerce-dominates-global-e-commerce-platforms-passes-7-million-downloads>

