

**Click**Intelligence

# ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SELLING PRODUCTS ONLINE



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# INTRODUCTION

The internet has grown to become a much more significant part of lives, and so every business has considered, at some point, the same question, “should I go online?” As a result, there is a growing trend of businesses moving to online sales to build their businesses. However, for businesses that have up until this point only sold their products from their physical stores, the transition to online selling can feel overwhelming. Plus, with so much competition, many business owners question, is it worth it?

Accounting for approximately 19% of eCommerce sales in the UK at a staggering £99.31 billion (up from just over £76.04 billion in 2019), it's a booming area that is only expected to grow thanks to the global shift to online sales. These figures alone speak for themselves at what going online can do for you. So, with the decision out of the way, now the only thing left to do is to get your online store up and running.

Building a business is a mix of getting the right audience for the right products and marketing the products really well. Each aspect is just as important as the other, and we're going to take a look at how you can turn your eCommerce dream into a reality.

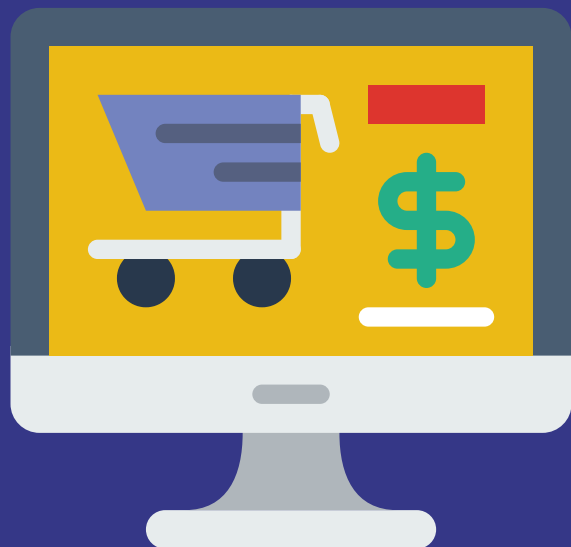
# WHAT TO SELL ONLINE?

Picking what to sell is either the most difficult task or the easiest. Either you already know exactly what you want to sell, or you just know you want to sell online in general. Both reasons are very different to begin your eCommerce journey, but both are valid.

## **I have an idea of what to sell online**

If you already have a business, maybe a shop that needs to move online to protect sales in this uncertain climate, or maybe you're a crafter or maker of things, then knowing what to sell will be easy for you.

Your next steps are to decide where to sell and on what platform and really build up your digital marketing side to ensure that your customers are buying the products from your website or chosen platform.



Search....



## **I Need Help Finding Products**

Not sure what you want to sell, but you know you want to sell online? You'll need to find a product or products that you believe in and want to sell.

While this seems obvious, it's actually much harder to sell products you don't believe in, and you will quickly become disillusioned with it and maybe even bored.

A quick word on the side here, if you don't know what you want to sell yet, it might be worth skipping to our 'where to sell' section, as each platform has its own specific quirks and audience. If you're building up your own website on your own domain (for example, using Shopify), then this may not be much of a consideration, but if you want to sell on Etsy, for example, you may want to stick to the more folk craft and homemade style rather than mass-produced or more tech-related products like external hard drives for example.

These audience niches aren't set in stone. There's no reason why you can't sell customised external hard drives and USB drives on Etsy, and there's no reason why you can't sell your own homemade Christmas decorations on your own domain or Amazon, but it is a consideration to think about when you're looking for products to sell.



## **What Products Will Be Popular?**

When picking a product or a range of products to sell, you must consider what products are or will be popular. This is a difficult thing to pitch right, and you might want to consider a range of products that can change over time and move with your audience.

A great example of this is novelty products that are popular right now. Think of popular fads such as loom bands, fidget spinners, slime, and – if you're old enough to remember – POGs and Pokemon cards.

All of these were popular in their day and had their five minutes of fame, but what may have been a great seller at the time is probably not selling as well now.

If we take the above example, they were all kids' toys and fashion fads. Having a shop or storefront that specialises in kids' fads may be a great way to move forward, but having a storefront or shop that just sells whatever is popular right now would probably not be a great long-term solution.

## **Go Niche or Go Big?**

When choosing a product or range of products to sell, will you go niche, or will you go big? Will your range of products be very specific, or will you cover a whole range of products that may not even be related?

Take hot tubs, for example. They are a very niche product; not everyone has space in their garden for a hot tub. This leads to them having quite a select audience. Sure, you can sell specific types of hot tubs such as inflatable ones or fixed ones, and you can sell all kinds of products to go with them, such as cleaners, filters, even decorations, but they're still a niche product with a relatively narrow audience.

If you were to expand on hot tubs, though, you might look into selling garden pool products, even generalised garden water products (such as pond products and water features). Going bigger, you could expand to general garden products such as garden furniture and decorations, even moving into the grow your own and horticultural side.

It's important to think about how your shopfront or store will grow over time. Will you keep it to just hot tubs and their related products? Or will you expand out eventually to cover all kinds of garden and gardening products?



If you think you're likely to just stick to one niche, you may want to reflect this in your brand name, your shop name, and your domain name. If you think you may expand in the future, keep your shop and brand a bit more generic. Be Dave's Gardens rather than Dave's Hot Tubs!

Of course, there are no rules to say you have to even mention what you sell or your niche in your brand name or shop name, you could go with something completely unrelated and build a brand around it, and there's nothing wrong with that at all.





# HOW TO SELL ONLINE

Now that you've decided what you want to sell, it's time to look at how you're going to sell it. Who will you be selling it to, and on what platform?

## **Which Is The Best Ecommerce Platform For Me?**

Choosing a platform is huge when you're looking into selling online, as each platform has its own quirks and own audience. Some platforms are more situated to some products than others, so it's important to really do your research first.

Buying online has gone through some major changes over the last few years, but one of the most consistent worries for buyers is security. Many buyers don't like buying from a shop that has no familiarity, and they will definitely not like buying from a shop without a security certificate and a secure payment method.

Payment options are varied, and it will depend on the platform you choose. If you go with Amazon, for example, they use their own payment system, which is trusted by millions of users every day. Other platforms such as eBay and Etsy have a few different options, but usually, these boil down to either paying by card using Visa, MasterCard, or American Express, or by using PayPal.

PayPal is by far one of the most recognisable and trusted payment methods on the web and, although the fees can be quite high for an independent seller, buyers are more confident when buying through PayPal than any other payment method.

## **Choosing an eCommerce Platform**

Here is a rundown of each of the big seller platforms available to most eCommerce sellers, how to set them up, how much they cost, and the type of audience you can expect to attract through the platform.

As a side note before we dive into it, you don't have to limit yourself to only one of these platforms. There's no reason why you can't have your own store with Shopify and also sell on eBay, for example. The more platforms you have, the more confusing it may get, but the more chance you have of expanding your audience.



# SELLING ON SHOPIFY

When Shopify first hit the scene in 2006, as a set of resources for shop owners to build their own websites, the playing field was suddenly levelled for small business owners and smaller sellers to really begin to build their brand.

Fast Forward to 2020, and there are now over 800,000 Shopify stores worldwide, and they collectively bring in over £75 billion in sales.

Shopify is a great option for the tech fan and for the technophobe among you because you can customise it to match your needs accordingly.

Don't have a love for tech? Use Shopify's easy to use tools to create your theme and add your products using a simple step by step wizard, and if you are a tech fan, then you can dive deeper into the ins and outs and even add Shopify as a plugin to another web-based CMS like WordPress.



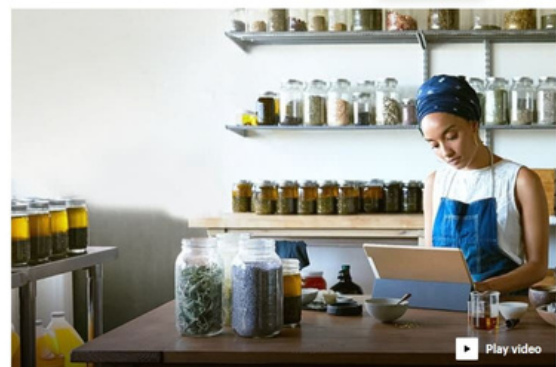
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**Anyone, anywhere, can  
start a business**

[Start free trial](#)

Try Shopify free for 14 days, no credit card required. By entering your email, you agree to receive marketing emails from Shopify.



[Play video](#)

# GETTING STARTED WITH SHOPIFY

**Costs** - Shopify's pricing structure can seem a bit complicated at first, especially because it is so varied. The prices range from \$9 (around £7) a month for merchants who just want to sell on Facebook (called Shopify Lite), right up to \$2,000 (£1500) a month for merchants who want a fully customisable and scalable platform (Shopify Plus). The usual pricing tiers are from \$9 (£7) per month to \$299 (£223) per month with discounts if you decide to purchase a one-year or two-year plan.

