

Success with **shopify**



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Introduction

Welcome to Shopify Secrets! Having your own ecommerce website is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things that you can do in your life.

Knowing that you have the potential for unlimited income and that it all rests on how hard you work is very liberating and motivating. While having an online store is something that many people dream about, few actually follow through and build one, so you are in a unique class of individuals.

Of course, creating a store has never been easier either, thanks to Shopify. In fact, setting up and launching an ecommerce website is as simple as painless as creating a Wordpress or Blogger blog these days thanks to ecommerce platforms like Shopify.

What You Need to Start Your Own Ecommerce Website

There are some initial things that you should be bringing to the table if you plan to start your own ecommerce website, before you start configuring your store or even deciding what sort of products you are going to sell.

You should ask yourself if you have or are willing to cultivate the items on the list below to give yourself the best chance possible of having success at selling online. Here are a few things to consider if you are thinking of getting into the business.

- Are you able to devote the time involved into making your store successful? That may include several hours per week that you spend setting up your ecommerce website while still having to work a full-time job or assume your regular responsibilities. Even if you are able to be successful and work your store full-time you will have to spend time each week on order fulfillment, shipping, updating your store, communicating with customers and following the industry of products that you are selling.
- Do you have the ability to invest in your store while still meeting your financial responsibilities and possibly compromising the lifestyle that you are used to in order to have money to spend on setting up your store? Even if you take out a

loan to start your store you are still assuming financial risk and you need to make sure that you are prepared financially.

- Can you work on your store for a year or more without seeing any sort of profit? The Small Business Administration estimates that the average small business won't see a profit until the second or third year in business.
- Will you be able to keep yourself motivated even if you feel as if you aren't having any success at running your store? You may end up having to work for a long period of time before you see any sort of success and most people would give up before they reached the point where things turned around for them. Are you able to make yourself accomplish the work that needs to be done daily, as well as live your regular life, including working at another job, all with what seems like to reward at any time in the near future.
- Are you prepared to accept potential defeat? You might put in the work, live simply or take out a loan to have money to invest in your business, purchase a great deal of inventory and do countless other things to make your website a success only to realize that it is never going to work the way that you have it currently set up. The competition is fierce and it not only takes skill and perseverance to run a successful e-store, it also takes luck. It is possible that you'll never be able to get your business off of the ground and you have to be willing to take that risk.

Why You Should Start an Ecommerce Website

Even though it might sound like starting an ecommerce website is best left to people with a great deal of time on their hands and plenty of money to invest, there are some great reasons to take on the challenge. Yes, it is a difficult job, but there are also benefits that make up for the difficulty of the process. Here are some of the more positive aspects and results of starting your own ecommerce store.

- You get to be your own boss. That means that you have no one telling you what to do, and that any successes (or failures) are yours and yours alone. Many people dream of being their own boss and dislike their current job or supervisor, but few

actually get the opportunity to do so. You'll definitely be accomplishing something that lots of people dream about.

- You can work from home. That's right; you don't have to go into the office. You don't have to leave your house at all. You can skip the shower if you want. You can work barefoot, in your underwear or however else you choose (with the shades down of course). Besides the comfort factor, you also have the ability to work whatever hours you choose and take time off whenever you want. If you decide you want to work for ten days and then take five off, no one will stop you. Of course, if you are shipping merchandise yourself, you might be limited by the needs of your customers but you'll still have a great deal of freedom.
- You have the potential to make an unlimited amount of money. You know that in your regular job, no matter how hard you work, the most that you can look forward to is a series of raises. Even if you had the best luck in the world and worked harder than anyone else, you aren't going to get rich from your paychecks. But with an e-store, the harder you work and the luckier you get, the more money you'll make. Becoming a millionaire is within the realm of possibility when you are business for yourself.
- You'll be prepared for the future. The fact is: brick-and-mortar stores are on their way out. If the technology is created to ship something and have it arrive at the customer's home or business within hours, such as with Amazon's drone shipping program or through the use of 3-D printers, brick-and-mortar stores will have no advantages and many disadvantages. Right now, the only thing they have going for them is that you get the item when you buy it. In the future, it is likely that any benefits to shopping in person will be outweighed by the benefits of online shopping and you will be right there, already prepared to fulfill the online shopping in your niche.
- You get numerous advantages over starting a retail store. There are many advantages that ecommerce has over the brick-and-mortar retail store for business owners, perhaps even more benefits than for customers. For example: you get to stay open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Can you imagine how much

it would cost to run a physical retail store 24 hours? Also, you don't have to pay rent, you don't have to pay utilities and start-up costs are massively reduced.

