



EBOOK

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ECOMMERCE ON WORDPRESS

TORQUE®

 WPengine®

INTRODUCTION

While there are many powerful ecommerce platforms out there to choose from, one aspect they often neglect to bake into their infrastructure is content management capabilities.

Whether your ecommerce site is powered by **Magento**, **WooCommerce**, **Shopify**, **BigCommerce**, or another solution, WordPress is the perfect pairing to power content and be a key tool in your digital commerce strategy.

Your ecommerce brand's online success is not only dependent upon the digital or tangible products being sold but also the content you create to go with it. In an age where outbound advertising has become a thing of the past, fresh content is the buoy that raises your brand to the surface from all the advertising bloat and clutter.

Content that's well-crafted will differentiate your brand and attract new visitors, and can even surprise and delight shoppers.

Here are a few reasons why WordPress shines as a perfect solution to pair your ecommerce store with:

- ✓ **Open Source** - Because of its open source nature, WordPress can be fully customized to blend perfectly as an extension of your ecommerce store. Your site won't be limited in scope thanks to its ease of modification through technology like the JSON REST API and fully adjustable theme frameworks, like the Genesis Framework. Also, because it's open source, costs will be fairly low (there are no licensing fees), other than the price you pay for hosting, paid extensions, and development costs.
- ✓ **SEO Optimized** - WordPress is completely optimized for SEO; plugins like **Yoast SEO** can take your online marketing efforts to the next level by enabling you to create a sitemap and optimize your content for searchability and readability. By producing fresh content, you'll reap the benefits of discoverability through search engines, which can increase sales on your ecommerce store.
- ✓ **User-friendly** - It's extremely easy for content creators and marketers alike to log-in to WordPress and start producing awesome content...no coding knowledge is required for content production either. Any beginner can quickly become familiarized with WordPress' easy to navigate interface.
- ✓ **Fully integrable** - WordPress comes with over 50,000 **free plugins**...you can do just about anything you desire with endless options for extended functionality. It's even fully integrable with all of the aforementioned ecommerce solutions.
- ✓ **Secure** - Despite common news coverage of security breaches, WordPress core is quite secure. As long as you **take precautions**, like keeping themes, core, and plugins up to date, enforcing strong passwords, using 2FA, and being vigilant about user role permissions, your site will be quite bulletproof.

Now that we've covered some of the ways in which WordPress shines as a CMS, let's get to the meat of this ebook.

We will lay out some of the benefits of using various ecommerce solutions with WordPress, take a look at some examples of WordPress ecommerce sites in the wild, provide some tips for A/B testing ecommerce on WordPress, and more!

Read on to become equipped with some advanced knowledge, inspiration, and more to be on your way to becoming a WordPress ecommerce aficionado.

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CHAPTER 1

THE DECISION MAKER'S GUIDE TO ECOMMERCE ON WORDPRESS

BY NICK SCHÄFERHOFF.

Now more than ever, shoppers are going to the web for their purchases. These days, we can order pretty much anything online, from clothes and electronics to software and even groceries.

Customers appreciate the convenience of making purchases from the comfort of their homes 24 hours a day. There are several other reasons why more and more people prefer shopping online, including better prices, wider variety, easier to compare prices and so on. It's for these reasons, every major retailer is now offering their wares online instead of just in the brick and mortar store.

Online shops also offer many advantages to their owners, mostly that they are cheaper to maintain. In contrast to brick-and-mortar businesses, there's no need to rent space, take out insurance, or any of the other things involved in running an in-store business.

These days, you can open up shop online for the price of a hosting package. In addition, if you are selling digital products or choose **dropshipping**, you don't even need storage room and can run your business from anywhere in the world.

Plus, technology has essentially leveled the playing field. An increasing number of high-quality and affordable ecommerce solutions have enabled almost anyone to get started selling stuff online. No wonder more and more business owners opt to do so.

To help you decide which solution is best for your online WordPress shop, in the first chapter of this ebook, we will have a look at four of the biggest players in the ecommerce game: **WooCommerce**, **Shopify**, **Magento**, and **BigCommerce**.

Together, they power about **half of all online shops**. In this chapter, we will examine their strengths, weaknesses, and what purposes they are most suited for. All of these ecommerce solutions offer easy integration with your WordPress site. In the end, we want you to be able to make an informed decision about which solution to use for your own online shop.

Ready to rock 'n' roll? Let's dive in.

WOOCOMMERCE



The first one on the list is by far the largest of the bunch. The WordPress plugin WooCommerce powers **41 percent** of all online shops. That doesn't just make it the most popular ecommerce solution for the WordPress platform but the most popular ecommerce solution, period.

WooCommerce currently has three million active installs and in 2015, its parent company **WooThemes was acquired by Automattic**, the company behind WordPress.com.

Pretty impressive, right? Now, let's talk about what makes WooCommerce so popular.

WooCommerce Strengths

Many brands choose WooCommerce for a number of strengths, including:

- ✓ **Cost-effective** - WooCommerce's first advantage is its price tag — it's free. You can download it without charge in the [WordPress directory](#). Since WordPress is also free, you can build a full-fledged online shop for the cost of a hosting package. While some advanced features might be paid (more on that below) most extensions are quite affordable and, most importantly, only need to be purchased once and not subscribed to.
- ✓ **Easy to setup and use** - Since we are talking about a WordPress plugin, setup is really easy. Download, install and activate. After that, a setup wizard will guide you through the beginner-friendly setup. Once you are done, creating and managing products is as easy as managing other WordPress content. Detailed settings also give you full control over your shop. (For more information, check out [WooCommerce for beginners](#).)
- ✓ **Feature rich** - Users of WooCommerce can sell both physical and digital goods as well as affiliate goods. You can set up product variations, multiple shipping options, and payment gateways as well as coupons, take advantage of full inventory and order management, as well as obtain detailed reporting.
- ✓ **Highly extendable** - Besides the standard features, the ecommerce solution offers a plethora of free and [paid extensions](#). For example, you can add PDF invoices, multi-language capabilities, membership functionality, additional payment options and much more. The price range for paid extension with WooCommerce is from free to \$249 for a single-site license.
- ✓ **Customizable** - WooCommerce integrates well with most themes so you are free to choose your own design from [thousands of possibilities](#). There are also special [WooCommerce-ready themes](#), as well as [child themes](#). Since everything is based on WordPress, with some technical chops you can basically customize everything and the plugin itself is also very developer friendly.
- ✓ **Well supported** - The support structure behind WooCommerce is great. Users profit from regular updates and multiple support channels ([WordPress forums](#), [documentation](#), [email support](#) from WooThemes). It is also very well established, which makes it easier to find affordable hired help.
- ✓ **SEO and marketing** - With WordPress in the background, users get to enjoy the search engine optimization of the platform and can take advantage of powerful SEO plugins like [Yoast SEO](#). Most importantly though, the platform is a blogging powerhouse which shops can use for content marketing.
- ✓ **Full ownership** - Finally, one of the main benefits of WooCommerce is that with a self-hosted WordPress website your online shop is fully yours and nobody else's. With everything located on your own server, you have complete control over what happens with your shops and can always take it with you when you change providers.

WooCommerce Weaknesses

Of course, nothing is without flaws, WooCommerce included:

- ✘ **Advanced customizations need skills** – Users can change a lot about their site via mouse clicks and the UI. However, the possibilities you have in terms of design changes is highly dependent on the theme you are using. Advanced customization might require editing templates and styles, which beginners might find difficult and for which they will possibly have to hire someone else.
- ✘ **Dependent on WordPress** – As mentioned, WooCommerce is a WordPress plugin, not a standalone software. For that reason, you have to be familiar with the WordPress platform and there will be a learning curve for those unfamiliar with the CMS. However, the same is true for all ecommerce solutions on this list.
- ✘ **True costs difficult to calculate** – Running a WooCommerce-based online shop comes with different costs including hosting, maintenance and security measures. Many of these have to be set up separately and are dependent on the providers you use. Some research will be required, however, there are also many all-in-one service providers.

Who Is It For?

WooCommerce is especially suitable for anyone who wants to take full ownership and control over their venture. From SMB to enterprise, users can sell almost any product on there and anyone who has ever worked with WordPress will feel right at home.

However, even less experienced users should quickly understand how to set up their shop if they put in a little bit of time. With some extra effort and diving into templates and CSS, there is nothing that can't be achieved.

And while it can be argued that WooCommerce isn't scalable, this simply isn't true. With the right hosting support and a development team focused on site optimization, WooCommerce sites can handle thousands of transactions per minute. (For more on this topic, check out the webinar: [Myths, Mistakes, and Management of WooCommerce at Scale](#) and the ebook [An Executive's Guide to Scaling WooCommerce](#).)

SHOPIFY



Our next contender on the list, Shopify, last year launched [Shopify For WordPress](#). With this plugin, users can sign up for their website and create a store right then and there.

After that, Shopify will host your shop for a monthly fee and take care of all things maintenance and security. It is one of the more popular solutions yet with only around [six percent](#) overall market share, much smaller than WooCommerce. However, more than 275,000 vendors on the site are nothing to scoff at.

Shopify Strengths

So, what's good about Shopify?

- ✓ **Ease of use** – Shopify is clearly geared toward beginners with little or no development knowledge. Almost everything can be configured via the UI, even the design. This includes previewing your changes before making them permanent.
- ✓ **A wide range of features** – Since Shopify is a paid service, it comes with lots of features out of the box that are premium in other platforms. Depending on your plan, you can take advantage of analytics, printable invoices, gift cards, abandoned shopping cart recovery and more.
- ✓ **Extendable** – Besides the standard features, there is also the [Shopify app store](#) with additional options. These include image optimizers, recurring billing modules, apps for social media promotion and much much more.
- ✓ **Mobile-friendly** – Mobile purchases have [recently eclipsed desktop buyers](#), therefore Shopify puts a big emphasis on being mobile friendly. It does so with mobile responsive themes, [mobile apps for shop owners](#) and other options. Even Facebook messenger can be integrated into the purchasing process.
- ✓ **Great support** – Since we are talking about a premium product, we can expect great support. Shopify delivers in the form of [extensive documentation](#), 24/7 email and [live chat support](#), as well as help to get in contact with Shopify experts for hire.

Shopify Weaknesses

So far so good. But are there things that could be improved?

- ✗ **Advanced customization difficult** – The lack of control is also evident in the customization options. While, as mentioned, you can code your own theme, you need to get into Shopify's custom code base for that.
- ✗ **Expensive** – Another downside of Shopify is its price. While you can get a free trial, after that the cheapest of their plans starts at \$29/month and it gets more expensive quickly. In addition to that, there are possible one-time payments for themes and recurring fees for apps and additional features. Plus, transaction fees for external payment gateways. In addition to that, hired help is probably more expensive. All these amounts snowball quickly.

Who is It For?

Shopify is absolutely geared toward beginners and people unwilling or unable to manage their own site. If all you want is to take care of your products while someone else worries about the technical stuff and you have the budget, Shopify is the place for you. It is also great for startups, to test business ideas or build an MVP as it allows you to get started super quick.

MAGENTO



Similar to Shopify, Magento also offers easy integration with WordPress, enabling you to connect your WordPress site with your Magento store.

Magento is another open source platform that can be installed on your own server. Unlike any other entry on this list, it is specifically aimed at large-scale projects and is also the most technical of the four solutions.

The latter is probably the reason why Magento is especially popular among the top 10,000 websites on the net with a **11 percent market share**. Overall, its piece of the ecommerce pie is about six percent.

Magento Strengths

Let's see what this solution has to offer:

- ✓ **Free** – Magento comes in two editions. The [Community Edition](#) is open source, free to download and can sustain small to medium-sized online shops. As with WordPress, costs are limited to the hosting provider, payment processor, domain and other things you need to run a website online. For larger projects, there is the [enterprise edition](#) which is paid and pricey (like \$17,000 per year pricey).
- ✓ **Feature-rich** – As an enterprise-level solution, Magento is known for its extensive feature list. The platform is able to manage multiple storefronts, languages, and currencies, can integrate with Google analytics, comes with integrated newsletter marketing, product bundles, and an extensive inventory management tool. It also offers multiple payment providers and can deal with both physical and virtual products.
- ✓ **Third-party integrations** – Magento also has its own [shop for extensions](#) which contains anything from newsletter providers to social integrations. There are also lots of free extensions and the paid ones have a wide pricing range from \$0.99 to \$8,000.
- ✓ **Customizable** – If you know what you are doing, there's almost nothing that can't be changed about an online shop built with Magento. Plenty of [ready-made design templates](#) make it easy to get started and you can find more around the web.
- ✓ **Marketing-friendly** – The ecommerce tool comes with a lot of marketing features out of the box. SEO is configured automatically (with the option to make changes), you have email marketing and ad tools included as well as upsells, promotions, coupons, one-click payments, guest checkouts and more.
- ✓ **Scalable** – As mentioned, Magento is the only solution on the list that is built specifically to power large-scale projects. It can handle thousands of products and is relied upon by some of the biggest sites on the net.
- ✓ **Well supported** – The makers of Magento offer a slew of help options including the [documentation](#), [blog](#), [knowledge base](#), [forums](#) and [direct contact to the parent company](#). They even have a [security center](#) that you can turn to in case your shop got hacked.