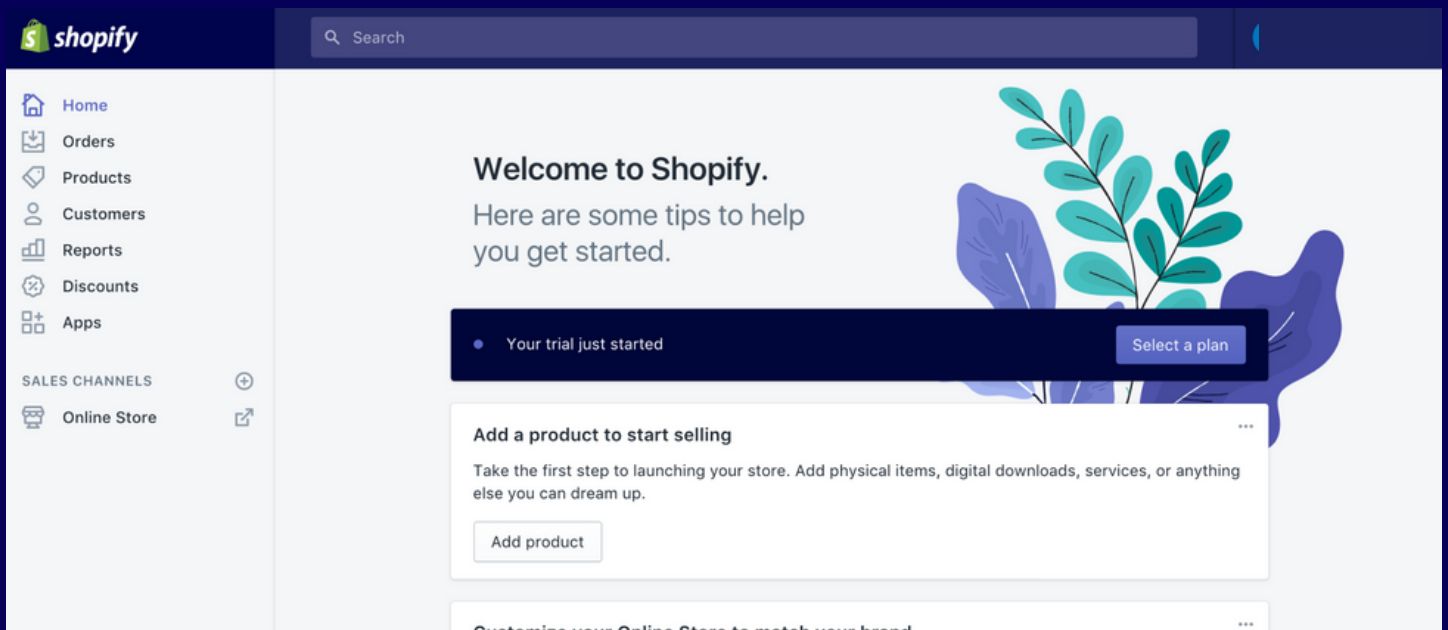
**What you can sell** - You can sell practically anything on Shopify, but it's worth tailoring your products to your brand and your niche. As with all online selling platforms, there are some prohibited items such as firearms, alcohol, tobacco products, CBD products, etc.

**Requirements** - You don't need anything to get started except products to sell and an account to get paid into. Shopify is an all-in-one platform, and it will handle your hosting as well as your domain, website, look, brand, etc. You may want to have your own website on another CMS service, like WordPress, for example, and this will mean setting up the domain side yourself and using Shopify as a plugin.



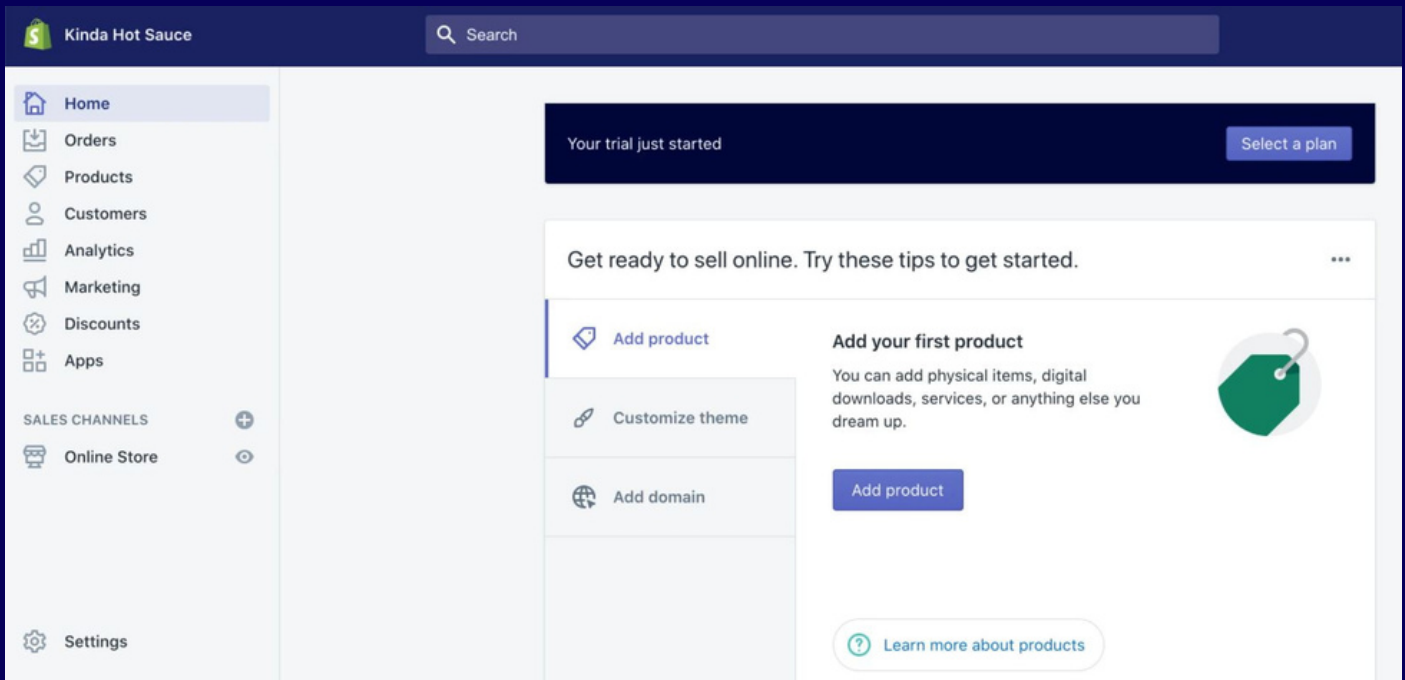
## Shopify SEO

Shopify SEO works a bit differently to the likes of Amazon and eBay because you are not using someone else's platform per se. Instead, you're on the Shopify platform, but you own the branding, the look, and feel. Therefore, you will need to really work on your search engine optimisation to ensure that your business is found. This type of SEO can be quite technical, and it's always worth speaking with an expert who will be able to advise you on how to improve your SEO rankings, build backlinks, and drive more traffic to your website.



# HOW TO SET UP SHOPIFY

Setting up Shopify is really simple, and the setup wizard will take you through the process easily. Essentially you'll need to sign up and create an account, provide Shopify with your bank details and add your products to get started.



## Step 1: Sign up and create an account

To create your Shopify account, fill in your email address, store name, and come up with a password before clicking on **“Create your store”**.

This will sign you up for a 14-day trial.

To finish your store creation process, answer some quick questions with information about your business.

## **Step 2: Create your store**

To start building your store, you will need to add product listings.

Choose one of your products you want to sell, add your images, and make sure to include your keywords in your product title and description.

Don't forget to add the price, as well as the shipping options or requirements for that product, such as weight.

## **Step 3: Add pages**

Next, you will want to start creating an **About Us**, **Contact Us**, and a **Policies Page** as this builds trust.

Click on **Online Store > Pages** and choose the appropriate template for the page you want to create.

## **Step 4: Customising**

Head to the **Online Store** section and select **Themes**.

You can change the colours, fonts, what the checkout looks like, and decide what displays on the screen in this step.

## Step 5: Shipping

You then need to set up your shipping.

Click on the **Setting** tab and click on **Shippings**. You can create shipping zones, real-time shopping, and set standard rates for shipments to other countries here by clicking **Add Rate**.

## Step 6: Don't forget about your taxes

If your tax has been miscalculated, go to the **settings** tab, click on **Taxes**, and override the default rates.

## Step 7: Choose your payment gateways

You then need to select your payment options. To do this, head to **Settings**, and click on **General**.

## Step 8: Launch

Once you have done the above steps, you are theoretically ready to launch. Of course, you can go back and make any changes before you do so; you can even get a start on your marketing efforts.

If you want to launch straight away, click on **Preferences** in the online store and disable the password protection.

For a more in-depth look into setting up your Shopify account, take a look at our guide [here](#).



# SELLING ON AMAZON

Why build your own website and have all the hassle of setting up domains and security when you can just use something that millions of people already know and love and are happy to use every day for everything from books to groceries, tech to clothing. We're talking about Amazon, the world's biggest online store.

## Getting Started With Amazon

- **Costs** – Amazon has two plans, either an individual plan which costs you £0.75 per item (like a seller fee on eBay) or £25 per month for an unlimited number of items. Both of these prices may include extra fees and are not inclusive of VAT.