Why You Should Start a Shopify Store

While there are some enormous benefits to starting an ecommerce website, there may be even more benefits to doing it with the Shopify platform. In fact, many of the risks and the potential problems mentioned in this introduction that come with having your own e-store are minimized or eliminated thanks to the Shopify platform. Whether or not you start an ecommerce business is up to you, but if you decide you are going to, you definitely need to do it using the Shopify platform. Here are just a few reasons.

1. Your store design costs normally would be thousands of dollars, for getting a website designer that not only has the skills to create a great looking website, but also to program all of the ecommerce functions you need including security. But with Shopify, there is no huge investment of thousands of dollars. You just pay one of four tiers of pricing and you get the perfect ecommerce website.
2. You get the benefit of the entire Shopify team. You aren't just getting a website template with Shopify, you are getting a ready-made store that has already had all of the bugs worked out and has been re-designed and re-worked so that it functions perfectly and has just about every feature that you could possibly want.
3. The platform is so intuitive that you can start building your store right after logging in. You might have to look at the help pages to use some of the more advanced features but for adding products and customizing design as well as other basics, you can start doing it right away with almost no learning curve.
4. You have some incredible security. By law, an ecommerce website has to take certain steps to protect a customer's financial information, but you don't just get sufficient security with Shopify, you get some of the most highly rated security features of any ecommerce platform on the market today. You don't have to worry about programming security protocols or making sure that your site is protected on all sides from thieves who want your customer's credit card numbers. Shopify does all the work for you.

5. Shopify is designed to help you reach your SEO potential. If you were to pay a designer for a custom ecommerce site you would spend thousands of dollars or perhaps even tens of thousands of dollars and you wouldn't get the features that you get with Shopify. One of those features is their search engine optimization. With Shopify, your e-store has the best chance possible to rank high in the search engines and bring you lots of organic traffic.
6. You get analytics that tell you exactly what is going on. With Shopify, you can see exactly where your customers are coming from, what keywords they are using to reach your site and where they go once they get there, not to mention how long they stay. All of this information has one primary purpose – to allow you to tweak your Shopify site and your marketing and promotion efforts to get as many people coming to your site as possible and then getting them to stay there once they arrive. You still have to offer great products, but Shopify helps you market your site much more effectively and gets customers to show up, which is half the battle when it comes to ecommerce.
7. Your site is already optimized for mobile and will continue to be optimized in the future. With Shopify, you get a responsive website that will work with any mobile device and as this quickly becomes the primary way that people shop, your ecommerce website is only going to get better, as the engineers behind the platform ensure that you always keep up with the technology.
8. You get hosting with your site. Shopify has an advantage that many ecommerce platforms do not share – your site is hosted by them, and your payment gateway and other shopping cart features are already taken care of. Not only does this save you money since you don't have to pay for hosting, you also will always have enough bandwidth to support your traffic and of course, you get security with the hosting that is unrivaled.
9. Shopify is extremely reliable. Shopify didn't get to their spot as the number one ecommerce platform by accident. They are so popular and so widely used because of how reliable the platform is. When your store begins to get more traffic, you

will lose money for every second or minute that your site id own. Using Shopify minimizes the chances of this as much as possible.

10. Shopify has numerous apps created for your use. The Shopify app store has some talented designers creating programs that you can use to make your ecommerce store even better. You can customize the appearance of your site and do a great deal with Shopify but with the app store you can create an unstoppable force in the world of ecommerce.

What this Book is about

This book is intended to explain everything that you need to know about the Shopify platform, including why to use it, how to use it and what sort of products and services the platform is appropriate for. The main purpose of the book is to take you through the process of deciding whether or not to use the program, then a step-by-step guide to choosing your products and setting up your Shopify store. There are three sections to this eBook:

Part One: Introduction to Ecommerce

This section is an introduction to the world of ecommerce in general and includes information on how to decide what products to fill your store with, how to evaluate the competition that your store is likely to face, how to differentiate between the different products that are out there, how to identify your ideal consumer and how to become unique and an indispensable ecommerce website that is known for having expertise in a specific niche.