Magento Weaknesses

What can Magento do better?

- ✗ **Unsuitable for beginners** – Magento is only a valid option for the highly tech-literate and made with developers in mind, not casual users. Therefore, you either need to deal with a very steep learning curve or hire a specialist. Even the user interface can be overwhelming and needs some getting used to.

Who is It For?

Magento is a real powerhouse that can be used to build large-scale eCommerce websites. However, it doesn't pretend to be anything else than that and is most

suitable for large companies, people with a big budget or coders. Everyone else is probably better off choosing a different solution.

BIGCOMMERCE



The last on the list is a website builder similar to Shopify but with more features. Sign up, design your shop and BigCommerce will host it for you and take care of the things in the background. Like the others, BigCommerce also offers easy integration with WordPress.

The platform boasts over 95,000 live sites in more than 150 countries and \$8-plus billion in total sales. It is popular in the middle range of websites with a [market share of around four percent](#), however, on the entire internet, its share is very small.

BigCommerce Strengths

Let's see what BigCommerce has under the hood:

- ✓ **Easy to use** – The platform sports a very clean and simple UI. In my opinion, it seems even easier to handle than Shopify and its intuitive interface is a constant recipient of customers praise. BigCommerce also offers [video lessons](#) on how to use its backend in order to make getting started even easier.
- ✓ **Feature-rich** – Like all solution on this list, BigCommerce comes with its own set of impressive features. For example, you can't only sell products but also services and events across multiple channels including Facebook, Pinterest, and eBay. Users also get customer segmentation, custom domains, social sharing, filtered search, one-page checkout, product reviews and much more.
- ✓ **Great design options** – As usual, the platform offers [themes](#) for changing your shop's design and they have some good looking templates. Pricing is around \$120 to \$250 and customizations are possible via a WYSIWYG editor as well as HTML and CSS.
- ✓ **SEO and marketing** – BigCommerce has its own content delivery network for fast-loading pages and options to set page titles and meta descriptions right on the product page. It also integrates with Google shopping and you can run promotions, sales, and email marketing campaigns. Coupons, social media integration, and other options round off the feature list and there is even a decent option for blog integration.
- ✓ **Payment options** – For payments, the platform offers over 60 gateways. Users can accept payments through their shop instead of third-party services and

offer shopping in multiple currencies and with customizable shipping rates. The secure checkout is level 1 PCI compliant, however, your need to purchase your own SSL certificate when moving to a custom domain.

- ✓ **Customer support** – Again, for a paid solution clients can expect grade A help. BigCommerce delivers with [24/7 support](#) via phone, live chat, email and a [forum](#). Plus, there's [BigCommerce university](#) with loads of videos to help you make the most out of your site as well as a [knowledge base](#) and [guides](#).

BigCommerce Weaknesses

Here are just a few things to consider before choosing BigCommerce:

- ✗ **Confusing plans** – BigCommerce offers several plans, all paid on a monthly basis. Once you hit a certain amount of sales or revenue, you have switched automatically to a higher bracket. This gets a little confusing. It seems like you will be upgraded to the Pro plan (\$199.95/month) once you surpass 3,000 sales and need to pay extra for every additional 1,000 orders. Sounds like you can lose control of costs easily.
- ✗ **Pricing** – Talking about money, BigCommerce's pricing changed in 2016 to the tune of many complaints. After a 15-day free trial, the cheapest plan clocks in at \$29.95/month (10 percent off if you pay annually instead of monthly). Once you sell more than \$125k in revenue per year, your monthly fee increases to \$79.95 which is quite the climb. Plus, there's the switch to the Pro Plan after 3,000 orders which is even more expensive.
- ✗ **Lack of ownership** – Since you don't host the site on your own server, you don't have full control over it. This becomes especially relevant in case you decide to make the switch to another platform (as many considered after the price hike of this year). With a hosted solution your data is always essentially on someone else's computer.

Who is It For?

BigCommerce is suitable for small to midsize businesses and anyone who wants to get started quickly. You can literally set up shop in minutes. However, the costs grow together with your shop and BigCommerce's pricing policy is one of its biggest points of critique.

SUMMING UP

All of these solutions offer easy integrations with WordPress, allowing you to have the best of both worlds. There are, of course, [several amazing WordPress plugins](#) that also provide ecommerce support.

Online business offers many benefits for both sellers and customers, most notably reduced overhead costs and increased convenience.

When building an online shop, choosing the right ecommerce platform is vital.

Though there are more and more good solutions available, not all of them are created equal or suitable for all types of markets and users.

Above we have compared four of the biggest players in the ecommerce industry, all of which can work beautifully with your WordPress site. Let's recap our findings:

WooCommerce, the largest of the bunch, is especially suitable for beginners, startups with little budget and users who like both flexibility and having full ownership of their shop.

Shopify lets you get started quickly, works out of the box with little need for technical knowledge, and is for anyone — from beginners to enterprise — willing to pay for premium service.

Magento is the behemoth among the platforms and able to power enterprise-scale online shops. On the other hand, the solution needs serious technical chops or money to pay for them.

Finally, **BigCommerce** is another easy-to-use SaaS solution loaded with features. Yet, its pricing structure makes it suitable only for those willing and able to pay for them.

All of these solutions can be [integrated with WordPress](#) to help you harness the power of commerce and content. And there you have it. Ready to make your pick? Which solution will you go with? The choice is, of course, up to your needs. However, with the information above, you are now able to make an informed decision. Good luck!

A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is positioned over a blue background. Inside the lens, the white WordPress logo is visible. The background outside the lens is a blurred blue and white. The text is overlaid on the magnifying glass area.

CHAPTER 2

30+ REAL LIFE EXAMPLES OF ECOMMERCE SITES BUILT ON WORDPRESS

BY NICK SCHÄFERHOFF

One of the **benefits of WordPress** is that you can use it to build pretty much any site you want. Portfolio websites, blogs, business websites, you name it. No wonder so many **famous companies, celebrities, and brands** rely on WordPress. Ecommerce is another area that shines.

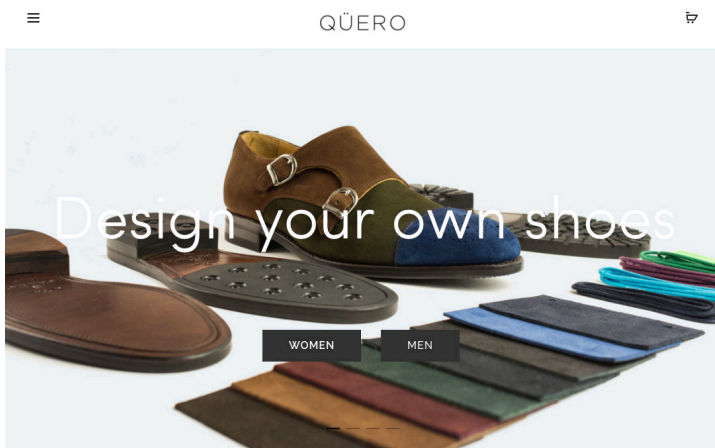
Regardless of platform, there are number of solutions available to build an ecommerce shop on WordPress. Yet, if you have never built an online shop with WordPress before, you might still be hesitant to believe that WordPress can actually do this. Luckily, there are plenty of WordPress ecommerce example sites out there to convince you otherwise.

As you will see below, our examples encompass a lot of different designs, industries, and product categories both physical and digital. After going through them, you will see that there are no limitations when it comes to building an online shop with WordPress and hopefully find a lot of inspiration for your own venture.

Examples of Ecommerce Websites Built With WordPress

Just a quick heads up: As you will see, most of the examples are powered either by **WooCommerce** or **Easy Digital Downloads**, with some rare exceptions. We would have liked to feature other ecommerce plugins but weirdly not all of them publish live examples on their page (I'm looking at you, **iThemes Exchange**).

QÜERO



Our first example is a shop for hand-made shoes from Spain, querohms.com. The website sports a nice, elegant, yet minimal design with the shopping cart right on the front page. Looking into the code, it quickly becomes obvious that WooCommerce is the force behind this shop and their theme is a derivative of the **Super Hijinksified** starter theme. Well done.

Adoboloco



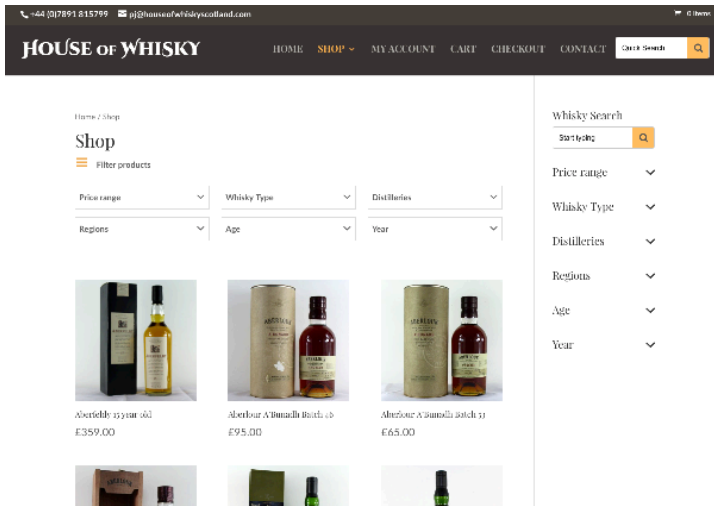
Adoboloco is a vendor of hot sauces made in Hawaii and Portland. Their WordPress site includes a blog with recipes as well as a shopping cart inside the header/menu. The theme in the background is **The Retailer**, which is a Storefront child theme.

Humoresque Cartoons



Humoresque Cartoons is a site that sells cartoons for all purposes that you can buy right off the site thanks to Easy Digital Downloads. It has no checkout page or anything, rather, buyers move directly on to Paypal. The **Stocky theme** (which is made to work with EDD) is responsible for making everything look good.

House of Whiskey



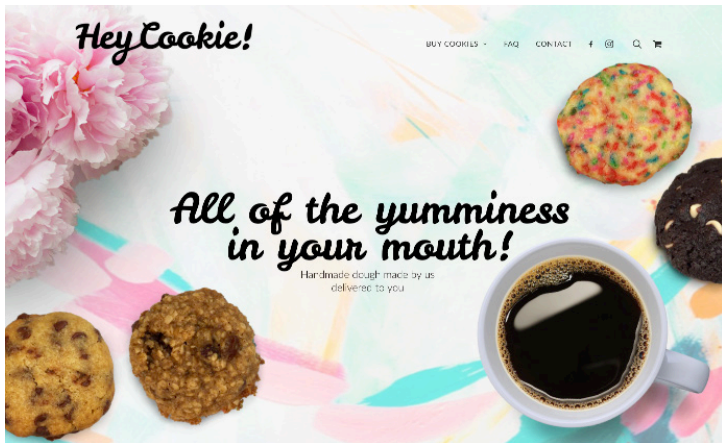
Next up, a shop for exclusive Scottish whiskeys, houseofwhiskyscotland.com. This one is built with the [Divi theme by Elegant Themes](#) and has its cart and checkout in the menu. It also runs on WooCommerce.

Marché du Pre



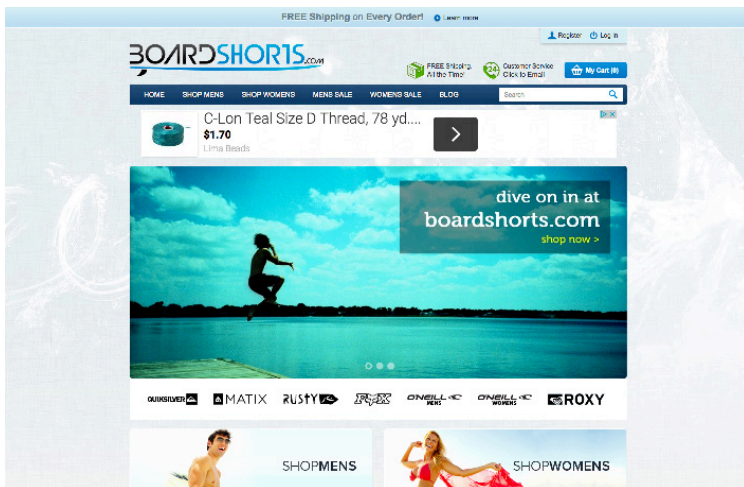
Danish kitchenware, Marché du Pre, sells different kitchenware and cooking essentials through an elegant card design. The website has its own blog, custom WordPress theme, and WooCommerce as the reigning ecommerce plugin.

Hey Cookie!