The screenshot shows the 'Sell on Amazon' landing page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Sell on Amazon' on the left and a 'Sign up' button on the right. The main heading is 'Become an Amazon seller'. Below this, a subtext states: 'More than half the units sold in our stores are from independent sellers.' There is another 'Sign up' button, with a note below it: '\$39.99 a month + selling fees'. To the right of the text is a large, tilted cardboard box with the Amazon logo (a curved arrow) on it. At the bottom, there are three white boxes with icons and text:

- Sell more**: Fresh new startups and Fortune 500s. B2B and B2C. Brand owners and resellers.
- Scale with FBA**: Leave the shipping, returns, and customer service to us with Fulfillment.
- Make money**: In 2019, nearly 225,000 Amazon sellers worldwide eclipsed \$100,000 in sales, up

- **What you can sell** – On Amazon, you can sell practically anything. This does include restricted items such as knives and alcohol. Firearms are not permitted for sale at all on Amazon, but some exceptions are made for non-firing guns such as replicas, toy guns, BB guns, and airsoft guns. These are subject to geographical restrictions.
- **Requirements** – You will need to purchase the product bar code for the products you're selling. In the UK, this is called an EAN, formally known as European Article Number.

## **Amazon SEO and Ads**

Using the right keywords and metadata for your products will help improve your SEO and drive customers to your products. This is good news for you and good news for your customers who want to find products easily and effortlessly when they search.

A note on the SEO side, Amazon has an affiliate program that many bloggers and article writers take advantage of. It may be worth looking into this to help your business grow.

Amazon ads are completely legitimate and legal, and buyers expect to see them. The ads show up for buyers as sponsored or promoted products, and they are usually put at the top of search results for individual products and at the bottom of search results for brands or shops.



**300 million active customers in more than 180 countries**



**195 million monthly unique visitors (in the U.S. alone)**



**\$1.5 billion reported sales by third-party businesses during Prime Day 2018**

## Growing Your Amazon Store

There are many ways to grow your store, from outreach marketing and influencer marketing to SEO techniques, affiliates, and seller coupons. Getting good reviews, seller feedback, and testimonials is another very solid way to grow your store and build trust with your audience.

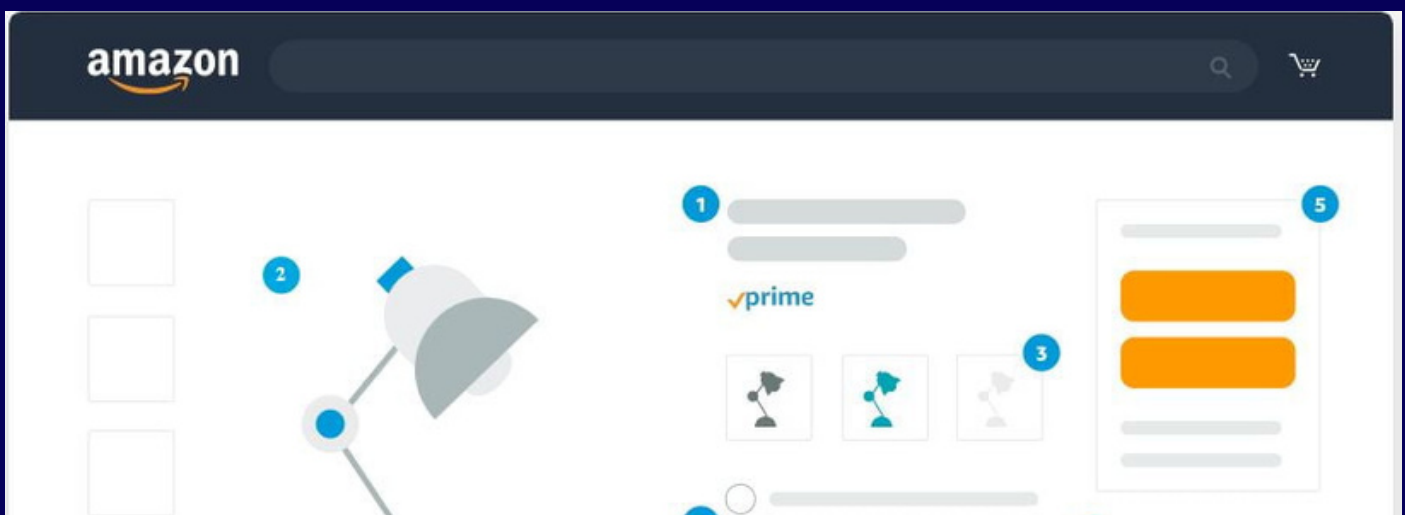


# HOW TO BECOME A SELLER ON AMAZON

To get started selling on Amazon, you'll need to sign up with an Amazon seller account with your personal details and bank details. When you upload your items, you can either use the barcode to find the details of the products (if they are already available elsewhere on Amazon) or manually enter the details if it is a bespoke product.

If you have selected to pay per item, you won't be charged until your item sells. When your item does sell, you'll get an email notification. You can either fulfil the posting yourself (you are responsible for postage, packaging, storage, etc.) or select **Fulfilled** by Amazon. If you are choosing Fulfilment By Amazon (FBA), you will be paying extra for storage, postage, and Amazon's customer service, but that does mean they take care of posting and speak with customers in their own language, so this isn't such a bad thing.

For more information on how to set up on Amazon, click [here](#).





**Did you know that, on average, shoppers perform 3,000 searches every second on eBay?**

That's a lot of searches and a lot of buyers too. eBay is a great place to have an online shop, and it's well trusted by millions of buyers every day, but the competition is stiff!

Due to eBay's massive growth, sellers can sell practically anything on eBay (with a few restrictions mentioned below), and shops are not limited to sticking within one genre either. You could quite easily have a shop that sells novelty t-shirts and astroturf at the same time, and it wouldn't hurt your sales.

Getting Started With eBay

- **Costs** – eBay's fees are a little more complicated than Amazon's fees, and they're not set in stone. For each item, you will be charged an insertion fee (this is the fee you pay to list your product) and a final value fee (a percentage of the sale, like a commission). To add complication to the matter, eBay also allows sellers to upgrade their listing, and each upgrade has its own price tag.



- **What you can sell** – eBay accepts listing for most products, at most price ranges. Everything from keyrings to cars can be sold on eBay. There are a few more restricted items than Amazon. For example, the sale of Animals and Wildlife products, vouchers, and even artefacts and antiques are subject to tight restrictions, and items such as firearms, offensive materials, and adults-only products are prohibited from sale. Find out the full, exhaustive list [here](#).
- **Requirements** – Becoming an eBay seller is very easy. Simply sign up as a seller and provide your card or bank account details, let eBay know how you wish to pay for your fees, and get started. It's that simple!

### **eBay SEO and Ads**

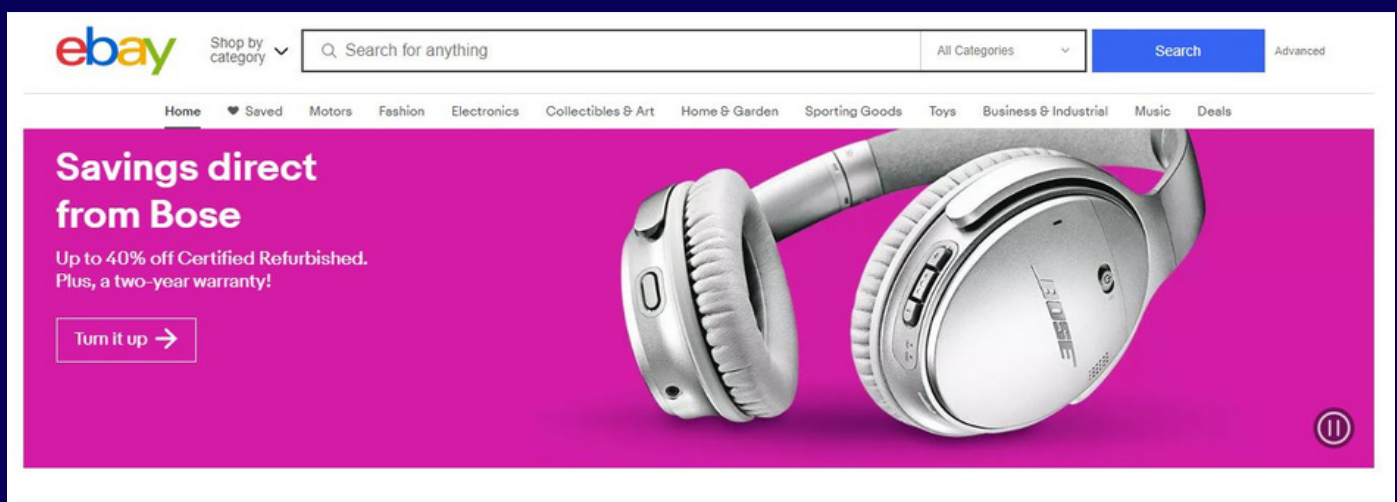
Just like Amazon, eBay has its own approach to SEO, using keywords and metadata for each product. In general, the more well filled in the product description, the better. Users may search for products located within their own country (great for drop shippers), and they may also search by price or condition.

A note on price; many sellers are 'hacking' appearing at the top of the search results by being in the '99p club'. The 99p Club is a term used to describe sellers who have items that usually cost a lot more than 99p, but they list a 'sample' of the product for 99p or something loosely related.

