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Accelerate Your eCommerce Launch with These 5 Expert Tips

How to get your web store online in less time, even if you're starting from scratch.

You need a web store, and you need it now.

Shopping is more online now than ever before. In most retail sectors, online sales this past March were 74 percent higher than a year ago.[1] Some direct-to-consumer brands achieved record-breaking digital sales in the first quarter of 2020.[2] And a growing numbers of B2B companies are transitioning to digital business models.

If you're looking to add new revenue streams, it may be time to upgrade your digital commerce strategy. For example, if you're a B2B manufacturer selling through distributors, you could add a direct-to-consumer web store. Or, if you're a successful brick-and-mortar retailer with

zero online presence, you could start a web store and even offer deliveries and curbside pickup for your local clientele.

A new web store may also be the answer if your existing website is unable to support unexpectedly high traffic volumes or to meet changing customer needs. For example, when regional grocery stores started allowing their customers to place orders online for pickup or delivery, many of their websites crashed due to the surge in demand. Other stores discovered that their commerce platforms didn't actually support curbside pickups or pick-and-choose product assortments.

Whether your priority is to simply sell more by adding a new channel or to manage a wave of new customers, launching a scalable, flexible commerce website could be your pathway to success.

The 5 tips in this eBook will help you launch your online store quickly while accelerating your business.

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[1] https://apnews.com/Business%20Wire/b6847791fbed49af98a47d1dcd6293a7

[2] https://www.forbes.com/sites/kaleighmoore/2020/04/17/retailers-selling-non-essentials-see-double--triple-digit-increases-in-online-sales-during-covid-19-crisis/#7f4703856431

1. Adopt a phased approach.

You probably have a long wish list for the new online store you envision. You may want sophisticated product displays, flexible shipping and fulfillment, and more. But if you need to get to market fast, it's critical that you choose a few top priorities for your initial launch and then build a roadmap to fill in the blanks over time.

For example, if you don't have a web store at all, your priority may be simply getting your products online, accepting payment, and providing for basic fulfillment. If your existing web store is crashing from spikes in traffic, your priority should be scalability. If customers can't schedule pickup or delivery times, fulfillment should be your top concern. Using a phased approach, you can launch your new site in a few weeks and see real financial results within 30 to 90 days.

5 EXPERT TIPS

1. Adopt a phased approach.
2. Choose a cloud-based solution with a proven infrastructure.
3. Don't build anything yourself.
4. Do the minimum work necessary to get up and running.
5. Choose a platform that can easily support Amazon marketplace sales.

2. Choose a cloud-based solution with a proven infrastructure.

It's critical for any website today to make sure it can manage high transaction volumes. Likewise, you need a site that loads quickly to keep customers interested. Bounce rates are more than 90 percent higher for a page that loads in five seconds than for one that loads in one second.[3]

Another major challenge for online retailers is digital security. Although more people are shopping online, they're still nervous about their data. More than half (62 percent) of 2,000 consumers surveyed in late 2019 said they are not confident about the security of their data with digital retailers.[4] It's no surprise that a breach can destroy your reputation, especially if you're new to selling online.

If you want to get to market fast, you don't want to get bogged down designing a custom cloud infrastructure and integrating multiple service providers. Plus, a DIY approach to your cloud infrastructure, if you don't have a security expert on staff, can leave you vulnerable to a data breach. You'll save precious development time and lower your risk if you choose a commerce platform with a predefined cloud services package. A package with

multiple services, SLAs, built-in security, and the leading cloud provider can ensure that your website will be secure and ready to handle spikes in web traffic and big transaction volumes from the moment you launch.

[3] https://www.machmetrics.com/speed-blog/average-page-load-times-for-2020/

[4] https://www.digitalcommerce360.com/2019/01/15/why-all-data-breaches-pose-a-threat-to-retailers-customer-experience/

Sites that load quickly keep customers interested. Your website should be able to handle spikes in web traffic and big transaction volumes from the moment you launch.