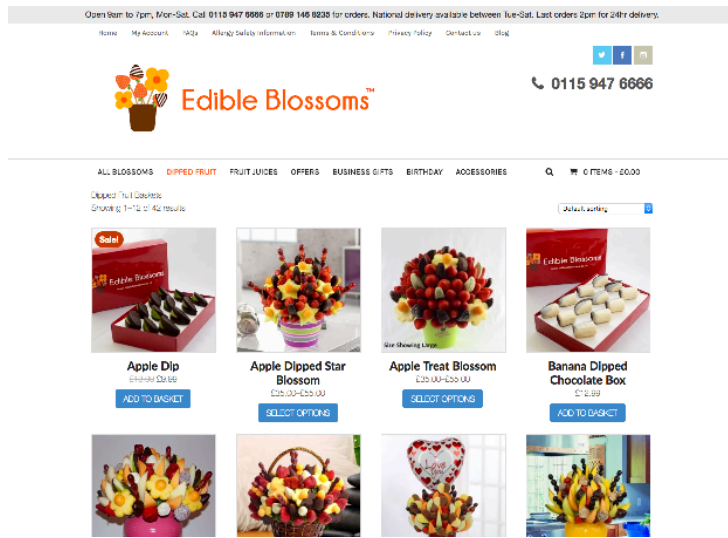
As the name suggests, [Hey Cookie!](#) sells cookies that you can bake at home. The shop, based on the [Uncode theme](#), displays its offerings with a lot of JavaScript, making for a very dynamic experience. WooCommerce takes care of everything else.

Boardshorts.com



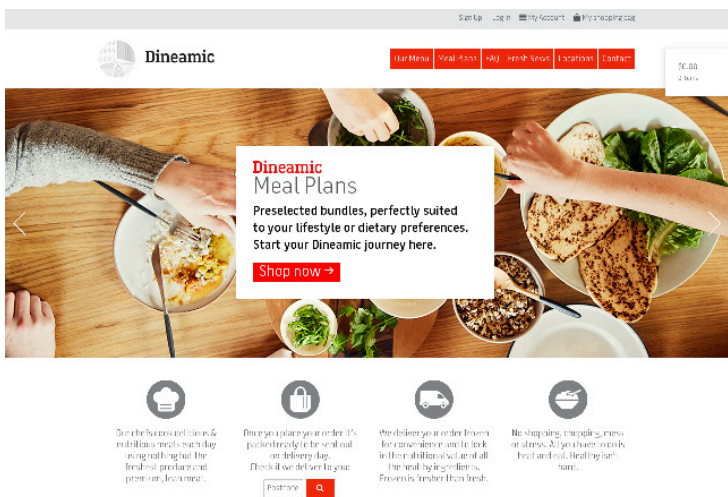
You can probably guess what [boardshorts.com](#) is selling. Our first example of a WordPress ecommerce site with an unknown ecommerce solution. They also run their own custom theme.

Edible Blossoms



Just looking at edibleblooms.co.uk makes me hungry. I didn't even know edible bouquets were a thing but this stuff looks delicious. The entire thing runs on the [Canvas theme by WooThemes](#), so you can probably guess what takes care of the online shop part.

Dineamic



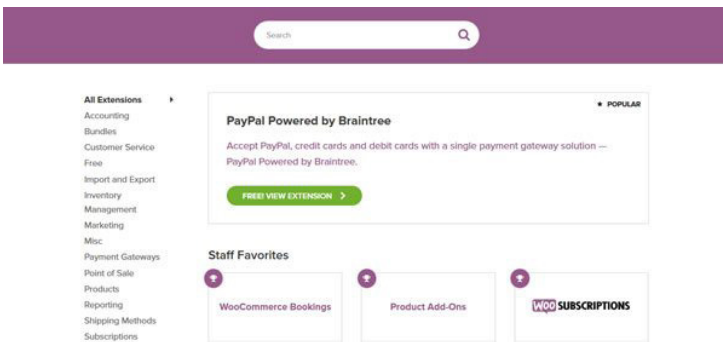
Next, we have an Australian delivery service [Dineamic](#) for healthy food. For easy viewing, the shopping cart stays attached to right side of the screen. The site is very quick to react without any reload when adding something to the cart. WooCommerce powers this shop and a custom WordPress theme makes it look good.

Lobotz



Making logos since 1986, anyone in need can buy them right from [Lobotz's](#) site. Thanks to Easy Digital Downloads, there is a shopping cart in the sticky header bar. Design is courtesy of the [Humbleshop theme](#), which also made for EDD.

WooCommerce



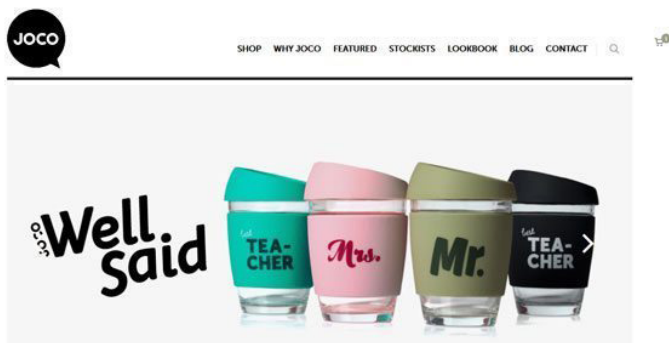
[WooCommerce](#) is the the reigning WordPress eCommerce plugin, it only makes sense that their own web presence is also powered by WordPress. On it, you can buy extensions for their flagship product as well as themes and other plugins. It's probably not hard to guess what powers their online shop and they appear to be running a custom theme.

Trendy Resumes



If you are looking for a job, [Trendy Resumes](#) might be able to help you with custom resume templates. Here, the account, cart, and checkout are all located in a separate menu. The shop is running a child theme based on the [Trizzy theme](#). It's made for WooCommerce, which is also what is powering their online store.

Joco Cups



Fans of the jitter juice can buy artisan coffee glasses and accessories from this site. [Joco Cups](#) runs a child theme based on [Salient](#). They could work on their responsive design, which breaks slightly in some screen sizes. However, with WooCommerce to take care of the shopping experience, functionality is probably fine.

WP Rich Snippets



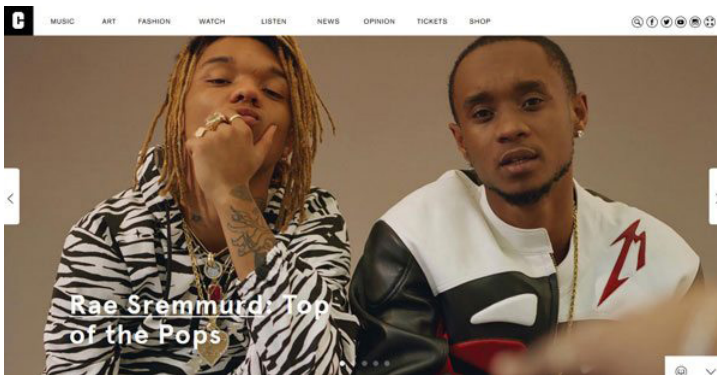
[WP Rich Snippets](#) is a WordPress plugin for [structured data](#) plus different addons. The design comes from a custom theme based on [Genesis](#) and eCommerce capabilities from Easy Digital Downloads.

WPML



WPML is among the most successful [WordPress translation plugins](#) and one of my personal favorites. They sell their main product with WooCommerce and use a custom theme.

Crack Magazine



A magazine on contemporary culture that runs its online version on WordPress with a [Bootstrap](#)-based theme. [Crack Magazine](#) contains an online shop for subscriptions, tickets, and paraphernalia. I'm not sure what powers it, but this time it's definitely not WooCommerce.

The Untold Wish



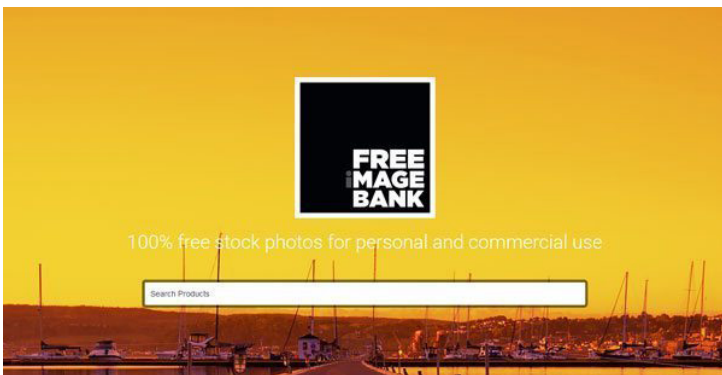
Our next example ecommerce site sells hand-drawn gift ideas, cards, and more. The WooCommerce-powered online shop, [The Untold Wish](#), has a lovely design courtesy of its custom theme. They also take advantage of WordPress' blogging ability and the site beautifully degrades for mobile devices.

Blue Star Coffee Roasters



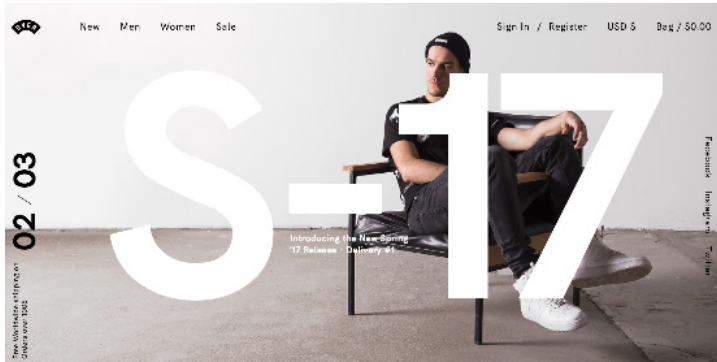
[Blue Star Coffee Roasters](#) offers exclusive coffee beans and more sold through a beautiful layered design. Even though WooCommerce is behind the site (the buy button is still in the familiar purple), overall the shop experience could be better.

Freemage Bank



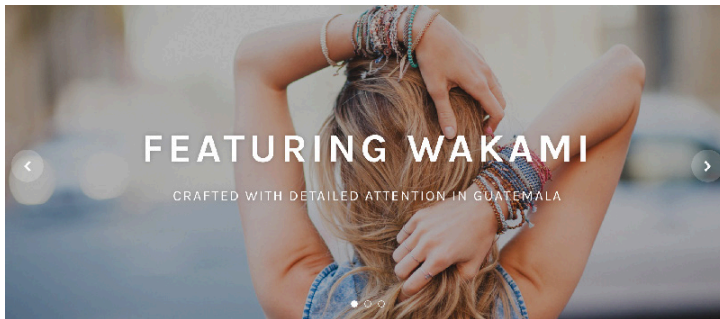
[Freemage Bank](#) is a vendor of free stock photos (of which we actually have [a long list](#)). Though free, Easy Digital Downloads takes care of the administration and lets you leave a tip if you want. Besides that, the site runs on the [Stocky theme](#), which is a fitting name if there ever was one.

Over



Here, we have a clothing company which also explains the very hip design. WooCommerce is running behind the scenes and the theme is based on the [Underscores starter theme](#). I say well done!

Wakami



[Wakami](#) sells socially-conscious bracelets made in Guatemala. The combination of WooCommerce and Underscores is also what keeps this site going.

Strillipes



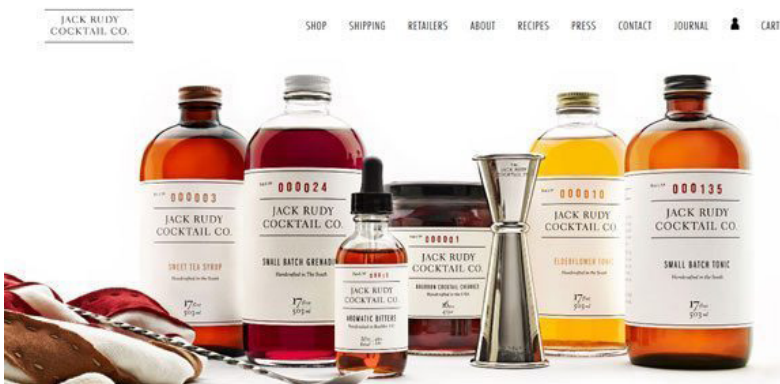
Obviously a design shop for accessories. Very well designed with an elegant shopping card inside the navigation. WooCommerce's touch is also quite obvious here and the shop is running the [Bridge theme](#).

Rotimatic



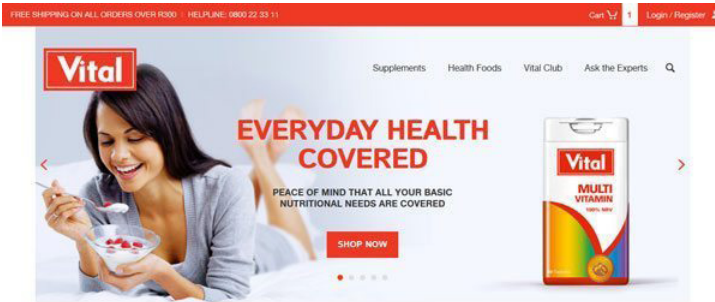
This must be my favorite entry in the list: [Rotimatic](#) is a kitchen robot that makes delicious Indian bread and wraps. Unfortunately it's not available in my country, otherwise, I'd surely order it drunk one night. WooCommerce also seems to have its hands on this one.