An example of this might be fake grass. A strip of fake grass may cost around £20, but some sellers will list one single lawn pin for 99p, getting them into the 99p club. They will usually use a photo of the grass itself and may even use the grass on the title, hoping to push their more expensive grass to buyers who find the listing.

Some 99p products are completely legitimate, but trying to manipulate the search results by offering a non-related product or 'samples' that no one will ever buy is actually against eBay's terms of service and may get your account suspended.

eBay does have ads and sponsored items section. This works in practically the same way as Amazon, with products given a prime position to catch the buyer's eye.



The screenshot shows the eBay homepage with a prominent sponsored advertisement for Bose headphones. The ad features a large image of silver Bose headphones on a magenta background. Text on the left of the ad reads: "Savings direct from Bose", "Up to 40% off Certified Refurbished.", "Plus, a two-year warranty!", and a button that says "Turn it up →". The eBay navigation bar at the top includes the logo, a search bar, and various category links. A small "Advanced" link is visible on the right side of the search bar.

ebay Shop by category

Search for anything

All Categories Search Advanced

Home Saved Motors Fashion Electronics Collectibles & Art Home & Garden Sporting Goods Toys Business & Industrial Music Deals

**Savings direct from Bose**

Up to 40% off Certified Refurbished.  
Plus, a two-year warranty!

Turn it up →

BOSE

# HOW TO BECOME A SELLER ON EBAY

If you've ever used eBay to buy anything (and who hasn't!?), then you will already have the ability to create a listing and begin selling straight away. This type of account is known as a private seller and is meant for one-off items, such as selling that old jacket you're never going to fit into again!

If you want to scale up and appear as a business listing, you'll need to sign up to eBay's business account. There are some monthly fees associated with this type of account, but you will have more tools at your disposal for setting up your eBay shop.

Find out more information at [eBay's Seller Centre](#).





# SELLING ON ETSY

Are you a maker of things? A crafter or designer? If so, Etsy could be the platform of your dreams! Etsy's whole business is about crafting and handmade items, so it's the perfect platform to find a hand-knitted scarf, a personalised Christmas decoration, and even vintage items.

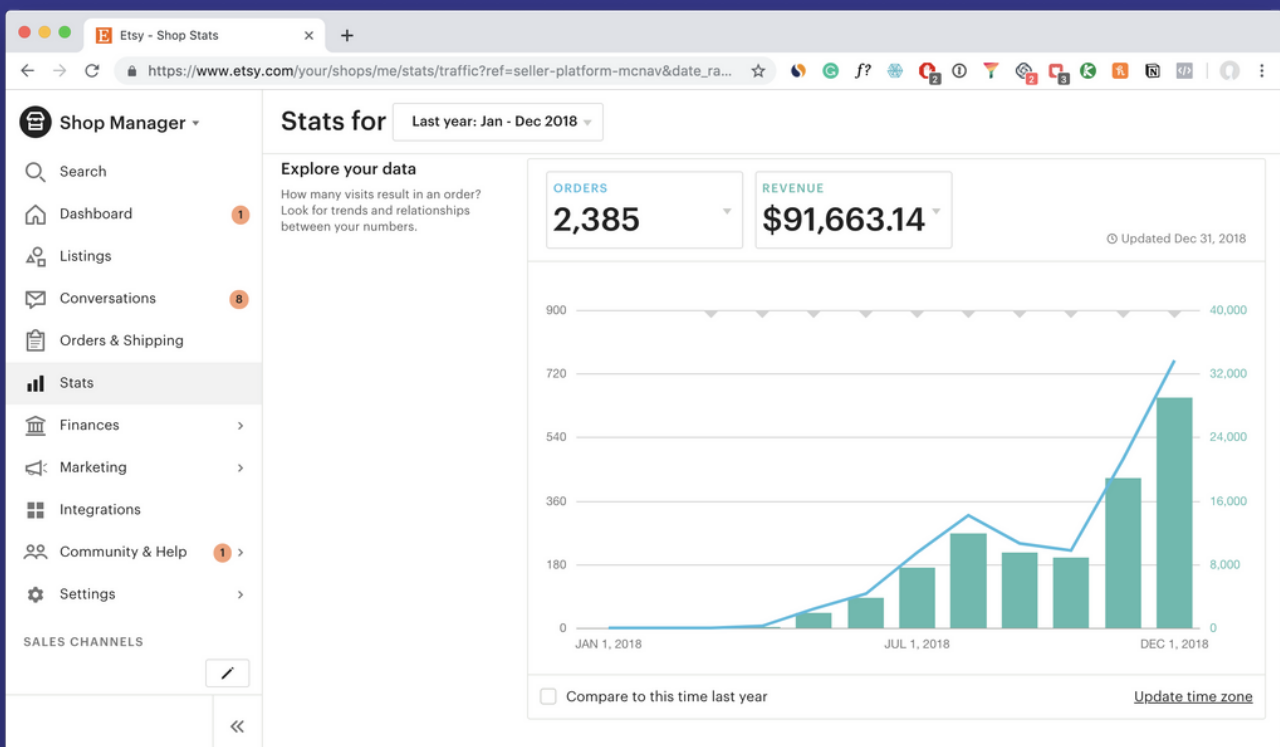
- **Costs** – You'll pay £0.15 per item as a listing fee and 5 % Transaction fee, 4% + £0.20 payment processing fee (like eBay's final value fee) per item. Etsy is a US company and bills in dollars. Sometimes the fees may vary due to currency changes.
- **What you can sell** – Etsy's platform is quite strict about what you can sell. Your products must fit into one of three categories: handmade goods, vintage items, or craft supplies. They have a list of prohibited items that can be found [here](#). This includes the usual prohibited items such as alcohol and items which promote violence.
- **Requirements** – You'll need to create a shop account to be able to list your products, but the steps are very straightforward.

## Etsy SEO and Ads

Etsy has worked really hard to improve its personalised results for users. This means that Etsy SEO is a little more tricky than it is on other platforms, but in some ways, that works much better for the seller as Etsy will be putting your items in front of sellers who are more likely to buy.

This means that if you are selling personalised stationery, you're more likely to be put in front of users who have a love of stationery, pens, pencils, paper, etc. than you would be someone searching for vintage car parts.

Of course, you'll still want to focus on getting the right keywords and descriptions for your products, taking beautiful pictures, and asking your buyers to provide good feedback, all of these things will help you to stand out as a good seller and help you to improve your rankings.

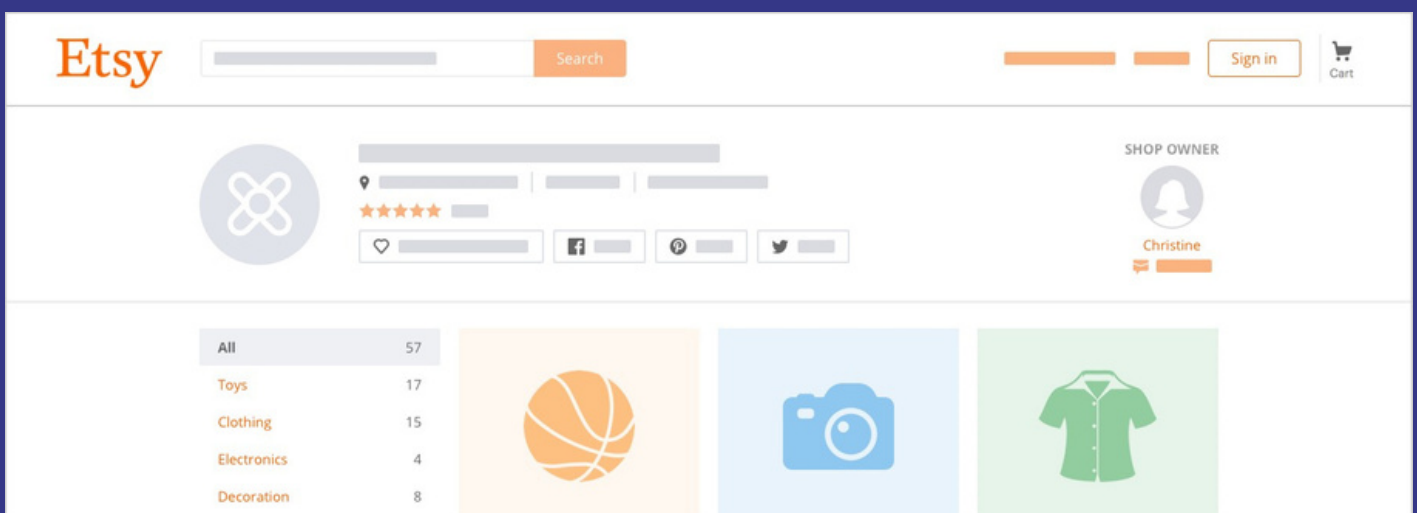


# HOW TO START SELLING ON ETSY

Setting up on Etsy is really simple! If you have an Etsy account already, simply go to your profile by hitting your profile picture in the top corner of your screen and finding “Sell on Etsy” to open your Etsy shop.

From there, you’ll have lots of options to create and customise your shop to get it exactly as you want it. There are no special requirements for selling on Etsy other than following the laws in your country for setting up as a small business.