You will understand the various aspects of the ecommerce industry including how to position yourself as an expert in your field and understand laws and regulations that pertain to you.

Part Two: Setting up Shopify

The second part of this book is all about the Shopify platform. This section of the eBook will show you exactly how to set up your Shopify site, including choosing a Shopify package that will work best for you, creating and customizing your Shopify store.

These chapters will teach you everything that you need to know about setting up payment gateways, calculating sales tax and saving for income tax, offering shipping options and how to launch your ecommerce website most effectively.

Part Three: Making Your Shopify Store a Success

The final part of this eBook will deal with the extras that you can add on to your Shopify site as well as ways that you can market your website without spending money doing so. You'll learn how to optimize your site for search engines, how to use social media to market your site and still retain your followers as well as taking advantage of time-sensitive factors like trends when they happen so that you can make as much money as

possible and allow your ecommerce website to reach its full potential. From extra features to social media, this section is all about making your ecommerce site as good as it can possibly be.

Part One: Introduction to Ecommerce

Chapter 1:

Choosing the right products for your e-com store

When it comes to selling online, particularly with a platform like Shopify, you want to choose products that work well with the platform, as well as products that work well for your particular store. Luckily, you can sell just about anything using Shopify and you'll see that people have created stores with almost every product imaginable. But what about choosing products that are right for you?

That's a little more complicated and you're going to have to ask yourself some thoughtful questions to figure out what it is that you want to sell in your Shopify store.

Choosing Your Products: Go With What You Know

The first thing that you should understand is that while you don't need to be an expert on whatever products or services that you are selling, you at least need to be familiar enough with them to be able to answer a customer's questions or to know where to go to find the answers when you don't know it yourself.

So, the best place to start is to decide what you are passionate about. If you are an avid action figure collector perhaps toys is your particular niche. If you are into sewing and knitting, then those particular hobbies might be where your production selection should come from.

Identify a Problem & Solve it

Second, we want to identify a need. Everyone has problems that they want solved by a product. When they find that product, they are willing to fork over cash for it. A good example is the weight loss industry. Experts have been saying for decades now that there

is no “magic pill” for weight loss. In fact, there is nothing except hard work that promotes weight loss – less calories in and more calories burned. But still, there are thousands of “magic pill” weight loss products on the market, cluttering up the television late at night and advertised in every magazine and newspaper in the country.

Obviously, those people are still in business because people are willing to pay for what they want, and what they want is a magic weight loss solution that will allow them to skip the dieting and exercise. Unfortunately, those products don’t work. Hopefully, you will find a need or a problem that begs to be solved and actually provide a product that will solve that problem. If you do, you’ll be ahead of more than three-quarters of the ecommerce entrepreneurs out there, because many people don’t consider what problems need to be solved when they start to sell, nor do they ensure that they have chosen a product that will solve that problem effectively. Many new sellers simply jump in with both feet.

Think About it From a Consumer Standpoint

Have you ever purchased something? Of course you have. In fact, it is certain that you have purchased many things during your lifetime. You have been a consumer, and so you have the ability to look at your products and your store from a consumer point-of-view. Imagine that you were trying to solve the problem from the last section yourself. What kind of things would you be looking for? Would you be looking for a real, physical product or would a service help you better? What kind of features would you want that product to have? What other things would you be willing to buy as accessories to that product or service?

These questions are how you look at your product from a consumer point -of-view. It is easy to get lost in the business owner point-of-view, where you think that if you build your store, they will come, even if you aren’t sure who “they” are or what they are looking for. You can not only solve your customer’s problems much more effectively when you are able to see things from their perspective, you are also able to cash in on extras, like the aforementioned accessories. When you think you have the products that you want to sell, spend some time carefully considering them as a customer before you commit to putting them into your store.

Your Brand as a Marketing Tool

Okay, so you might not have a brand built up yet, but it is important to evaluate whether or not you are going to be able to make your brand have staying power in the niche that you have decided upon. This is an almost impossible decision to make until you know more about how your business is going to go. Your brand could be the best way that you could have possibly marketed yourself or it could lead to your downfall if you don't change it. But as mentioned, it is impossible to predict. As an example, a successful attorney was unfortunately enough to have the last name "Crooks." When he went live with an ad campaign that was branded "Trust Crooks" everyone thought it would backfire, but in fact, it turned out to be successful for him.