Jack Rudy Cocktail Co.



[Jack Rudy Cocktail Co.](#) offers cocktail ingredients and supplies. Very elegantly designed and congruent. On the technical side, we are looking at WooCommerce again and a custom theme without any further information.

Vital



A HEALTHIER YOU

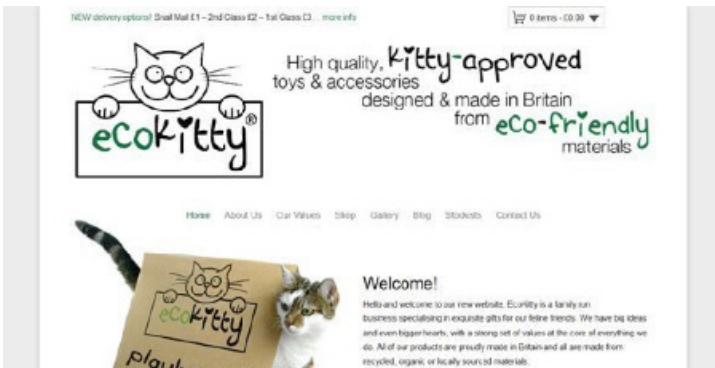
Vital provides supplements and healthy food made in South Africa. Cool detail: When adding something to the shopping cart, a new window opens on top of the page that shows your current items. Runs a customized theme and WooCommerce to make everything happen.

Yousli



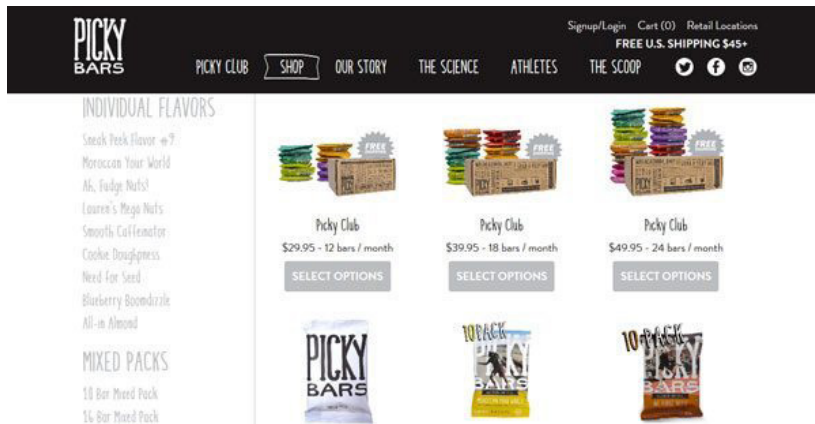
Yousli provides muesli made in Melbourne with a very solid website design and an informative blog. All of this is achieved with a custom WordPress theme and the usual WooCommerce eCommerce plugin.

EcoKitty



Crazy cat people listen up! [EcoKitty](#) is a UK based shop that offers eco-friendly cat accessories are here and WooCommerce lets you buy as many as you want! At the same time, the [Divi theme](#) makes everything look good. What more can you ask for?

Picky Bars



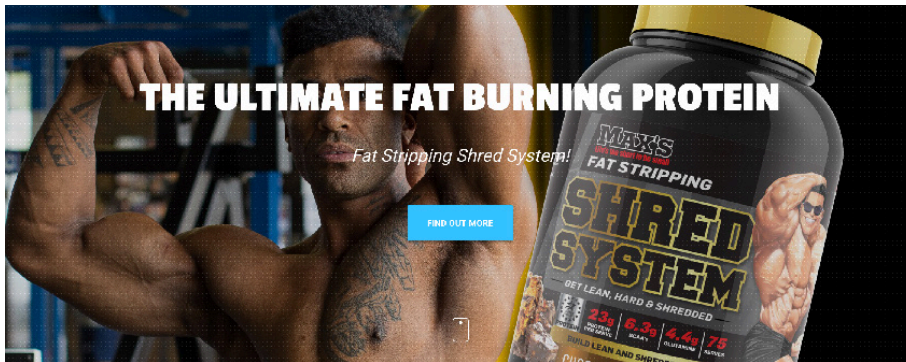
[Picky Bars](#) offers healthy and nutritious real food bars sold online, this time for athletes. The website is clad in WordPress with a well-done custom theme. Comes with a blog, too.

Entrepreneur Bookstore



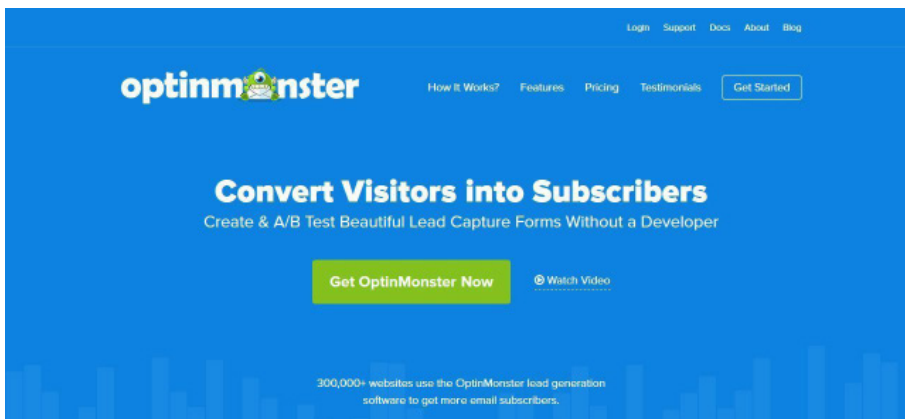
[Entrepreneur Bookstore](#) is our first example of an online shop that does purely affiliate marketing. Looks like that's also something WooCommerce is capable of. The [Maya Shop theme](#) is responsible for the design (which could be closer to its parent site, in my humble opinion).

Max's



Max's offers more sports performance food in all kinds of flavors. The site as a really well designed overall including an elegant fly-in menu for the checkout and [shopping basket](#). Based on the Storefront theme, it gets its eCommerce powers from WooCommerce.

Optinmonster



Finally, we have [OptinMonster](#), which is one of my favorite apps to create opt-in forms of all shapes and sizes. Their web presence is also powered by EDD and running a theme based on [Underscores](#).

Do you have more WordPress Ecommerce Examples?

Ecommerce is an important part of the WordPress universe and there are plenty of websites that use the platform to sell their wares online.

When looking at websites of this type, one thing that quickly becomes obvious is that WooCommerce truly reigns supreme. The majority of the eCommerce examples above use the free plugin to power their online shops.

However, at the same time, they also show that WordPress can handle all sorts of industries and products and that designs can be as varied as the offerings. Consequently, if you are planning to create an online store yourself, you know that you have a reliable partner in WordPress.

A man and a woman are sitting in the front seats of a car. The man is in the driver's seat, looking at a laptop screen. The woman is in the passenger seat, also looking at the screen. They appear to be discussing something on the laptop. The background shows a bright, sunny day outside the car window.

CHAPTER 3

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ECOMMERCE A/B TESTING IN WORDPRESS

BY JOHN HUGHES

Making changes to your ecommerce website design that aren't backed up with real-world data isn't an effective way of improving your conversion rates. You *could* hire a developer and have them make changes based on your guesses, but what if it doesn't work and you end up losing customers?

A/B testing your website can help you arrive at a design that your visitors respond to in the best possible way. The best ecommerce sites understand that there's always room for improvement, and regular testing plays a key role in paving your path to success.

In this chapter, we'll show you how to test your eCommerce website, along with the plugins you'll need – but first, let's cover the basics of what A/B testing is and why you should be doing it.

WHAT IS A/B TESTING AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

A/B (or split) testing offers multiple versions of a page element to your website's visitors to determine which one converts better. For instance, in an A/B test with two variants (A and B), half of your site's visitors would see web page A and the other half would see web page B. The site that performs better, wins.

Testing multiple variants of your site gives you concrete results, enabling you to implement what works, and discard what doesn't. In a nutshell, A/B testing enables users to optimize their site's design and functionality for conversions.

Choosing Your Testing Metrics and Elements

Cart abandonment rate- This indicates the visitors who added products to their carts but didn't make it through the checkout page.

Average order value- This determines how much profit you're gaining per order on average. It enables you to figure out how much money you can make based on your site's traffic and conversion rates.

Bounce Rate- This indicates the number of visitors who visited your landing page, then left without interacting with the page.

Once you've laid down the metrics you'd like to monitor, you'll need to figure out which page elements to test. There are a **myriad of elements** to choose from, but we recommend using common interactive points such as forms, your checkout page length and layout, your cart placement, and your call to action text and buttons.

WHY YOU SHOULD A/B TEST YOUR ECOMMERCE WEBSITE

A/B testing with a crystal clear strategy in mind is vital, but what's even more important is to understand why you're doing it in the first place. Here are three key reasons.

1. To See If The Design Works

A/B testing gives you rock-solid evidence of what works and what doesn't. For example, take a checkout page with a form that requires the visitor to enter some personal details in order to complete their transaction. While it's easy to read, visually appealing, and simple enough to follow, you find that sales aren't improving, while your cart abandonment rate is rising – what went wrong?

With a split test, you can gain insight into user behavior to find out exactly why visitors are leaving. It could be the length of the form, or some confusing text. Whatever the problem, A/B testing helps you pinpoint where your design went wrong.

2. To Analyze How Well the Design Works

If a variation seems to work well, it's important to **determine its effectiveness**. Split testing should be performed regularly, and measuring how well a particular implementation works helps you to improve what's already there.

Of course, you can choose to measure your design's impact against a single metric, or a combination. Some – such as cart abandonment rate, bounce rate, and average order value – are a great starting point. However, to take things to the next level, you can measure other key performance indicators such as the time spent on site, your affiliate performance rates, and query resolution times.

3. To Evaluate the Design

Finally, another benefit of A/B testing is that even if none of your ideas work out, the results will almost always help you understand why, and point you in the right direction. With A/B testing, the more design iterations you go through, the better. You'll happen upon some new ideas each and every time.

Now you have a better understanding of what A/B testing is and why you should be doing it, let's see how you can get started with it in WordPress.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ECOMMERCE A/B TESTING IN WORDPRESS

Step 1: Choose A Suitable Plugin

Although there are **several offsite** A/B testing tools available, using a WordPress plugin to get the job done has its own benefits. For a start, you won't have to connect to a third-party service or worry about integration. Here are three plugins we recommend:

- **WordPress Calls to Action.** This plugin enables you to create and test the conversion rates of the calls to action on your website. It's a great option for users who are building landing pages.
- **Nelio AB Testing.** This plugin is incredibly easy to use and enables you to setup, manage, and monitor split tests. It also generates daily reports about test experiments and conversions.
- **Title Experiments Free.** The plugin helps you to split test your post's titles to find out which ones lead to more page views. It can create variations for you and reports both impressions and page views.

While all of these solutions are suitable, if you're looking for a complete A/B testing solution, we recommend the **Nelio AB Testing** plugin. It's great for beginners and pros alike.

Step 2: Conduct Your Research

Once you've chosen a suitable plugin, you'll need to figure out what you want to split test. If you're reading this post, the chances are that you already have a few things in mind. That said, it's always a good idea to **conduct some research** to find out even more.

You can start by **studying your analytics** to ascertain your visitor's user behavior. This will help you determine why they're not completing their transactions, abandoning their shopping carts, or whatever else you may be looking for. Another foolproof method of gaining insight into user behavior is to ask them **directly for feedback** – after all, who better to get insight from than your actual users?

Step 3: Define Your Goals

The next step in A/B testing is to define clear goals that you'd like to achieve. Setting goals enables you to validate whether the tests worked, and if so, their overall effectiveness.

You don't need to be **particularly specific** when it comes to setting goals. For instance, it could simply be to "increase conversion rates" instead of "increase conversion rates by 35 percent" – and of course, the goals you set can be based on almost any metric you like.

Step 4: Select Your Testing Variables

As an eCommerce site owner, you've probably identified some **page elements** that you think could undergo testing. In this step, you'll actually have to pick one to test. The element you choose should tick off some (or all) of these points:

1. The design may be affecting user behavior negatively.
2. Its placement may be off.
3. The color scheme doesn't fit in with the brand.
4. Its wording may be off-putting.

Be mindful not to get too deep at this stage. Simply select one element that you'd like to test to act as your 'test variable'.

Step 5: Develop Your Testing Variants

Now that you have the test variable, it's time to **create some variations**. Since we're split testing, simply **create a duplicate** of the web page you'd like to test, add the variable as is to one of them (we'll call it web page A), and its variation to the other (web page B).

The testing tool you use will automatically redirect half of your site's traffic to web page A, and the other half to web page B. Ideally, you should present the variation to new visitors in order to get accurate results – your chosen tool will normally have options for doing so in its admin panel.