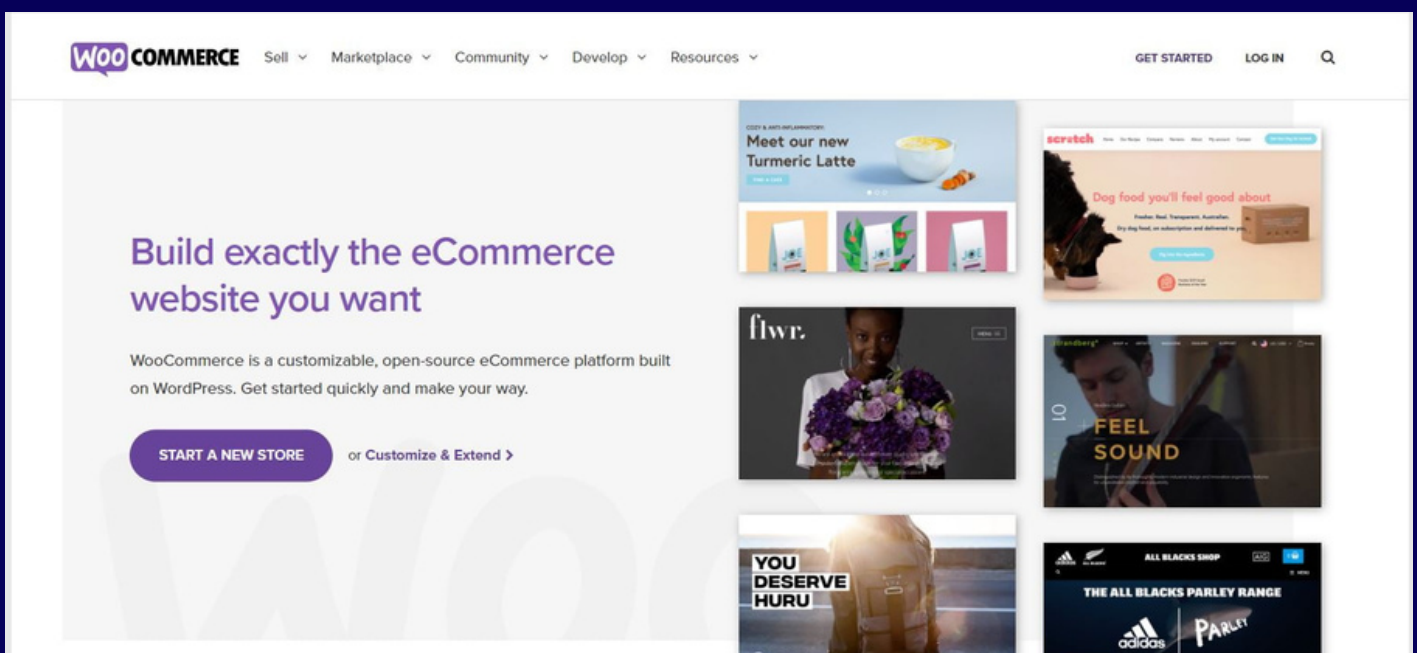
For full details on how to set up on Etsy, see their [beginner's guide](#).



# SELLING ON WOOCOMMERCE

Do you already have a WordPress website and want to stick with it? WooCommerce is an entire eCommerce platform designed to work with WordPress as a plugin service. It's not just one plugin either, WooCommerce also works with hundreds of other extensions, allowing you to expand your business at your own pace.

- **Costs** – Free! Kind of... WooCommerce itself is free, but in order to take advantage of WooCommerce, you will need to have your own domain, hosting, theme, and everything else needed for a website. Most of the extensions and plugins are premium too. Estimate to spend around £500 per year for your domain, hosting, theme, and sundries.



- **What you can sell** – Practically everything can be sold through WooCommerce, including both physical and digital products. The usual items like counterfeit goods and firearms are not allowed, and interestingly services like social media like farming and MLM (Multi Level Marketing) schemes are banned.
- **Requirements** – You'll need to have a WordPress website set up with your hosting etc., to begin.

### **WooCommerce SEO and Ads**

Due to the fact that WooCommerce is a plugin for WordPress websites, SEO and ads can be run the same as you would a 'normal' website. This actually gives you a lot of flexibility, especially if you want to explore the blogging side of SEO, which can really help to drive traffic to your site.



# HOW TO SET UP ON WOOCOMMERCE

Before you set up with WooCommerce, you'll need to get a domain and some web hosting of your choosing. You should find one that integrates with WooCommerce seamlessly.

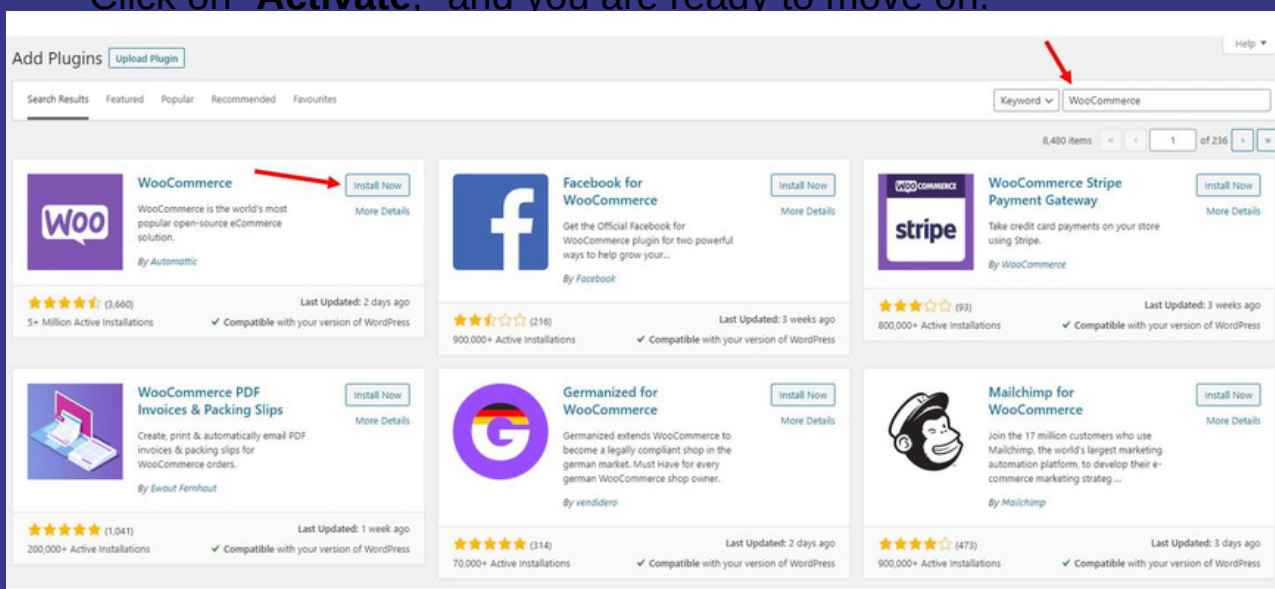
Once you have these two, you'll need to install WordPress on your website and set up your website as you would normally. Then you can jump right in and follow our step by step guide on setting up on WooCommerce.

## Step 1: Add the WooCommerce plugin

Go to the **Plugins menu** on your WordPress dashboard and click "**Add New**" to add the WooCommerce plugin.

Use the search feature to find the plugin. Once you have found it, click "**Install Now**".

Click on "**Activate.**" and you are ready to move on.



## Step 2: Fill in your Store Profiler with help from the Wizard

You can skip this step. However, it can improve your experience. The set-up Wizard will ask for details, including:

- Where your store is located
- If you are setting up the store for a client
- The industry you work in
- The type of products you want to sell
- About your business

You can also choose the theme for your store. There are both free and paid options. After you finish, you will be presented with a checklist. Again you can skip this if you prefer, but it will help you set up your store quickly.

## Step 3: Add your products

If you choose to continue with the set-up wizard, click on the **Add my products** in the checklist. If not, on the WooCommerce page, head to **Products** and click **Add Product**.

Enter a **product title** at the top and a **description** underneath.

Then, head to the **Product Data** panel. You will need to fill in the important information about your product, including the price, tax, weight, dimensions, shipping class, and attributes.

If the product is downloadable or virtual (e.g., services), tick this at the top, as you won't need to set up shipping for this.

#### **Step 4: Add your images**

Click on **Set Product Image** on the **Products page** and upload your image or select your image from your Media Library. You can also create a **Product Gallery** using this same method.

#### **Step 4: Set up Payments**

Go to **Settings** and click on **Payments**. Select a payment gateway, and click on **Set Up**. Each set-up will be slightly different.

#### **Step 5: Set up your taxes**

On **Settings**, click on **General**. Tick the box "**Enable Tax rates and calculations.**" Click **Save**. Then on the **Settings** tab, click on **Tax** to configure taxes to suit your needs.



## Step 6: Shipping

Go to **Settings** and click on **Shipping**. Add a **Shipping Zone** or select your existing shipping zone and click Edit. You can then choose flat rate or free shipping and click Add **Shipping Method**.

You can edit the title that will display to the customers or keep it as Free Shipping or Flat Rate.

The set-up for both types of shipping is different.