3. Don't build anything yourself.

If your main concern is time to market, you will want to take advantage of existing website design templates and pre-built extensions. The Magento platform alone provides thousands of themes out of the box as well as vetted extensions developed by our ecosystem of partners, including advanced features such as experience personalization and marketplaces. Relying on extensions eliminates the need to create scopes of work, write specifications, and hire developers.

4. Do the minimum work necessary to get up and running.

In addition to setting priorities for development, it can help to define the bare minimum of workflows and back-end automation you need in order to launch. To offer a high-quality customer experience, generally speaking, an online store needs to have payments, tax collection, shipping, order tracking, and email integration in place. You may also be able to get away with a single payment method if you choose a commonly accepted payment solution like Amazon Pay.

If accelerating your business is your main goal, any functionality beyond your "minimum viable web store" should be scoped and scheduled for a future phase of your web development project. And, of course, you shouldn't try to launch with any less than your minimum feature set.

Any functionality beyond your "minimum viable web store" should be moved to a future phase.

5. Choose a platform that can easily support Amazon marketplace sales.

In addition to launching a new web store, many businesses are also starting to sell on Amazon to add yet another revenue stream. If this describes you, it's critical to choose a platform that can manage all your product listings—including those for your web store and your Amazon sales—in a single place. That way you'll be able to respond nimbly to changing customer demand by quickly adding new listings and adjusting old ones.

SUCCESSFUL AMAZON SELLER? TAKE A SHORTCUT TO BUILDING YOUR OWN BRANDED STORE.

Magento Commerce Branded Stores for Amazon Sellers (Branded Stores) are a new way to build your own branded web store and get to market fast. Branded Stores let you create a distinctive shopping experience powered by Amazon merchant tools like Amazon Pay. And they're designed to deliver fast page load times, high conversions, and flexible scalability for peak shopping times.

Learn more
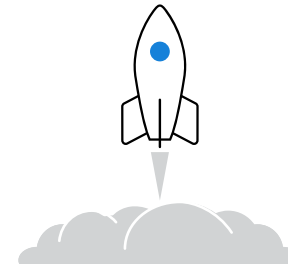
10 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU LAUNCH YOUR WEBSITE

1 **Who are your biggest competitors, and how are you different?**

HINT: Look beyond your local area.

2 **How do your customers want to shop?**

HINT: If you're not sure, ask them.

3 **How do your customers want to receive their goods?**

HINT: Many people want curbside pickup these days.

4 **Which products will you sell online?**

HINT: Start with your best sellers.

5 **How will you let customers know about your new online store?**

HINT: If you're unfamiliar with digital marketing, run small tests before spending a lot on ads.
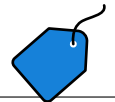
6 **Which shipping providers will you use?**

HINT: Shipping will make or break your customer experience.

7 **Which payment providers will you use?**

HINT: Always go with the easiest and most popular payment methods.

8 **How will you keep track of inventory?**

HINT: You may need a commerce platform with order management.

9 **How will you collect and pay sales taxes?**

HINT: Automation will save you time and compliance headaches.

10 **How will you manage returns?**

HINT: Think about how you can arrange for flexible returns.

MAGENTO COMMERCE

Magento Commerce, part of Adobe Experience Cloud, is the leading commerce solution for merchants and brands across B2C and B2B industries and was recently named a leader in the 2019 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce. Magento Commerce boasts a strong portfolio of cloud-based omnichannel solutions that empower merchants to successfully integrate digital and physical shopping experiences. Magento is the #1 provider to the Internet Retailer Top 1000, the B2B 300, and the Top 500 Guides for Europe and Latin America. Magento is supported by a vast global network of solution and technology partners, a highly active global developer community, and the largest eCommerce marketplace for extensions—available for download on the Magento Marketplace. More information can be found at www.magento.com.

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