Step 6: Run The Tests And Analyze The Results

With everything set in place, you can launch your first A/B test! Here are a few points to keep in mind:

- Make sure that you're testing both web page A and web page B simultaneously.
- The only difference between web page A and web page B is the test variable.
- Any design update you make your pages throughout the duration of the test should be applied to both variants to maintain consistency.

Once the tests are in motion, you can start analyzing your user's behavior. The testing tool you use should provide some insight into the test results; however, you can always check out your site's analytics too.

Conclusion

Making modifications to your eCommerce website's design at random and hoping for the best simply isn't effective. With A/B testing you can make informed decisions regarding your website's design, that are backed up with real data and experiments.

If you thought it was difficult to get started with split testing, think again! Let's recap the process:

1. Choose a suitable plugin.
2. Conduct your research.
3. Define your goals.
4. Select your testing variables.
5. Develop your testing variables.
6. Run tests and analyze the results.



CHAPTER 4

4 REASONS WHY NOBODY'S BUYING ON YOUR ECOMMERCE SITE

BY JOHN HUGHES

No matter how much time you've spent creating your new ecommerce site, once the first sales roll in, it may feel like it's not quite the success you thought it would be. Simply put, once you begin seeing your conversion rates slide it's time to take action – or your new venture will be dead on arrival.

Rather than simple chance, there's likely some definite reasons why your products aren't selling – perhaps it's because your initial marketing strategies are off, or your website's design lacks accessibility. Whatever the reason may be, the fact of the matter is that nobody's buying from your new ecommerce site, and it needs to be sorted – pronto!

In this post, we'll cover four key reasons your products aren't selling, and suggest the actions you can take to fix them. By the time you're done, you'll be in a better position to boost conversion rates and see your new ecommerce site generate revenue.

Let's get started!

1. You're Targeting the Wrong Market

Your fledgling store's sales are going to suffer if the right people aren't seeing your products. It may be because your copy, marketing techniques, promotions, or all three aren't resonating with the visitors who have begun to land on your site. Simply put, you can't launch an online store, tack on some products, and expect to make sales right off the bat.

Also, remember that you can't sell to everyone. [Identifying and understanding your target market](#), therefore, is vital – although this really should have been done before the launch. To rectify it, you'll want to rework your marketing strategies and develop a plan your target market will respond to and relate with. Online marketers who don't have a targeted marketing campaign generally end up with a generic sales pitch that doesn't convert.

To get started on your own site, you need to ask yourself two simple questions:

1. [What are you selling?](#)
2. Who is going to [buy your product?](#)

Once you've answered the preliminary questions, look to find some people who [fit into your target market](#), and have them evaluate your [site's design and user experience](#). You might be surprised to find yourself having to make some early design modifications, and reworking your initial sales copy.

2. You're Not Marketing Your Products Correctly

It's a complete fallacy that a good product markets itself. No matter how good your product is or how large of a social media following you have, you're going to need to put in some marketing efforts to sell it. As a new store owner, you're also going to have to tackle elements such as designing [catchy marketing campaigns](#) and sales pitches to [build brand awareness](#).

The first way to go about this is easier said than done: convince your target market that your product is amazing. To put this into practice, create some **example user personas** that relate with your potential customers, and figure out why they should buy your product. Begin to ask questions about their personalities – for example:

1. How will it improve their lifestyle?
2. How can this product or service make them happy?
3. What do they need from you in order to purchase it?

This will also require you to form a **sales pitch** that's personalized for your target market. Look to understand the sales language your customers respond to, and try out different campaign messages to see which one converts the most. **A/B testing** your sales copy, utilizing strong **calls to action**, and implementing **landing pages** are all great ways to take a first step in the right direction.

3. Your Sales Copy Is Too Direct

Sales copy that's too direct from the get-go arguably isn't the best way to market your product to potential customers. Instead, the brighter path is to make sure it **delivers value to your customers**. Giving your target market a reason to buy your product through a **more diversified approach** will definitely help boost your sales.

That said, there are times when a more direct approach is not only advised, but necessary. For instance, if you're **retargeting customers** who've bounced off your website, a pushy sales pitch will be more effective in bringing them back to your site for two reasons – it's both concise and direct.

One way to get the ball rolling is to **develop a content plan** for your online store. Instead of filling up your site's web pages with promotional offers and catchy sales pitches, **write up blog posts** relevant to your industry that deliver value to the reader. Then, when it's time to roll out a new product, you can look to divert back to your standard direct marketing approach.

4. Your Products Aren't Accessible

Sometimes the biggest problem your new ecommerce store faces is not a marketing issue at all, but a technical one. It may be because your website has a **poor design** that compromises the customer's user experience, or lacks responsiveness. This is especially pertinent if you've got out of the blocks quickly to take advantage of the market.

One major indicator of this problem is a **high bounce rate**. This figure is trying to tell you that you've managed to get people to your site, but for one reason or another they're hitting the back button. In short, if your products are hidden away and inaccessible, you're not going to make a lot of sales. To rectify this, you'll need to think again about undertaking a complete redesign of your website – this time ensuring your **products are at the forefront**.

This is where heat maps can be a godsend. They enable online store owners to observe user behavior on their site, and identify what causes them to bounce off without making a purchase. Furthermore, you can also split test your site's navigation and layout, and look into user flow mapping in order to start revamping your site's design. Above all, keep in mind that you're designing for conversions first and foremost.

Conclusion

If your new ecommerce store is lacking in sales, the fault might not be in your products but in the way you're presenting them. Ultimately, the way you market your products to potential customers is absolutely vital, and if your site isn't converting as you'd like out of the gate, it's time to get to work.

Let's quickly recap what you need in order to make sure your ecommerce site starts pushing products off of its virtual shelves:

1. Target the right market.
2. Market your products correctly.
3. Publish content that delivers value.
4. Make sure your products are accessible.



CHAPTER 5

5 MYTHS ABOUT WORDPRESS ECOMMERCE DEBUNKED

BY JOHN HUGHES

Given [its beginnings](#), WordPress has gathered its fair share of misconceptions since its release back in 2003. Arguably the most common misconception clients have about WordPress is that it's merely a blogging platform, and therefore isn't suited to developing ecommerce websites.

In reality, WordPress is powerful and flexible enough to become your go-to solution for developing all manner of websites – including ecommerce sites and online stores.

In this post, we'll debunk some of the most common myths and misconceptions about WordPress-based ecommerce sites from a developer's perspective. Hopefully, by the time you're done reading this post, you'll have a better understanding of the functionality WordPress has to offer.

Myth #1: WordPress Isn't Suited to Large-Scale Ecommerce Websites



Developers looking to build small-scale online stores often don't second-guess WordPress to power it. While plugins [such as WooCommerce](#) have a stellar reputation, when it comes to building large-scale ecommerce stores, many look to other solutions [such as Shopify](#). It's a simple matter of perception.

[No matter the size](#) of your client's business, WordPress is a viable option for developing an online store if used correctly. After all, sites such as [Bata](#), [DealerOn](#), and [WooThemes](#) are all [built on WordPress](#). What's more, plugins such as the aforementioned WooCommerce are scalable, powerful, and easy to customize to your needs. It means a solid ecommerce site is possible using the free solutions.

Ultimately, there are a few things you'll want to keep in mind to minimize any post-development site maintenance issues. For instance, it's always a good idea to develop with [future-proofing in mind](#), such as considering a [reputable hosting provider](#) designed to run [large-scale WordPress sites](#). Additionally, you'll also want to have a [reliable backup system](#) in place in case the worst happens and you need to re-upload your site.

Overall, WordPress' scalability and extendability also make it a popular choice for developing any sized ecommerce store – even at the [enterprise level](#).

Myth #2: WordPress' Functionality is Not Enough to Power an Ecommerce Site

As we've just discussed, WordPress is more than enough to power an ecommerce site of any level. However, it's *not* a dedicated ecommerce platform like [Shopify](#) and [BigCommerce](#). Because of this, some people extrapolate and assume that because WordPress isn't a dedicated eCommerce platform, it doesn't offer enough functionality to get the job done.

It's a pretty easy assumption to make, although the wrong one. Simply put, there are [several reasons](#) why you may want to opt for [WordPress to power your eCommerce site](#):

- 1. Finer Control.** WordPress gives developers full control over their entire website—including hosting, plugin choice, customization, and extendability.
- 2. A myriad of plugins and add-ons.** WordPress' inherent flexibility enables developers to extend its functionality through the [use of plugins](#).
- 3. Its powerful publishing tools.** Since WordPress is now a full-fledged Content Management System (CMS), you also get access to some strong [built-in publishing capabilities](#) right out of the box. Of course, plugins can also help you fill in the gaps, but from an eCommerce perspective, building landing pages and product pages becomes infinitely easier when using WordPress.

Overall, WordPress has [more than enough features](#) to help power your [eCommerce site](#). To take things further, WordPress also enables you to tinker under the hood to [fine tune its performance for eCommerce](#).

Myth #3: WordPress Ecommerce Stores Need Experts to Run It

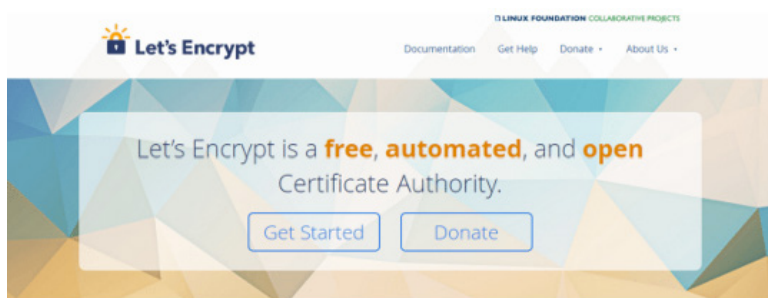
To the layperson, this myth is a logical one. They may realize that WordPress and its additional functionality is powerful, and know of its capability for running a large-scale ecommerce website. However, this could lead some to believe that using the platform is well beyond the reach of their own abilities, potentially meaning they'll need a specialist to run it.

What's more, with WordPress being open-source software, if the client has had a poor experience using open-source technology in the past, it only stands to reinforce their misconceptions. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

The beauty of WordPress is that it can be used by all kinds of users regardless of their technical expertise. For instance, if a particular task requires you to mess around with your site's core files, there's likely a plugin solution available to help you. In fact, it's [entirely possible](#) to build a fully [functional ecommerce site](#) *without* having to hire a developer or trudging through technical documentation. What's more, the plethora of instructional WordPress-related content on the web is staggering – understandable [given the platforms' dominance](#).

Finally, because many **business owners** are a bit skeptical about operating a WordPress-based ecommerce site, you may need to take a step back and think about how you'd **convince them otherwise**. You could start out by **customizing the admin panel** to make it more user-friendly for non-techy site owners. Adding a few **dashboard widgets** and some **helpful guidance** throughout can make it significantly easier for newbies to 'bed in'.

Myth #4: WordPress is not Secure Enough to Power an Ecommerce Site



There's one perennial concern nearly every WordPress user or developer has regarding their website – **security**. Given the constant discussion around this subject, it's surprising that this misconception still exists. However, for those who believe it, there *is some basis* to it.

As you're no doubt aware, WordPress is open-source – to a layperson, this could translate as free and vulnerable. However, WordPress **takes security incredibly seriously**, as do a number of other developers. In fact, as it pertains to ecommerce, there are a number of reasons you're safe with the platform:

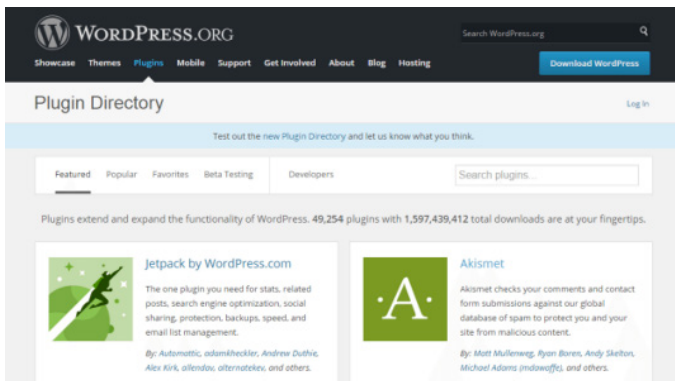
- 4. Secure Checkouts.** **SSL certificates** ensure the data transferred between your site and your customer's browser is encrypted. This simple functionality greatly enhances the security WordPress-based ecommerce sites can provide. While WordPress doesn't offer this out of the box, its functionality makes it a simple element to implement.
- 5. Payment gateways.** Unlike other ecommerce platforms, WordPress offers a **wide range of plugins** that enable developers to integrate third-party payment gateways (such as PayPal) into their site, instead of relying on a custom solution.
- 6. Secure passwords.** WordPress understands the importance of setting strong login credentials. There are several plugins available that force your customers to create strong passwords, and out of the box it also contains a **strong password generator and validator**.

To get started, you'll want to **install a free SSL certificate** on your WordPress site if you haven't done so already. As the year progresses, both WordPress and Google will **clamp down** on potentially unsecured sites across the board, so it's a good idea to get onboard now. Taking care of your **site's security, in general**, is also vital, and while you could easily head down the proverbial

rabbit hole with this, installing a plugin such as [Wordfence Security](#) is a solid first step.