Even if you can't predict exactly how your brand and marketing is going to fare when it actually gets in front of consumers, there are a few things that you can do to ensure that you have the best chance possible to make it a success. Here are some things to keep in mind when building your store brand.

1. **The Logo:** You don't want to go with a logo that someone from Fiverr made for you, or even one of those "Make-it-yourself" logo services. You definitely don't want to design it yourself until you actually are a graphic designer. Instead, spend some money and get a real, professional logo created. If you can't afford the outlay, try to make a trade with a graphic designer.
3. **Something Completely Unique:** Brands that become successful do so because they offer something that no one else offers and then they market the heck out of that feature. For example: Tom's Shoes is a for-profit shoe company that sells their canvas kicks for probably more than you think they're worth, but they donate a pair of shoes to a child in need in a third-world country with every purchase, so people buy from them in droves. Remember the old Domino's Pizza ads? "Thirty minutes or it's free!" They've had to stop guaranteeing that particular time frame since driver's were getting into car accidents, but the principle stands.

4. **Being Consistent:** This is a biggie. Think about readers and successful authors. The readers that flock to those authors in droves do so because the writer delivers one great story after another, consistently. In fact, what readers want when they finish a great book by an author is another book just like it. It can work the same for your business. If you solve a problem for them in a particular niche and provide a quality product, they will expect you to be able to solve a similar problem in the future and with the same level of quality as the first.

So, choosing products is more than just selling something you like. You want products that you know a lot about, enjoy working with and can build a brand around. Do that and your Shopify site will be successful.

Chapter 2:

Evaluating your market size and potential

Once you have decided what kind of products you are going to sell, you next need to determine how big the market is for those products. There are a number of mistakes that some new entrepreneurs make when setting up their store for the first time. We'll go over a few of those in a moment. If you can avoid the mistakes, then you have a much better chance of being successful. Determining market size definitely is one of the most important things that you can do before setting up your store, but do keep in mind that even if you determine that the market is too small for the product that you have chosen, you might still be able to sell it.

That's one of the first mistakes that people make when they are determining their market size. They stubbornly stick to one product because it is their passion and that's why they got into the business in the first place. There's nothing wrong with that, except that if you want to be successful, you are going to have to do more than sell a product that almost no one wants. So, how do you appeal to a wider customer base while still selling something that you are familiar with or knowledgeable about. There are actually two ways that this can be accomplished.

Method One: Expand Your Product Line

So, you want to sell bandanas or 'do rags that feature horses. This is a great product – for someone who wants to wear a bandana that features horses. But there aren't many people looking for that particular product. In fact, you might be hard-pressed to sell a single bandanna. But there is definitely a market for 'do rags and bandannas. The problem is, there is too much competition in this wider market, which is why you went with the niche – that and your unparalleled expertise on horse prints and patterns of course. But what if you decided to sell bandannas that featured all kinds of animal, pop

culture and photo print designs. You suddenly have opened yourself up to a huge market of bandanna and 'do rag wearing customers.

Method Two: Learn Something New

Okay, so maybe your niche product only appeals to a very specific niche and there isn't anything you can do to expand it. You don't want to stick with that niche on a potentially huge ecommerce site like your Shopify site. Instead, you want to learn something new. Simply move on to a new niche and if you don't know anything about it, then you can learn before you open your store. Of course, you can always find something that is related to your original niche idea so that you can at least incorporate the products that you had in mind at some later date when you have already established a name for yourself with the new niche.

Don't be Afraid to Choose a Large Market

Another mistake that budding entrepreneurs make when they are first setting up their store is to balk at competing in a large market. If you are looking at your market and feeling fearful that you will get lost in the shuffle, take heart. There are actually several things that you can do to distinguish yourself in a large market to make sure that you can compete with the big guys. We'll go over those strategies in a later chapter.

How to Determine the Size of a Market

So, how do you determine the size of a market for a product that you are considering selling? The first step is to check out the market research that has already been done for you. There is no reason not to take advantage of information that is provided by the government, not-for-profit organizations or even companies that have released the information. To determine the size of the market you'll research your industry with the Small Business Administration or through FedStats.gov. There are also organizations devoted to each industry that will have more accurate numbers. Checking out these numbers is the first step in determining market size, but not the last one, because you are likely competing in a niche market within that consumer segment.

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