



e-BIZ

TIPS FOR MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: E-COMMERCE

INTRO TO E-COMMERCE

Doing business online requires a website that provides quality information about products, connects consumers to a company's social media platforms, provides customers with a positive online shopping experience, and much more.

How can business owners assess if their websites are e-commerce ready?

Some questions to consider:

1. Do you have a development partner and do you trust their knowledge?
2. How secure is your hosting infrastructure?
3. Are you using encryption to protect your data and transactions?
4. Do you have a dedicated budget for website maintenance?

QUICK TIP

To help improve the ability for your website customers to share and learn more about your products:

1. Incorporate social sharing icons
2. Suggest related products
3. Use the Facebook commenting plug-in

GETTING STARTED

Business owners should consider these key industry trends, especially those related to mobile usage:

- In 2017, e-commerce retail sales amounted to \$409.21 billion in the US
- 51% of Americans prefer to shop online
- Email marketing has a 38:1 return on investment
- The average online shopping cart abandonment rate is 69%
- 23% of online shoppers abandon their carts if they have to create a new account
- 84% of online shoppers in the US review at least one social media site before making a purchase
- China currently has the largest e-commerce market in the world
- PayPal managed 7.6 billion payment transactions in 2017
- PayPal transactions have 70% higher checkout conversion than non-PayPal transactions
- Parents spend 61% more online than non-parents
- 43% of e-commerce traffic comes from organic Google searches
- 93% of consumers considers visual appearance to be the key deciding factor in a purchasing decision
- 68% of US online shoppers engage with live chat features
- 96% of Americans with internet access have made an online purchase in their life
- E-commerce is growing 23% year-over-year, yet 46% of US small businesses don't have a website

THINGS TO KNOW

Don't be fooled, building an e-commerce business takes time

- Amazon launched in 1995, but didn't make a profit until 2003
- Pizza Hut began offering online ordering on its website in 1994
- Competition is intense; after the introduction of Netflix and Redbox, Blockbuster eventually went bankrupt

Mobile Matters

- 34% of online retail purchases happen on mobile devices
- There are 2.6 billion smartphone users globally
- 61% of organizations engaged in social selling, or selling over social media, report a positive impact on revenue growth

RESOURCES

Hubspot Marketing Statistics:

<https://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>

SmarterMail E-commerce Marketing Statistics:

<https://www.smartermail.com/blog/99-e-commerce-marketing-statistics/>

Sleeknote E-Commerce Statistics

<https://sleeknote.com/blog/e-commerce-statistics>

BigCommerce E-Commerce Trends

<https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/ecommerce-trends/#stats1>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Dr. James Barnes joined the Department of Agricultural Economics at Mississippi State University after serving for seven years as an Extension economist with the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and Director of the Louisiana Center for Rural Initiatives. Dr. Barnes' Extension and research work focuses on the economics and management of social media in business, broadband technology adoption in rural places, rural health care, and regional economic development. Since joining MSU, Dr. Barnes has launched the Mississippi Bricks to Clicks Entrepreneurship Extension Program aimed at helping business owners understand how to leverage a Facebook network for business profits.

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Is your business e-commerce ready? Find out by answering these 25 questions ranging over seven different website functions and appeal categories that provide a snap shot of e-commerce readiness. Score your business on a scale of 1-10 with one being the lowest and 10 the highest, then add up your score to determine your grade.

E-COMMERCE READY TOOL

A Guide to Analyzing Business Websites for E-Commerce Readiness

| CATEGORY | QUESTION | POSSIBLE SCORE |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------|
| Domain name | Does the domain name represent the company? | 1-10 |
| | How well does the page load? Slowly? | 1-10 |
| Visual appeal/Mobile | Does the site look to be appealing on an iPhone? | 1-10 |
| | Does the site look to be appealing on an iPad? | 1-10 |
| | Does the website have plenty of white space, clarity? | 1-10 |
| | Is the use of color appropriate? | 1-10 |
| | Is the text used appealing and easy to read? | 1-10 |
| | How easy is it to find the 'Contact Us' section? | 1-10 |
| Photos | Are the pictures clear and of high quality? | 1-10 |
| | Do the pictures presented represent the company's products or services? Are there any mismatches? | 1-10 |
| Branding | Is the logo for the business presented clearly? | 1-10 |
| | Is the logo high resolution? | 1-10 |
| | Is the logo used consistently throughout the site? | 1-10 |
| | Is the company's vision or mission presented clearly? | 1-10 |
| | Is the company address linked to Google Maps or Mapquest? | 1-10 |
| Social Media | Are social buttons presented clearly on the site? | 1-10 |
| | Do the links take a potential customer to the page or simply to a like or share button? | 1-10 |
| | Do Facebook pages, Twitter accounts etc match the company name? | 1-10 |
| Products/Services | How easily are the products/services to find on the site? | 1-10 |
| Customers | Does the site feature any customer testimonials? | 1-10 |
| | Is there a place where customers can leave comments? | 1-10 |
| e-Commerce | Is the e-commerce platform easy to use? | 1-10 |
| | Does the platform present a searchable option to find products? | 1-10 |
| | Does the platform provide clear information about product attributes including prices and shippings? | 1-10 |
| TOTAL | | 240 |

GRADES

| | |
|---|-----|
| A | 216 |
| B | 192 |
| C | 168 |
| D | 144 |

ANALYSIS

| |
|---------------------|
| On the path |
| Near the path |
| Barely on the path |
| Can't find the path |

ADVICE

| |
|------------------------------|
| Tweak |
| Work the category scores |
| Try a revamped look possibly |
| Remodel |