Overall, WordPress is perhaps one of the most secure platforms available. It releases [security updates regularly](#), and you're also free to tailor your site to your own needs via plugins or under the hood tweaks.

Myth #5: WordPress Plugins Are Not Robust Enough for Running an Ecommerce Site



Our final WordPress misconception is one we've touched on throughout this piece. Given that other platforms have ecommerce functionality built-in to their core software, it's fairly easy to see why a typical user might think WordPress' ecommerce plugins are not up to scratch. After all, bolting on additional features is never going to be as good as functionality that's been integrated from the start.

However, the reality is somewhat different. WordPress has a [plethora of plugins](#) – both [free](#) and [premium](#) – that enable developers to extend its core functionality however they see fit. Some plugins even have a wide range of extensions on offer to enhance their feature set even more.

For instance, WooCommerce is one of the most popular (and free) ecommerce plugins for WordPress and offers [hundreds of extensions and add-ons](#). There are [plenty of other options](#) too, and [many themes](#) also offer integrated customization via a dedicated admin panel – so that should be a testament to the robustness of WordPress' ecommerce solutions.

Conclusion

As a developer, an easy to use, powerful solution for creating a website is vital, and WordPress can help you create eCommerce sites of any size in a snap. However, there are many who believe a number of myths about the platform, and listening to them yourself can disrupt your decision-making process and potentially leave you stuck with a subpar solution.

In this piece, we've debunked four myths of building an ecommerce site with WordPress. Let's quickly take a look at the truth behind each of them:

1. WordPress is a great solution for everyone, whether that's **small-scale sites** or **enterprises**.
2. The core WordPress software is robust enough to power a fully functional ecommerce site.
3. WordPress is easy to use for both developers and non-developers.
4. WordPress **rolls out security updates regularly** and you can minimize any potential threats by keeping your ecommerce site up to date.
5. There are a number of free and premium plugins (**such as WooCommerce**) to help you develop a stellar ecommerce site.



CHAPTER 6

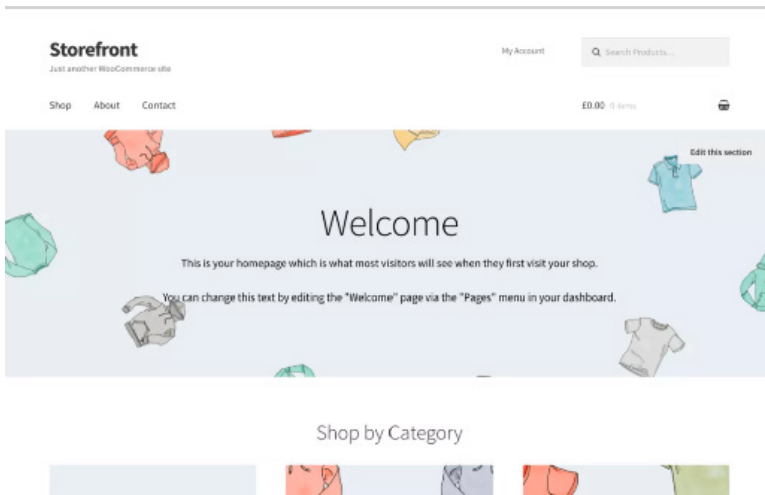
15 AMAZINGLY AWESOME WORDPRESS THEMES FOR ECOMMERCE

BY DAVID MEYER

In the last 14 years, WordPress has grown from a blogging platform to a full-functioning CMS. In fact, it is often chosen to power an online store.

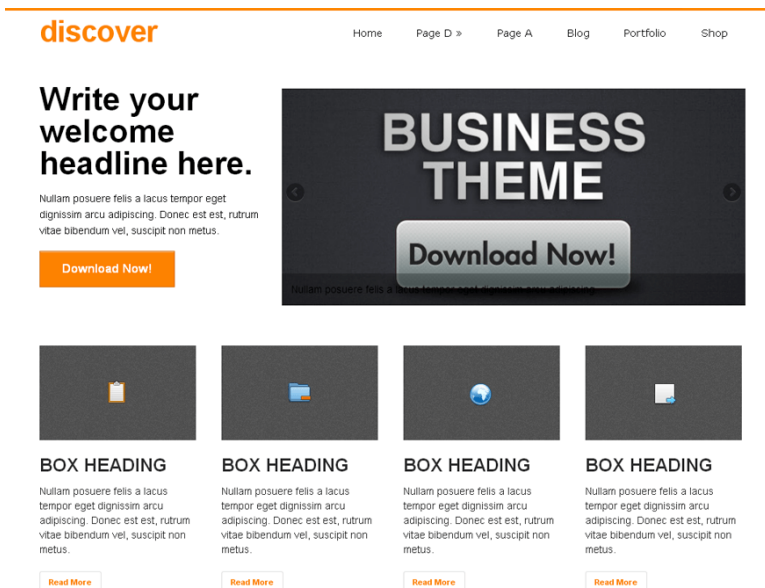
Whether you're a beginner or expert, you need your site to look amazing, and these themes will make any online store look professional.

StoreFront



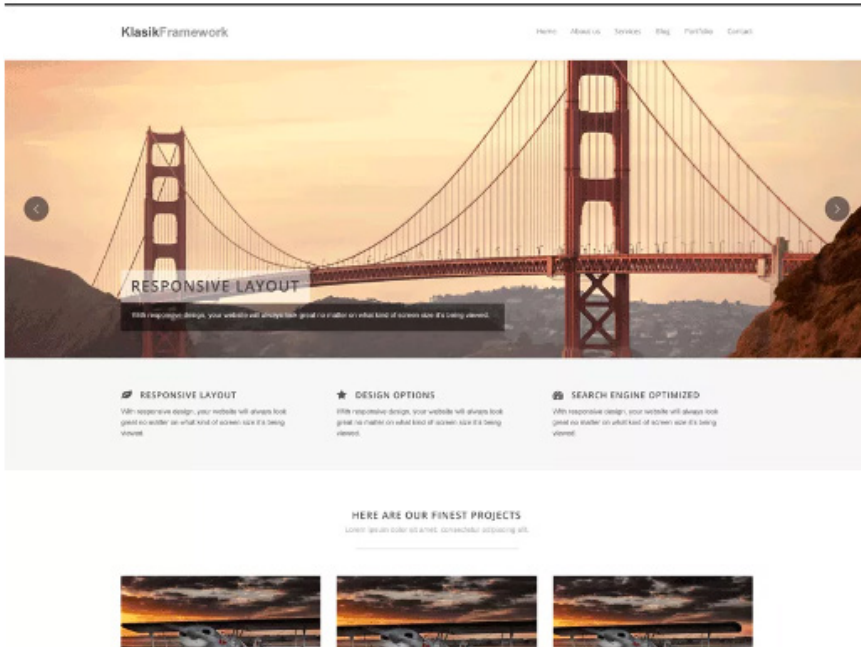
Storefront is a perfect WordPress theme for ecommerce sites which is compatible with WooCommerce. It is customizable and gives the ease to choose among several layout and color options along with widgets for ease of use. It's also incredibly responsive.

Discover



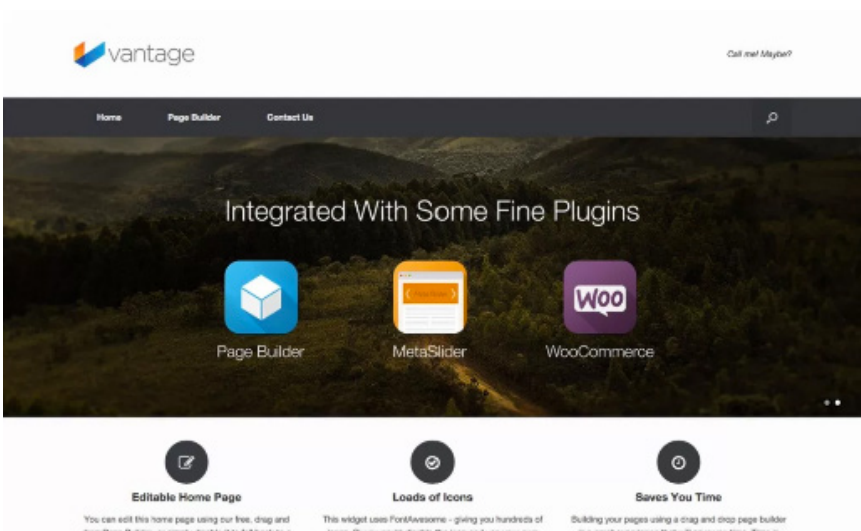
Discover is a professional, clean, and responsive theme which comes complete with features such as custom menus, header images with background, and threaded comments. The orange and white color scheme works perfectly for any store.

Klasik



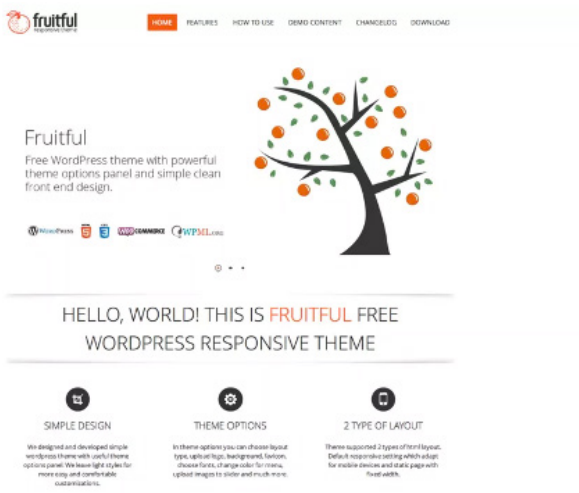
Klasik Framework is a starter theme that can be used for any type of business, blog, or portfolio site. It comes with eight widget areas, four custom widgets, plenty of customization options, and more. Klasik is responsive, Retina-ready, and entirely compatible with WooCommerce.

Vantage



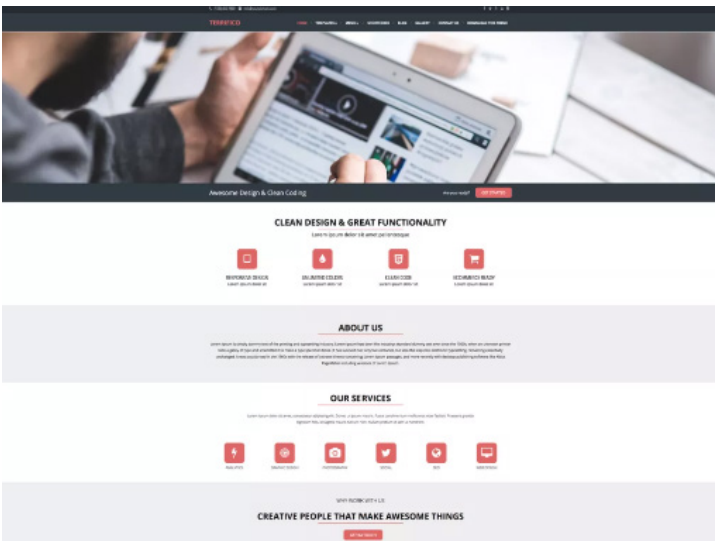
Developed by SiteOrigin, **Vantage** offers a simple and clean layout to help beautify your e-store. Integrated with several plugins, it gives a more intuitive experience. It works well with WooCommerce, PageBuilder, and MetaSlider to create custom and responsive layouts.

Fruitful



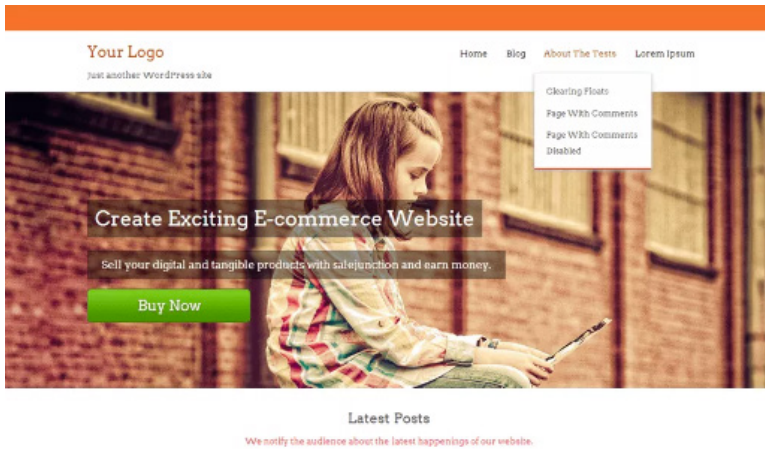
Fruitful is incredibly easy to customize. Changing the background, uploading your own logo, switching styles, and selection colors and layout are all extremely easy. Fonts, slider and social icons can also be easily customized with this theme, which is compatible with WooCommerce, Contact form 7, and WPML.