## Step 7: Create your pages

To add a new page, head to **Pages**, and then click **Add New** to add a homepage and contact us page, for example. You can edit these easily using the **Block Editor**.

With all this set-up, you will be ready to start selling. You can view your store through the Store Management widget.

WooCommerce provides some more detailed instructions [on their docs website](#), you'll also find more info about selecting a domain and installing WordPress too.

# SELLING ON BIGCOMMERCE

BigCommerce is an all in one and fully scalable platform. They handle your hosting and domain fees, and the entire platform is incredibly flexible. BigCommerce is suitable for the small business beginner and scalable to grow with your business with options to customise as much as your skill level or your plans include.

**Costs** – There are three levels of membership to BigCommerce: Standard (£25), Plus (£65), and Pro (£205). The three tiers are based on your turnover, and as such, you can upgrade when your business grows. Money can be saved if you opt for annual billing over monthly billing.

The screenshot shows the BigCommerce website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'ENTERPRISE' and 'ESSENTIALS' tabs, and links for 'Call Sales: 1-888-248-9325', 'Help Center', and 'Log In'. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with the BigCommerce logo and links for 'Solutions', 'Product', 'Customers', 'Partners', and 'Resources'. A blue 'REQUEST DEMO' button is positioned on the right. The main content area features a large heading 'ECOMMERCE FOR A NEW ERA' with a teal underline. Below the heading is the text 'Build a business that's ready for anything with the flexibility of Open SaaS.' and a black button with white text 'GET THE PRODUCT TOUR' followed by a teal arrow. To the right of the text is a graphic showing a smartphone displaying 'THE CLASSIC MARATHONER' watch, a close-up of the watch, and a man in a blue shirt with his arms crossed. At the bottom, there is a row of partner logos: 'BEN & JERRY'S', 'Skullcandy', 'WOOLRICH', 'bliss', and 'BURROW'.

- **What you can sell** – As with most online selling platforms, you can sell most things as long as they don't fall into the offensive or illegal categories, and that may change by country. For a full list of acceptable terms, [click here](#).
- **Requirements** – You don't need anything to get started. BigCommerce will take you through all of the necessary steps to get you up and running in no time.

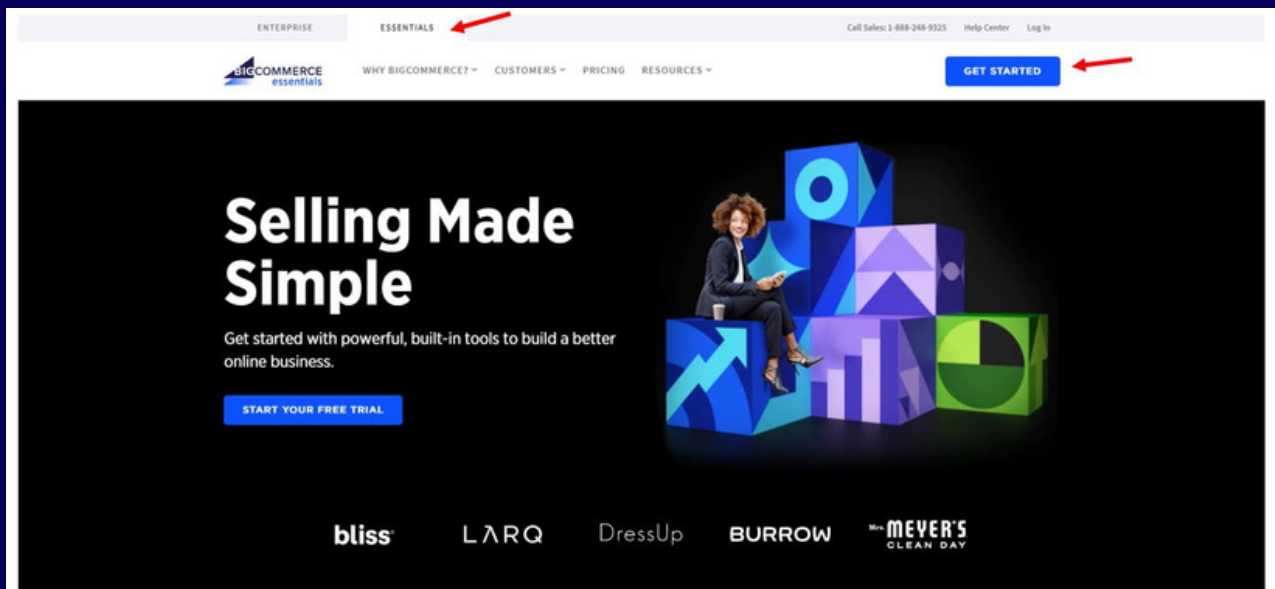
## **BigCommerce SEO and Ads**

BigCommerce is an all in one platform, meaning that you don't have as much control over the [on-page SEO](#) as you would on another platform like Shopify or WooCommerce. While the basic level does allow for some SEO options, the more useful things like product filtering and Google reviews are only available on the more expensive options.



# HOW TO SET UP BIGCOMMERCE

You don't need any special knowledge to get started with BigCommerce, and you don't need to have a domain already or hosting set up either. Our step by step guide will take you through the process.



## Step 1: Create your account

Head to BigCommerce.com to set up your 15-day free trial. Click on the button “**Start your 15-Day Free Trial**” or click on **Get Started**.

You will need to create a password and provide information about your business, including your store name.

## Step 2: Choose a theme

On your dashboard, head to the **Storefront** tab to change your theme. Click on **Theme Marketplace**. There are 12 free themes to choose from, but plenty of paid premium themes are on offer, allowing you to add sidebars or extra homepage elements. Click on **View Demo** to preview the theme with sample products.

When you are happy, click **Add Theme**.

## Step 3: Personalise your store

You can customise the store elements to match your brand, including the images, colours, payment buttons, typefaces and fonts, and checkout options. To do this, select your theme and head to your home dashboard.

Click on **Storefront > My Themes**.

Click the customise button to start editing your store's appearance.

At this stage, you should add your logo. On the **Storefront**, click on **Logo** and tick **Upload a custom image to use as your logo**. You can even customise your store navigation.

## Step 4: Create Your Product Categories

You should add product categories before your products. On your home dashboard, click on **Products**. BigCommerce will have already added some samples. If they are suitable for what you need, keep them. If not, delete them.

If you want to create a new product category, click “**Create a Category**“. You need to fill in at least:

- The name
- Category page URL
- Description of the category

The other fields are optional.

## Step 5: Add your products

Under the Products Menu, click **Add** to pull up the **Add Product** dashboard. You will need to fill in basic information about the product, images, pricing, and product descriptions – make sure to use keywords relevant **to** your product, then click **Save**.

## Step 6: Create your pages

Head to **Storefront** and select **Web Pages** to add pages such as a shipping and returns page and an about us page.

Click on **Create a Web Page**. Each page will vary slightly in the number of fields you have to fill in. Make sure to provide as much as possible.

## Step 7: Shipping

Under the **Store Setup**, select **Shipping**. Select your preferred shipping partner and then set up the services. BigCommerce automatically adds the United States as a default shipping zone. To add a new one, under **Checkout Shopping Options**, click **Add Shipping Zone**.

In the shipping settings, add your shipping quotes, such as free shipping or ship by weight.

## Step 8: Payment Gateways

Head to **Payments** in your navigation menu. If you don't want the default option, click "no thanks" and select your preferred gateway.

## Step 9: Preview your store

Before your launch, make sure to preview it first to make sure you are 100% happy. Click on **View Store** on your homepage.

## Step 10: Launch

When you are ready, make sure to select a price plan and then make your store live.

Visit [www.bigcommerce.co.uk/sell](https://www.bigcommerce.co.uk/sell) for more help.

# SELLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Another platform for selling that has gained a foothold in recent years is selling through social media.

There are a few different ways to leverage social media for sales, and mostly you'll still be driving customers to a specific landing page on your own website or through your shop on one of the above-mentioned platforms, but most social media platforms are now allowing you to integrate business tools allowing you to sell directly from the platform.

Facebook, for example, can integrate with a number of eCommerce platforms to allow you to host your products and sell them directly from the app. Facebook also integrates with some of the big recruitment software clients such as Oracle, giving you the option to really expand your business too.



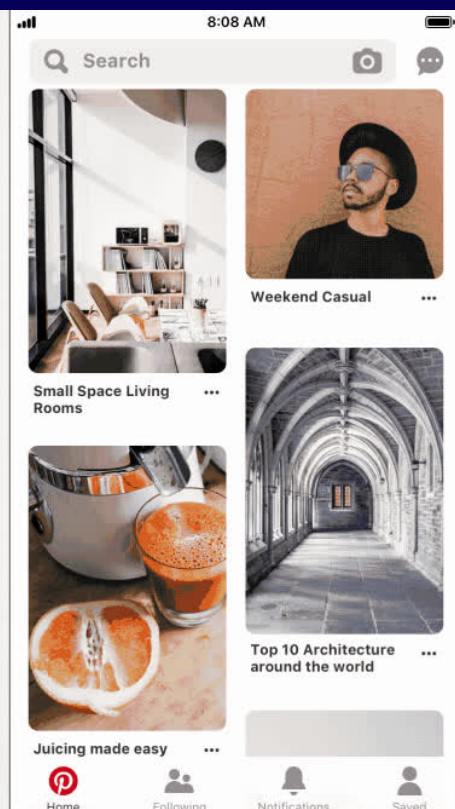


# HOW TO SELL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Let's take a deep dive into how to use each platform for selling your products. There are many different ways to get your products in front of customers and make those conversions. We're going to cover the most popular options and some that you may not have thought about.

