How to Start Dropshipping in 2020

Your all killer, no filler guide





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How to Use This Guide

If you're anything like me, you've probably already skimmed through this book (or even just the table of contents) and thought, "Wow, this is long AF."

That's because it's loaded with step-by-step instructions – everything you need to know to start your own dropshipping store.

There are three ways to read this guide:

- 1. If you're completely new to dropshipping, read it from beginning to end, following the steps described as you go. By the end of the book, you'll have your store live and an in-depth understanding of how to start marketing.
- 2. If you already have some dropshipping knowledge or progress on your store, use the guide as a reference. You can jump in and out of the chapters when you're working through different stages of building and marketing your store.
- 3. If you've already built your store, you can jump ahead to Chapter 7, which is where all the juicy marketing tips start.

Happy dropshipping!



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Meet the Authors





We're **Amanda Gaid** and **Adeel Qayum**, two dropshipping and marketing enthusiasts who have been immersed in these topics for years. We're all about sharing what we've learned so that we can help aspiring entrepreneurs get rid of the "aspiring" part and make their dreams a reality.

When making this book, we each wrote our own chapters. You'll see "Amanda here," or "Adeel here," at the beginning of every chapter so you can keep track of who's talking to you.

1

What Is Dropshipping?

Amanda here.

Since you're reading this book right now, you probably can relate to one of these:

- You're exhausted by your 9-to-5 office job and you want some more flexibility in life.
- You want to earn some extra money from the comfort of your couch (pants optional).
- You dream of being your own boss, but you're not sure where to start.

No matter what brought you here, this book will tell you everything you need to know about how to start making sales with dropshipping.

If you don't know anything about dropshipping, don't worry! This is a complete beginner's guide. No experience needed.

And by the end, you'll know every single step you need to take to make money with your first online store.

You'll even get plenty of advice from dropshipping pros – like Jenny Lei, who earned \$680,532 in eight months with her handbag store. That's a whole lotta money.

But first, a very important note. I'm going to be honest with you right now: dropshipping isn't a piece of cake. It takes a lot of work. Most of the pros you'll hear from in this book failed on their first store (and second, and third...).

abla FROM THE PROS

Andreas and Alexander's success didn't come easy, and it definitely wasn't their first store that was their big money-maker. It was her third store, to be exact! In an interview with us, they offered up some super important advice for newbies.

"When many people are first starting out with dropshipping, they're held back by a particular fear: Why would anyone buy off me instead of Amazon? Yes, people could get it cheaper on Amazon, but on Amazon the marketing is very cold because everything looks the same.



As long as your prices are okay, the product pages look good and the trust is there, then they will not look around anyway, they'll just buy it from you."

Jenny is the perfect example that you need to be persistent, creative, and resilient. You need to plan for failure and have a backup plan ready to go. Most importantly, you need to be dedicated to kicking ass.

We'll talk more about your mindset in the next chapter, so stay tuned.

For now, let's get down to business.

How Dropshipping Works

Let's start at the beginning: What is dropshipping, anyway?

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

dropshipping: A business model that you can use to <u>run your store</u> without ever holding any inventory. When you make a sale, your supplier will ship your products from their warehouse, straight to your customer's doorstep. You'll never need to worry about storing, packaging, or shipping your products.



Here's a quick breakdown of how dropshipping works, and how **merchants** make their money.

- **1.** Your customer places an order on your Shopify website. Say the price is \$200.
- 2. You forward that order to your **supplier** and pay them the **wholesale** price, say \$150.
- **3.** The supplier ships the product directly to your customer.
- **4.** You get to keep that \$50 profit to put in your piggy bank or reinvest in your store.

Simple, right?

Ⅲ ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

merchant: A person who owns a store and sells products to customers. In this book, I use "merchant" to talk about a dropshipping store owner.

supplier: The companies and people who sell wholesale products to merchants. They hold the stock and ship it to your customers for you.

wholesale: When products are manufactured and sold in bulk. Because they're made and sold in bulk, the supplier pays less to run their business. That's why they can give you a big discount.

The Dropship Model

Customer places order and pays you retail price (\$200) Forward order to your supplier and pay wholesale (\$150)





Pros and Cons of Dropshipping

Before you dive into starting a business, you should understand what you're up against. Here are some key advantages and disadvantages so you can weigh out if it's the right choice for you.

Dropshipping Pros

Quick to start. You don't even need any prior business experience! If you take some time to learn the basics, you can get started fast and learn the rest as you go along. Because ordering and shipping of items are taken off your hands, you get more time to focus on marketing.

Room to grow. As you grow, your business model doesn't have to

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

stocking: A retail word for making sure a store's shelves are always filled with products. These products are also referred to as 'stock.' Stocking can also refer to making sure that there's enough of a product in the warehouse or back room.

change very much at all. You'll have to put more work into sales and marketing, but your day-to-day will stay more or less the same. Your costs to grow won't be huge either, and you can grow at your own pace.

Demands less money to start. You can start dropshipping with minimal investment because you don't have to purchase inventory upfront. Even as your business grows, your costs will be fairly low – your expenses will be limited to marketing and website setup fees.

Flexible. This is one of its biggest benefits. You get to be your own boss, set your own rules, and work at your own pace. Again, because you don't have to buy any inventory upfront, you can easily list new products whenever you want – you only need a laptop and WiFi. Also, you can continually test and adapt until you find something that works – the business model gives you the flexibility to adjust strategies on the fly.

Simple to manage. Since the majority of dropshippers run their businesses solo, you can manage everything with little hassle. You can do everything all by yourself if you want to. Once you've found suppliers and gotten everything set up, you're mostly responsible just for your online storefront, marketing, and customer service.