Terrifico



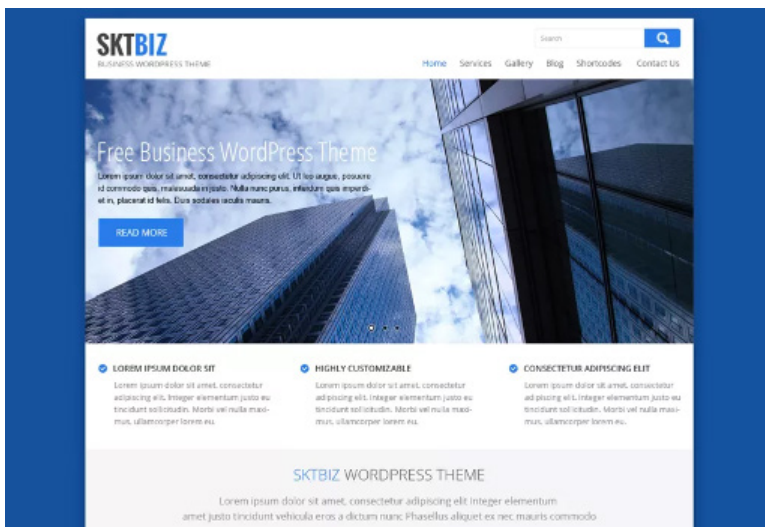
Terrifico is a responsive theme loaded with immense features. Custom logo, background, and favicon can be easily added, and you can also choose from a variety of post formats. A boxed or wide layout can be selected, and there is also a wide support for WooCommerce, translation and Google fonts.

SaleJunction



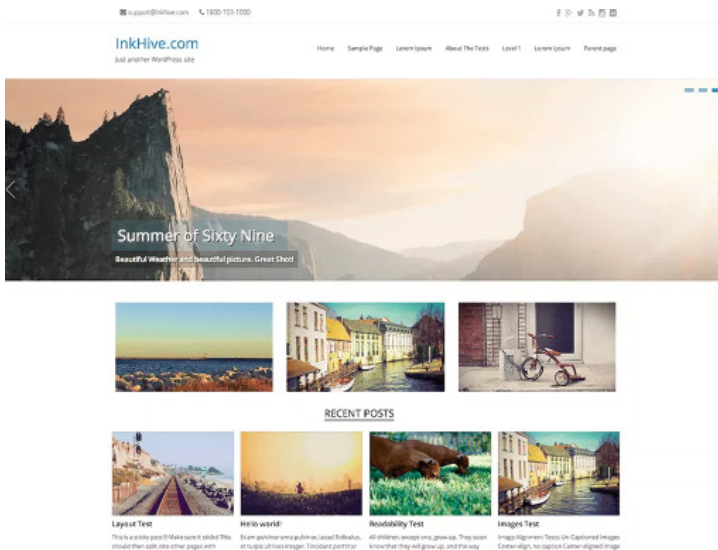
SaleJunction is a fully responsive theme with a slider and blog template along with intuitive options panel. It offers flexibility to upload your own logo and display your blog posts as well to reinforce visitor’s engagement. Great ecommerce is the aim of this theme with serious style.

SKT Biz



If you are looking for an extravagantly professional, responsive and multipurpose WordPress theme that is fit for every type of business, **SKT Biz** is a good choice. With a ready slider and an interactive theme options panel for easy customization, you'll have your site up and running in no time.

Seller



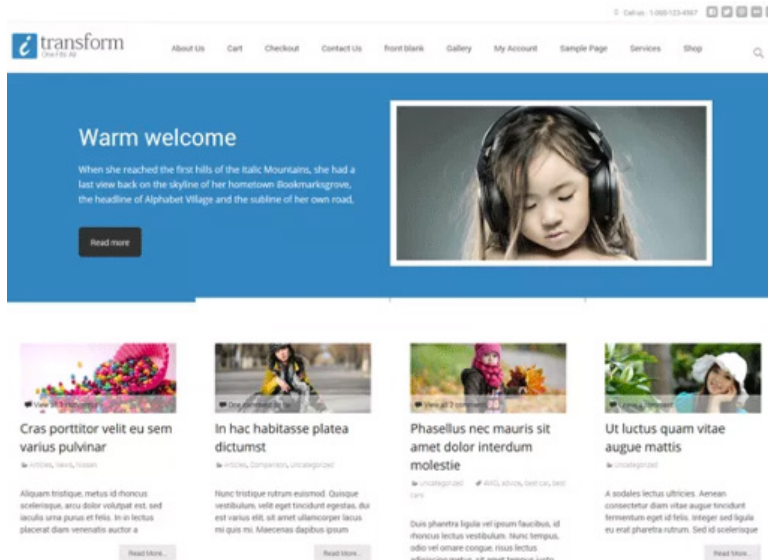
Seller works best with WooCommerce and allows you to create a professional layout. It is a free theme that comes with multiple benefits like footer and custom widgets, slider, multiple page layouts, responsive design, showcase area, and many more.

Simpleo



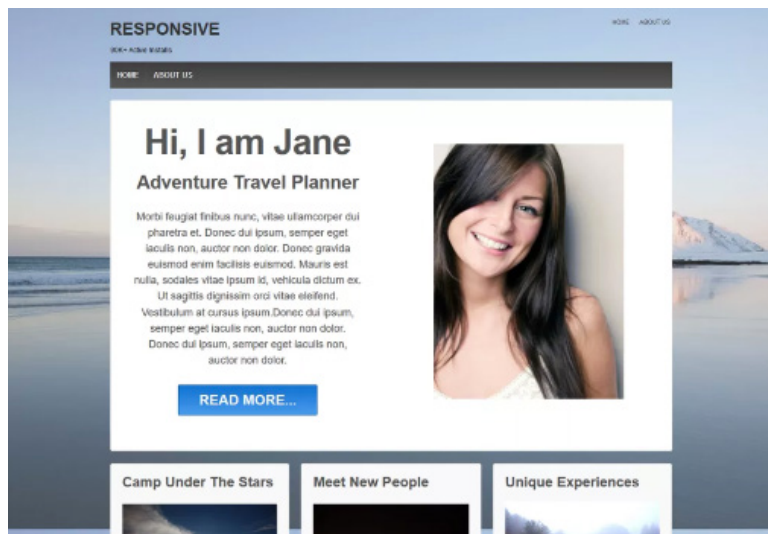
Simpleo has an attractive responsive design perfect for an interactive online store with plenty of features like logos, favicons, custom backgrounds, social icons, colors, and support for Google fonts. The two sliders will make it easy to show off your products.

i-transform



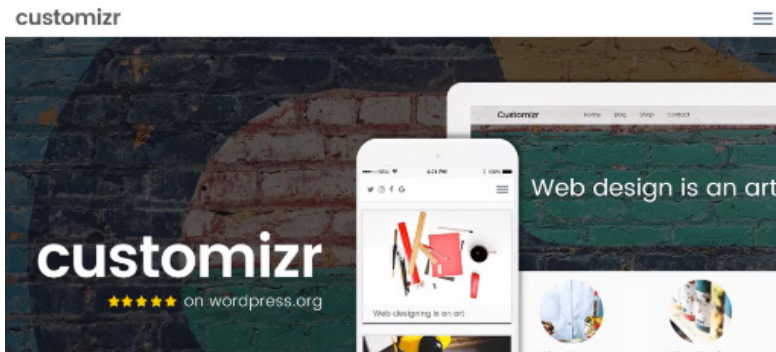
With a powerful toolkit, the **i-transform** WordPress theme provides features like testimonials, portfolios, custom blog posts, and unlimited sliders. Moreover, it offers incredible options such as an admin module, featured post section, and five color schemes. The social media integration is lightweight and comfortable.

Responsive



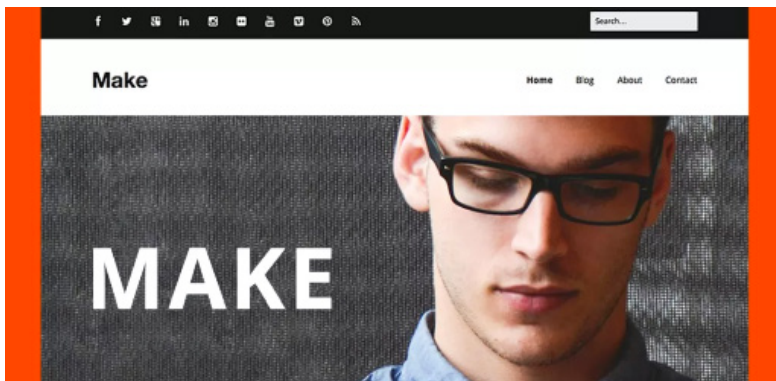
With a fluid grid system, nine page templates, six template layouts, 11 widget areas, and a unique theme options panel, **Responsive** allows you to take over every aspect of your site. Logo and social media icons can be effectively used with this theme, which is SEO friendly, translation and retina-ready and, of course, works well with WooCommerce.

Customizr



This beautiful theme gives the flexibility to see your changes in real time. The website's skin, logo, layout, sliders, featured blocks, and social profiles can be modified as per your taste. **Customizr** is child theme friendly, flat and responsive, it is a perfect option for any burgeoning business.

Make



Make is a great theme with responsive behavior, intuitive drag and drop editor, a photo gallery, and direct integration with WooCommerce. All the settings can be customized from the backend including colors, fonts, layouts, background, and logo as well.

Final Words

All of the mentioned themes are capable of embedding the desired features into your online store to make it robust, user-friendly, and fully optimized for a consistent look and feel.

A photograph of two young women sitting together, looking at a laptop screen. The woman on the left is pointing at the screen with an excited expression, while the woman on the right looks on with interest. They are both wearing denim jackets. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an indoor setting with natural light.

CHAPTER 7

TIPS FOR DESIGNING THE PERFECT ECOMMERCE WEBSITE

BY SUFYAN BIN UZAYR

There once was a time when ecommerce websites were viewed with suspicion by internet users. The concept of purchasing a product online and having it delivered to you was too novel to be trusted.

However, times have changed, and today **ecommerce** is a vital part of the internet. In fact, more and more users are now turning towards ecommerce, and this rise in popularity does not seem to be stopping anytime soon.

So, what makes a perfect ecommerce website? Are there any design considerations that you need to bear in mind? In this article, I will attempt to answer these questions.

Designing an ecommerce website is not as complicated as one might assume. In fact, it isn't really different from designing a mainstream website. Yet, there are certain points and considerations that surely need to be borne in mind.

BASIC DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Before going any further, there are important design considerations that should be understood:

Call to Action Buttons

The Call to Action button is arguably the most important component of an ecommerce website. In general, the 'Add to Cart' button on product pages serves as the de facto Call to Action button for ecommerce websites, and that's the button that you have to drive your users' attention to.

Navigation

Navigation should be as clearly laid as possible. Know that your users will navigate not just by means of the menu, but also via the search bar. So the placement and size of the search bar should be such that its prominence is not compromised.



Images

This is a rather overlooked aspect of eCommerce design. Irrespective of the product that the said store is selling, the golden rule remains the same: use big images, and use lots of them. People wish to **see** the product before they actually pay for it, so having multiple big images positively impacts your mission.

In addition, make sure you offer the ability to pan and zoom, or flip and switch through screenshots or images as and when needed.

USER-FIRST CONSIDERATIONS

Now, on to additional tips that are well worth the investment:

The Checkout Process

The checkout process—from product selection up to payment and order tracking—should be simple and clear. Ease of use is the key concept here: have a straightforward mechanism that allows users to order and pay for a product, and yet another straightforward mechanism that allows users to track the status of their order and/or cancel/modify it if needed.

What you should not have is a plethora of mechanisms each devoted to a particular task: one page that allows the user to enter product details, another page that asks for the shipment address, a third page to confirm the address, yet another to asks for payment details, and one more page to tell the user to review the order, and likewise. This is not only annoying but also rather confusing, and is bound to hurt your conversion rates.



More importantly, please try not to compel your users to signup. Even if signing up does actually offer visible benefits, make sure you offer an option

that allows users to continue without signing up. Unless you intend to offer support for the given product, requiring an account for a purchase is a very bad idea.

Be Shareable!

The power of social networking can be harnessed by eCommerce websites. For your product pages, make sure you have a prominent placing for social media buttons, to enable users to share products that they're interested in. This will, obviously, help draw new users and potential buyers to the website.

Related Products

When designing the layout for a magazine or blog, it's very common to have "Related Posts" or "Stuff You Might Be Interested In" sections—primarily on individual articles/posts.

You should attempt to do the same for eCommerce websites. For each product page, have a section devoted to "Related Products" or "Similar Items You Might Be Interested In."

Again, the logic here is simple: showing such related products will help users shortlist and compare products, and select the one that is best suited for their needs. This will not only boost the sales but also shed a good light on the concerned eCommerce store.