## SELLING ON PINTEREST

Pinterest is a great platform for selling, as users are almost primed, looking for products. Pinterest is less of a social media platform and more of a visual search platform, and users who are searching are users who are ready to buy!



It's worth noting that, although Pinterest is a great platform for selling, its user base is overwhelmingly women and very leaned towards the food, craft, and DIY side of products. That's not to say your non-craft or non-DIY products won't sell, but it's worth bearing in mind.

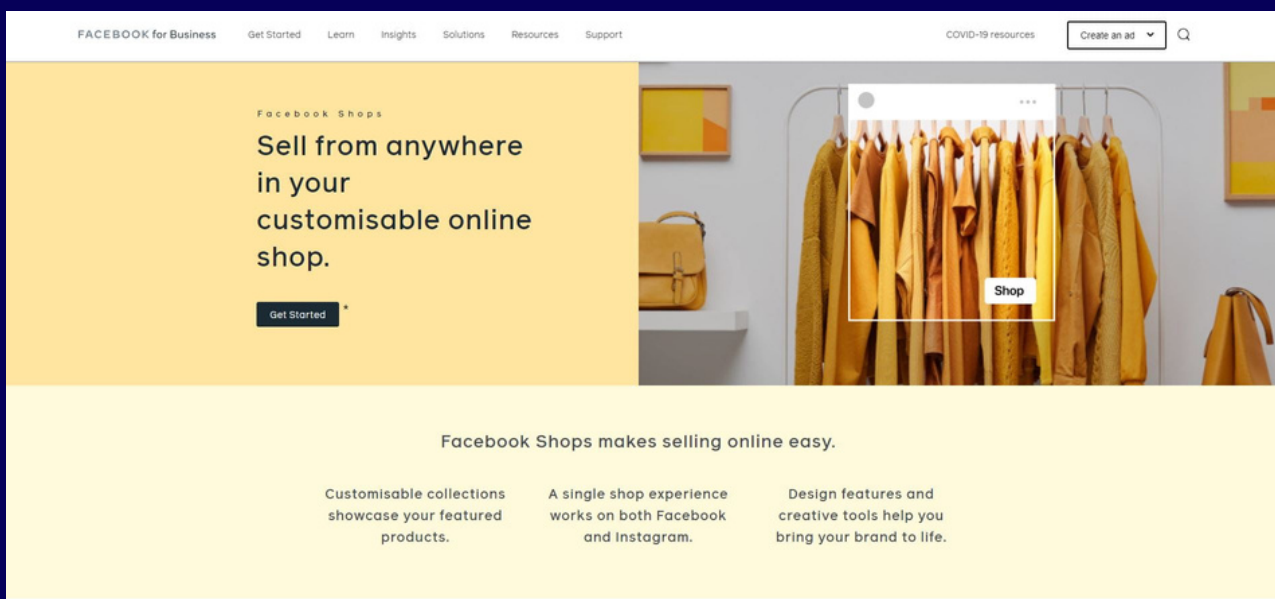
To get started selling on Pinterest, you'll need to create a business account. This will allow you to run ads and have sponsored and promoted pins on the platform. When you populate your boards with pins, you'll need to link them back to your eCommerce website, whether that be your Amazon shop or your Shopify site.

# SELLING ON FACEBOOK

There are, broadly, two ways to sell on Facebook: use your page and ads to drive sales to your eCommerce site, or use Facebook's marketplace to sell your products.

Using the marketplace can be a good way to sell, and there are options to boost your listings with sponsored content, but most users are looking to the marketplace for second-hand things, not brand new products. This doesn't mean you can't sell your products there, but you might find it more difficult if your products aren't in the DIY/Second hand/Upcycled/Craft sphere.

An alternative to the marketplace is to integrate Facebook with your selling platform like Shopify. This means you can use messenger to communicate with your buyers, run ads on Facebook that link directly back to your shop, and tag your products when creating posts. This is a great way to use Facebook for selling.



# SELLING ON INSTAGRAM

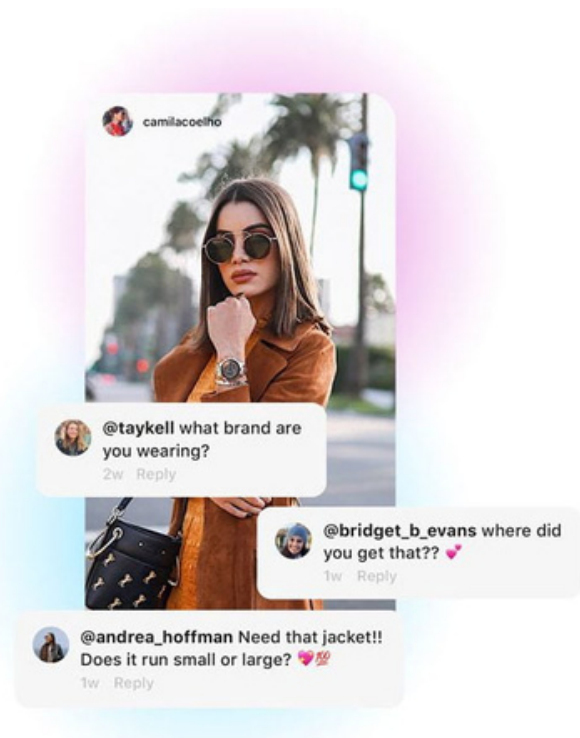
Selling with Instagram is a great option too, but you must be sure to not put generic photos of your products up. Instagram is first and foremost a visual platform, and photos and videos should be original and not “stock” like. This may mean spending some time creating more ‘lifestyle’ shots rather than store shots.

# "70% of shopping enthusiasts turn to Instagram for product discovery"

business.instagram.com

For a great example of the type of visuals suited for Instagram, [check out Primark's Instagram page](#). They use lifestyle shoots really well to display their products in situ.

There are two main ways to sell using Instagram. You can use a third-party app that syncs your product library directly, which will help you turn your business account into a digital storefront rather than just a page. Alternatively, you can use product tags on Instagram, which means users will be taken to your store if they click on a tag.



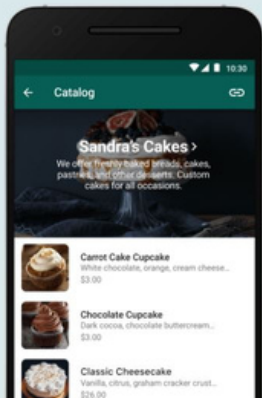
**"87% of people say that influencers have inspired them to make a purchase"**

business.instagram.com

The product tags method is probably the easiest method but will require you to have your own store off of Instagram, either on something like Shopify or another platform.

# WHATSAPP FOR BUSINESS

Investing in WhatsApp for business is a good idea for online sellers. It allows them to have a very familiar platform to communicate with customers and clients and a platform that is well used and recognised across the world.



The screenshot shows the WhatsApp Business app interface. At the top, there's a green header with the WhatsApp logo and navigation links: WHATSAPP WEB, FEATURES, DOWNLOAD, SECURITY, FAQ, and a language selector (EN). Below the header, on the left, is a smartphone displaying the 'Catalog' screen. The catalog is for 'Sandra's Cakes' and lists three items: 'Carrot Cake Cupcake' (\$3.00), 'Chocolate Cupcake' (\$3.00), and 'Classic Cheesecake' (\$26.00). On the right, there's a green speech bubble icon with a white 'B' inside, followed by the title 'WhatsApp Business App'. Below the title, there's a paragraph describing the app's features for small business owners, followed by a paragraph about its use for customer support and a link to 'WhatsApp Business API'. At the bottom, there's a section titled 'DOWNLOAD FOR YOUR PHONE' with two buttons: 'ANDROID' and 'IPHONE'.

WhatsApp

WHATSAPP WEB FEATURES DOWNLOAD SECURITY FAQ EN

**B**

## WhatsApp Business App

WhatsApp Business is free to download and was built with the small business owner in mind. The app makes it easy to personally connect with your customers, highlight your products and services, and answer their questions throughout their shopping experience. Create a catalog to showcase your products and services and use special tools to automate, sort and quickly respond to messages.

WhatsApp can also help medium and large businesses provide customer support and deliver important notifications to customers. Learn more about [WhatsApp Business API](#).

DOWNLOAD FOR YOUR PHONE

ANDROID IPHONE

There are not many opportunities for direct selling in WhatsApp like there are using the Facebook platform, but being able to communicate with your audience on a messenger-type platform is vital for good customer service.

# SELLING ON YOUTUBE

YouTube selling is its own beast and really needs a whole article dedicated to the intricate ins and outs of YouTube marketing, but it's safe to say that YouTube selling is BIG business, and practically any business can succeed on YouTube with the right strategy and the right content.

We mean any business too. There are popular YouTube channels on everything from camping to cars, photography to morticians. Yes, really, morticians!

YouTube is also the home of influencer engagement, much like Instagram and TikTok are, and the conversion rates when working with sponsors and influencers can be fantastic.

Be warned, though, YouTube is easy to get wrong. So many companies use YouTube as a video repository rather than as a platform of its own, and they are missing out on a huge opportunity for sales and growth with an overall affluent audience.

# MARKETING YOUR PRODUCTS ONLINE

Now you've decided what platform you're going to sell on, and what you're going to sell, it's time to consider how you're going to get people to actually buy from you? We're talking about marketing!

If you're using a platform like eBay or Amazon, you'll probably be less worried about marketing your brand, but there's no reason why you can't leverage some of the skills you'll learn in marketing to sell through these platforms; it's all about where you are driving traffic.

## **Driving Traffic To A Website**

If you have your own website selling products, either using Shopify or something like WooCommerce, you'll need to think about how you're going to get traffic to that website. Here is where paid ads, branding, link building, and SEO come into their own.



## **Paid ads**

Paid ads via social media or PPC ads like Google ads, Ezoic, Mediavine are a great way to reach a specific audience. Depending on the ad platform, they can be very cost-effective too. Facebook's ad platform is probably the best example of an ad platform, and with a well-trained Facebook pixel, you can really leverage Facebook's knowledge about people to put your products in front of the right people.

If you're wondering about an example of excellent Facebook product marketing, spend some time looking at products that interest you on AliExpress without any kind of AdBlock or cookie blocker on, then head over to Facebook. Within a few minutes, you're almost guaranteed to see an ad for AliExpress with the things you were looking at and similar items. AliExpress's use of Facebook marketing really stands out as marketing well done!

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Another great example of paid advertising on social media is actually Pinterest. Pinterest's paid ads side has been notoriously bad over the last few years, with users who are into crafts and chocolate cake getting adverts for sportswear and trainers, but there is one company doing an excellent job of marketing on Pinterest, and that is B&Q.

B&Q not only creates targeted adverts for their audience, but their adverts are designed to look like helpful feed pins, rather than intrusive huge video ads like certain sports trainers and clothing manufacturers who advertise on Pinterest a lot. This is an example of paid ads working with the audience.

## **SEO and Link Building**

There are, broadly, two types of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO): on-page and off-page. Local SEO could be classed as a third type, but it falls under the bigger banner of off-page SEO.

On-page SEO is the SEO you control for your website. It ensures it loads fast, has an up to date security certificate, you have a decent blog section, all of your images have the right tags, there is plenty of internal linking, etc. On-page SEO is actually fairly easy to get right, and getting it right will put your website in a great position to welcome traffic.

On-page SEO using blogging content can be excellent for eCommerce websites. In fact, there are websites using the blogging method to drastically improve their traffic sources, which is translating into a boost in revenue.

Off-page SEO covers everything out of your control, and also Local SEO. Local SEO is more in your control, as you can use Google My Business to create a business listing and ensure you're in all of the local business directories. This will boost your local SEO. Other types of off-page SEO include things like outreach and link building.

Link Building for eCommerce is a big part of off-page SEO. Google uses backlinks as a ranking factor for a website. Therefore, the more mentions your website has across the web, the better your Google ranking will be.



## **Branding**

Branding is important for any business, but if you've chosen to go down the route of having your own domain and website, branding is even more important. This goes further than just a logo and using the same colour scheme. There are a whole host of things you should consider, for example:

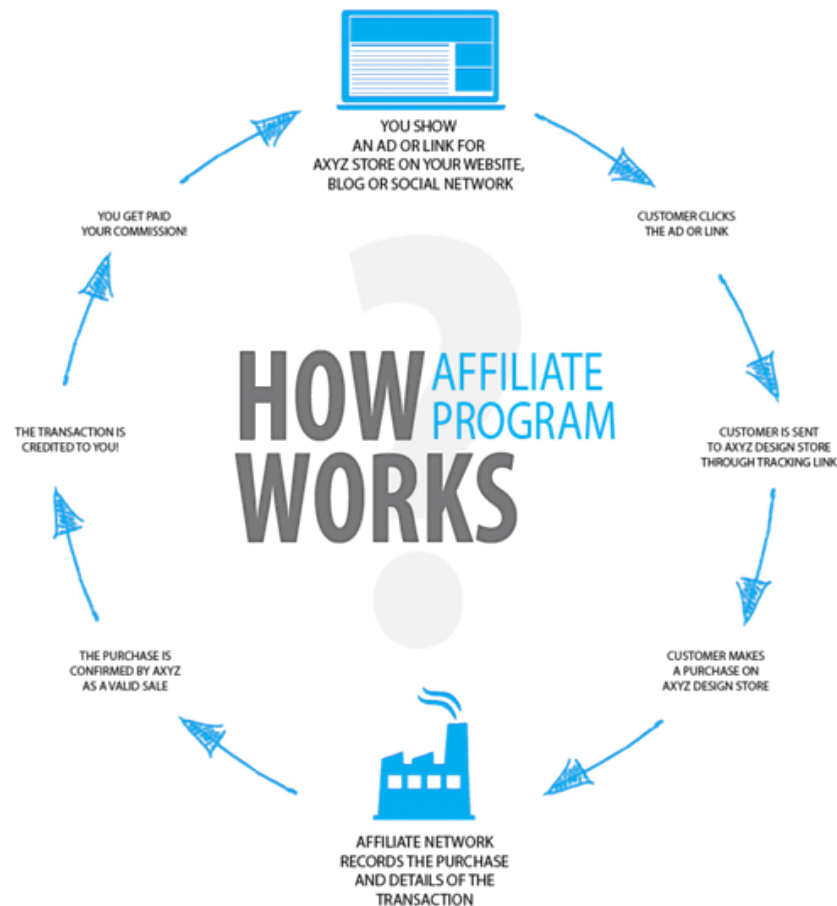
- Your brand tone of voice – what you sound like
- Your ethics – what you believe in
- Your look – your exact colours, shapes, packaging, etc
- Your audience – attract people “who believe in what you believe” in the words of Simon Sinek.

It's worth getting your branding right at the beginning. You can always update a logo and even your brand colours to a certain extent, but your ethos is a bit trickier to rescue if it all goes pear-shaped.

## **A Note About Affiliate Marketing**

One of the lesser mentioned ways to sell your product online is through affiliate marketing.

Affiliate marketing, just like influencer marketing, is a great way to leverage someone else's platform and someone else's audience to sell your products, but unlike sponsored marketing, you will lose some of your money to the affiliate.



## Why use affiliates to sell?

Affiliate marketing is hugely popular in the blogging and SEO world and on platforms like YouTube. In fact, YouTube has a better conversion rate for info products than most websites do.

The whole point of an affiliate niche blog website is to sell products.

The blog or website owner wants their audience to buy as many products as possible so that they get the commission for the products. Affiliate commission is usually better than earning via ads, and this is especially true for high paying commission affiliates.

The bonus to you is that the affiliate becomes a brand advocate for you. They want to get more visitors to their own website or viewers on their YouTube channel, so it's in their interest to work hard at promoting your product. The more conversions they get, the more money they make and the more products you sell. It's a win/win situation for many online sellers.

## **How To Find Affiliates**

Finding affiliates can be a bit tricky, and it really does depend on your product. Many of the bigger companies are set up through specialist affiliate brokers such as Rakuten and Awin. Once you have set yourself up and decided your commission amount, the affiliates can choose to work with you and build links to your products with their own unique tag.

For more high-value affiliate products, and especially if you are selling things like info products, digital products, and courses, it might be worth approaching blog or website owners specifically.

If you're going to approach blog owners, be sure that they don't have their own info product (an eBook or a downloadable pack, for example) or course they are already selling, and make sure that their audience is your type of customer.

For approached affiliates, especially, you'll need to give them a good reason to work with you and push your products. Don't just offer a 5% commission on a £20 product and hope that they will jump at the chance – it's very likely they won't! Go for a decent commission rate, something that you are happy with, maybe around 30-50%.

For shopping products, commissions are usually a lot lower, with an average of around 1.5-2% and the higher rates around 5%-8%. These usually work on a cookie basis, where the affiliate is sending traffic to your website via promotions of products, with most cookies being 30-day cookies.

# SUMMARY

We hope our guide to selling online was helpful and covered some of the major parts of how to set up, how to find products, and how to market your business.

Becoming an online seller is definitely not an easy task, and it's fair to say that you may put in a lot of work upfront without seeing a huge return to begin with. The best advice we have is to speak with an expert, ask plenty of questions, and don't be afraid to outsource the bits that you either can't do or hate doing.

Just as many creatives need to use accountants for the paperwork side of things, you may find it much better to use outside marketing services to help you get your business off the ground and to advise on how to keep it popular.

As a digital marketing business, we're happy to help advise and offer our services when it comes to SEO, link building, paid social, content creation, and so much more. We love the technical side, even if you don't!

Looking for more great content about eCommerce, check out these blogs

- [eCommerce SEO Handbook](#)
- [How to Drive Organic Traffic to Your Online Shop](#)
- [Tips On Using Social Media for eCommerce](#)
- [Ways To Build Links To Your Ecommerce Website](#)
- [How To Optimize Your Online Store For Organic Search?](#)
- [Top Strategies to Optimise Your eCommerce Website for the SERPs](#)

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