Possible Psychological Considerations

- Lastly, I would also mention certain *psychological* considerations that you can bear in mind when working on eCommerce websites. These points—though technically unproven by research regarding eCommerce websites—seem to have a favorable impact, so there is no harm in trying.
- Try to display the number of items left in stock. Big stores such as Amazon do it regularly; whereas smaller stores avoid it. The psychological basis behind this is that human beings are attracted to scarcity, and an item that has lesser copies remaining in stock has a better chance of being bought.
- If providing product specifications, be precise and possibly use bulleted lists. But if providing product descriptions, be as detailed as possible. For instance, technical specs of a mobile phone need to be precise; but its features need a detailed description. When reading about product descriptions, people tend to prefer a long piece of text that *talks* to them. On the other hand, when looking for product specifications, most people prefer a to-the-point summary.

CHAPTER 8

HOW TO RETAIN ECOMMERCE CUSTOMERS

BY SHAUN QUARTON

How do you make an existing eCommerce store more successful?

It's a very good question, and one that many store owners approach the wrong way.

It's all too easy to fall into the trap of relentlessly chasing *new* customers — 500 customers sounds far better than 400 customers, after all. And there's nothing wrong with this approach really, as extra customers will bring in extra revenue.

However, it's not the easiest way to boost your store's profitability.

Savvy marketers have long realized that it is far easier (and cheaper) to persuade an existing customer to buy from you again than it is to find a new one.

This makes a lot of sense: existing customers are highly targeted, have already trusted you enough to hand over their money, and are familiar with the quality of your products. If their experience with you the first time round was positive, they have no reason not to buy from you again.

When you maintain a happy, loyal customer base, this will increase the lifetime value of each customer. For example, a customer making five separate \$100 purchases would have a lifetime value of \$500. This is far better than a one-off customer making a \$150 transaction, despite the smaller transaction sizes. Knowing key metrics, like the lifetime value of each customer, will help you accurately set your marketing budget.

Today I want to discuss seven strategies to keep your existing customer base happy, and to boost a customer's lifetime value by encouraging repeat purchases.

1. Customer Accounts

Forcing customers to sign up for an account with you is a controversial topic. On one hand, you want your checkout procedure to be as frictionless as possible – forcing a customer to create an account adds friction. On the other hand, it encourages customer loyalty and will make for a quicker checkout in future.

So what is the best option here?

Personally, I think a mixed approach is best: offer a guest checkout and a member checkout.

However, don't underestimate the importance of growing an email list. It's one of the most cost-effective ways to get customers *back* to your website. With this in mind, giving them an offer they can't refuse – for example, 10% off their first order – will push them towards creating an account, and handing over that email address.

Sure, you might lose 10% of your revenue from this first transaction, but if that customer buys from you again, this will more than cover that cost.

2. Subscription Business Model

Many eCommerce stores are waking up to the importance of a customer's lifetime value. This has resulted in a new "breed" of eCommerce store: Product subscription stores.

Now, some eCommerce stores will implement product subscriptions alongside the traditional one-off transactions. For example, Amazon will allow you to buy groceries on a one-off or subscription basis.

However, some eCommerce stores take this one step further and build their entire business around a product subscription model.

Take, for example, a website selling fresh coffee. When someone buys from this shop, they know three things about that person: they like coffee, will drink the coffee, and, at some point, will need *more* coffee.



In such a scenario, doesn't it make sense to give the customer the chance to automatically replenish their stock of fresh coffee on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis? It's super convenient, and lazy consumers will be more than happy to subscribe so that they never run out of coffee, and to avoid the hassle of having to shop regularly.

3. Innovative Product Range

One of the best ways to get consumers rushing back to your website is to offer them something they can't find elsewhere – if they want a particular product, or a particular combination of products, the only place to get them is from *you*.

Of course, this is particularly tricky in the eCommerce world where it seems there is competition for *everything* – if you don't produce your products in-

house, or you can't arrange an exclusivity deal from suppliers, you'll just have to accept that you won't be the only supplier.

However, that doesn't mean you can't be unique; you'll just have to get creative.

This could involve choosing your suppliers more carefully to ensure there is minimal competitor overlap. Or you could specialize in two seemingly unrelated products that just work together: off the top of my head, premium men's skincare products with top-end whiskeys for the executive gentleman – you heard it here first!

4. Customer Loyalty Scheme

Of course, if you're trying to encourage customer loyalty, having a dedicated loyalty scheme in place seems obvious. However, it's a trick that many eCommerce stores are neglecting.

If you reward customers for shopping with you by giving them points towards *money off* vouchers, this provides a great incentive to keep shopping with you. If a customer's head is ever turned by a competitor's store, they will remember the loyalty bonus they have been working towards, and this is often enough to bring them back through your virtual doors.

If you're using WooCommerce, there's a dedicated add-on for this very purpose – called [WooCommerce points and rewards](#). The add-on allows you to define how many points each transaction is worth, and what level of discount these points equate to.

It might seem a little pricey at \$129 for a single site license, but if it can help you consistently bring your customers back, it will pay for itself in no time.

5. Newsletters

This strategy is strongly linked to point 1: if you can persuade a visitor to sign up for an account with your store – or even just to subscribe to your mailing list – you can market directly to their inbox. Often just the act of *receiving* your email will put your website at the forefront of that customer's mind, and this will result in more sales – which is exactly why advertisements work.

Let me provide a real life example, away from the world of eCommerce. One of the trashy UK television shows I watch has recently been sponsored by a well-known pizza company. Despite wanting to eat healthily, every time I see this advert a seed is planted in my head: "I actually *would* like a pizza!" This has caused my pizza consumption skyrocket, despite previously thinking I was immune to the lure of advertisements.



Your newsletter can have this exact effect, making it an effective form of advertisement. You can use the newsletter to inform customers of new product lines, exclusive content, and promotions. However, the biggest impact is often just from putting the thought into a customer's head that they need new shoes, guitar strings, eyeliner, or whatever else it is you're selling.

Sending out a newsletter is easy to implement, cost effective, and one of the most effective ways to drive sales.

6. Win back inactive customers

By effectively monitoring your customers' buying habits, you can extract maximum lifetime value from each customer. Perhaps the best opportunity is to win back an "inactive" customer by encouraging them to buy from you again – this strategy is one of the best ways to turn a one-off customer into a repeat customer.

I'm sure we've all received one of the "*We miss you...*" emails after buying from an online shop once and then failing to follow up on this custom. These will usually say something along these lines: "because we value your custom, we would like to offer you an exclusive 20% off your next purchase."

I must admit, I'm a sucker for these emails, and find the opportunity to get a *discount* outside of the usual promotional periods too good to miss.

There are a number of services that offer this feature, including [RemarketyeCommerce](#) email marketing service. You can also use automated email marketing to reach out to customers reaching the end of a product's lifespan, who are likely ready to buy again, turning a one-time sale into a repeat sale.

If your email list is small enough, you could even consider monitoring things manually.

7. Exceed Customer Expectation

The easiest way to persuade a customer to buy from you again is simply to blow them away with the whole buyer experience. If you exceed a customer's expectations, they have no reason to ever buy from anyone but you.

Of course, this is far easier said than done. However, there are a few things you can do to keep your buyers consistently happy:

- Free gifts – small samples, for example
- Highest quality products
- Top notch customer service
- Hand written *thank you* note
- Stylish packaging
- One-day delivery
- Exclusive discounts
- Acknowledgement on birthday – free gift or birthday discount

There's nothing ground-breaking in that list, but your customers will love you if you can do all these things consistently. Everyone knows customer service and quality is important, but how many consistently go above and beyond to deliver on this?

Customer service isn't cheap – it will cost you to provide free samples with each order, and it takes time to hand write a note – but it really is one of the best ways to attract a loyal following. Consider the expense an investment which will yield a positive return when your customers come flocking back to you.

Final Thoughts

If you run an eCommerce store, make sure you stay focused on the most important metric of all: your website's bottom line.

Don't get me wrong, the number of customers your website attracts *is* an important metric. However, it's also a vanity figure that some webmasters will chase relentlessly, despite there being easier "wins" available. Because it is generally easier and less costly to encourage an existing customer to buy again, this is an area you should focus a substantial portion of your time, effort, and resources.

Never underestimate the importance of cultivating a happy, loyal set of customers to bring in a more reliable revenue stream each month.

CHAPTER 9

TIPS FOR DESIGNING MOBILE ECOMMERCE APPS

BY SUFYAN BIN UZAYR



As of lately, ecommerce has grown at a very rapid pace, with more and more users shopping for their favorite products online. In fact, what began as a trend meant mostly for purchasing books and that occasional gadget online, has now evolved to a tradition, with almost every other buyer browsing for products on the internet, and new eCommerce stores coming up with each passing day.

Beyond that, it has been quite a while since mobile devices have overtaken the desktop, and smartphones and tablets are now our preferred medium for browsing the internet. As such, most websites are turning towards mobile apps, and a mobile-friendly app is available for most eCommerce stores as well.

So, what makes the perfect eCommerce app? Are there any considerations that you should bear in mind when building an eCommerce mobile app? What about some tips for designing mobile eCommerce apps? In this post, I will attempt to answer these questions.

TIPS FOR DESIGNING MOBILE ECOMMERCE APPS

The Checkout Process

It is beyond obvious that the checkout process should be simple and short. A long or confusing checkout process will only turn your visitors or users away. Therefore, things like multi-page sign-ups, especially in a mobile app, are something you should strictly avoid.

However, the checkout process does not just include the part where the user enters shipping and payment details. In fact, it is called “process” for a reason, because it entails multiple steps.

First up, make sure your “Add to Cart” button is visible on all pages in the app, and is prominent enough to be seen by the users. As soon as the users come across a product they wish to purchase, they look for the Add to Cart button, Make it very easy to find.

Next, when using a mobile eCommerce app, do not always insist that the user login via an account on your site. Allow them to sign in via social networks of their choice, and even more so, allow them to continue the checkout process as a guest. People using mobile apps have less patience, and the ability to continue without signing up really helps in this case.

Be User-Friendly!

Most mobile apps tend to pay great attention to User Interface, and some also show good importance to User Experience. However, a good mobile app needs to combine UI and UX and bring the two on the same pedestal, in order to be truly user-friendly.

For instance, UI demands that the images on your page should be clearly visible whereas UX demands that the page should be easy to browse. A good idea will be to add special “mobile-friendly” images, and also to rely on images that do not slow down your app.

More importantly, pay attention to minor details. Everyone is impatient nowadays — this is obvious. And check out processes can take some time — this is obvious as well. So, what’s next?

Give users something that satiates their impatience. Show a progress bar, or a “Step X of Y” type counter during the checkout process, so that they are aware of roughly how long a given checkout process will take. Human minds tend to react better when they are aware of how long they need to wait, as compared to something abstract like “almost there.”

Similarly, do not just have an “Add to Cart” feature. Allow users to short-list products. But, do not simply scream out “Short-list” on the app; let them add the given product to a wishlist, or a list of favorites, and so on.

Lastly, even though it is obvious that you will take every step to ensure that user data is secure, make sure your app talks about safety. People need assurance, and for that matter, do not send them to the website. Instead, mention that you are employing encryption and security measures, and mention it frequently both in on-app pages as well as in the settings section of the app.

Remember, it is “Mobile.”

A good idea is to study the Thumb-friendly zone, as shown below ([read this](#) for detailed info).



Basically, the concept here is to keep the key buttons, such as Add to Cart within the easy reach of the right-hand's thumb. As much as 70-90% of the world's population is right-handed, so yeah, exhibiting a slight bias in favor of right-handed folks is well worth forgiving.

Be warned though: since the crazy trend nowadays is to increase the screen size of smartphones and tablets, the thumb-friendly zone is likely to decrease.

Beyond that, keep your navigation menu highly consistent all throughout the app. Utilizing a slide-out mechanism for basic features such as view cart, settings, etc. is the ideal choice. But within the pages of the app, keep the menu consistent, and highly condensed. Unlike a desktop site, mobile apps do not give you the luxury of placing several products within the menu, so a consistent layout can help users in navigating back and forth within the app.

Conclusion

Studies suggest that as many as 85 percent of users tend to prefer using a mobile app over a website. Quite obviously, having a mobile app for your eCommerce business is a very sound and logical decision, especially bearing into consideration that the mobile user base is definitely expected to keep expanding.



About Torque

Torque is a news site featuring all things WordPress. We are dedicated to informing new and advanced WordPress professionals, users, and enthusiasts about the industry. Torque focuses primarily on WordPress News, Business, and Development, but also covers topics relating to open source and breakthrough technology. Torque made its debut in July 2013, at WordCamp San Francisco, and has since produced valuable content that reflects the evolution of WordPress, both as a platform and a community. Torque is a WP Engine publication, though maintains complete editorial independence. torquemag.io



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WP Engine powers amazing digital experiences for websites and applications built on WordPress. The company's premium managed hosting platform provides the performance, reliability and security required by the biggest brands in the world, while remaining affordable and intuitive enough for smaller businesses and individuals. Companies of all sizes rely on WP Engine's award-winning customer service team to quickly solve technical problems and create a world-class customer experience. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas and has offices in Limerick, Ireland, San Francisco, California, San Antonio, Texas, and London, England. wpengine.com

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