Dropshipping Cons

Low profit margins. This is especially true when you're selling competitive items. When you have lower competition, you'll have better margins, but usually not crazy high. That's why you'll need to focus on getting a lot of sales to make a lot of profit.

You don't have a lot of control.

When it comes to stocking products, order **fulfillment**, and shipping, things are out of your hands entirely. You have to rely on your suppliers to do everything right and work seamlessly. You'll also need to learn how to deal with issues as you go.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

fulfillment: All the steps
a company takes between
receiving a new order and placing
that order into the customer's
hands. In dropshipping, there are
much less steps to fulfillment than
in a physical store or traditional
ecommerce store.

Customer service is tougher. To add to the point above, a lack of control makes it tough when you have customer complaints. You'll have to take the blame for when the supplier does things wrong. But if you focus on keeping your customers happy, you should be able to manage in the long run.

Order processing can be hard. If you have more than one or two suppliers, things can get complicated. They might have different shipping options or different ways to process orders and bill you. That's why I recommend starting with no more than three suppliers for your first try.

To learn more about pros and cons, check out this video.



Legal Considerations

Let's look at how to make sure you're following GDPR laws, as well as how to register your business.

GDPR Compliance

If you live in the European Union (EU) or sell to EU customers, GDPR is too important to ignore. Even if you don't check off these boxes, you should keep it in mind.

First, let's learn what GDPR is.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

GDPR: Short for General Data Protection Regulation. GDPR creates rules for how all European residents' data must be managed. It took effect in May 2018 and impacts the handling of data related to everything from medical history to financial records to internet activity.

Why Is GDPR Important?

GDPR is in place to safeguard the data of EU citizens. Under GDPR, organizations must follow rules of responsible data collection and usage to protect users' rights and privacy.

By putting this responsibility on organizations, GDPR is giving EU individuals more rights to understand how and why their personal information is being collected and used. It also gives them the right to decide how they want this information to be used.

If you don't comply with GDPR, it can result in pretty hefty fines and penalties – up to four percent of a company's annual turnover! Case in point: a Polish retailer was hit with a huge fine of €650,000.

Who Does GDPR Apply to?

Regardless of where you are based, GDPR applies to all companies that offer products or services to consumers in Europe.

So if your store is <u>available in Europe</u>, you probably have to comply with GDPR.

Just remember: GDPR compliance isn't simply for European companies selling products to European customers. It covers any interaction with customers in Europe, period.

GDPR Compliance Checklist

The full GDPR is 88 pages and more than 50,000 words long. So we'll spare you the details and just go over some key tips to make sure you're compliant (which is a fancy word for "following the rules").

- Make sure to get clear consent from your visitors. Don't use preticked boxes or assumptions that they want your content, like joining your email list.
- Collect only the necessary. The rule is, if you don't need any piece of information, don't ask for it.
- Be open about your GDPR compliance. Give them the option to opt-out, mention GDPR in your terms and conditions, and make your privacy statements clear and visible. If you have certified trust marks, show them off.
- Be transparent and honest. Full GDPR compliance may not be a walk
 in the park, if you're straight with your methods, regulators may close
 one eye on any soft violations and even help you with it.

Please remember that this GDPR checklist only serves as a guide. Each organization will have its own specific GDPR requirements to fulfill and policy to state. To learn more about GDPR, check out this helpful video.



Registering Your Business

When you first start your store, it's not necessary to register your business just yet.

You can wait until you actually have sales, and you've proven that your store idea is successful. Like I mentioned earlier, it's very common that your first – or second, or third – store idea won't be as successful as you think. Totally normal.

Here are a few short steps for how to register a business in the U.S.

L TIP TIME

If you live in a different country, try Googling "how to register a business in [your country/city]." Look for resources on government websites so you can be sure everything is right.

- Register with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). It has
 to be a unique name that nobody has ever registered before, so <u>use USPTO's</u>
 free tool to check if your business name is available.
- 2. Choose your business entity. You can choose a limited liability company (LLC), or one of two incorporation types: an S corporation or a C corporation. Generally, an LLC requires less paperwork and expenses. But before you choose, make sure you understand how the entity type will affect your taxes. You can read more about that here.
- Get your employee identification number (EIN). This is a federal tax number that allows you to register your business on a federal level.
- 4. Consider opening a business bank account. After you register your business, you can open a bank account for it. This can help you keep your business and personal money separate, which will help a lot when tax season comes. It can also help your business look more professional.

Dropshipping FAQs

Let's look at some frequently asked questions (FAQs) about dropshipping.

How long does it take for customers to get their order?

The delivery time depends on where your supplier's warehouse is and where the customer's house is. It might take several days or a few weeks, but the rule of thumb for most dropshippers is two to four weeks.

It also depends on the way the order is shipped. Most products have different shipping methods you can choose from, like <u>ePacket</u>. We'll cover this more in Chapter 4.

© TIP TIME

If you're concerned customers won't be happy with the shipping time, make sure to be clear about how long it could take either on the product page or your store's FAQ page.

How much money does it cost to start?

One of the best things about dropshipping is that it doesn't require much investment. But it's important that you consider the basic costs:

- Shopify subscription. After your free 14-day trial, a Basic plan is \$29 a month plus a small transaction fee for each order.
- Marketing budget. You can do your own marketing for very cheap, but if you plan to run Facebook Ads, you should have at least a few hundred dollars to spend.
- Custom domain (optional). This is usually about \$12 per year.

I also recommend setting aside part of your budget to order sample products. This will allow you to test the quality and potentially take your own photos.

What profit margins can I expect?

Your dropshipping profits will depend on these four things:

- Product price. This is the cost price given to you by the supplier.
 Buying items at close to wholesale costs is a great way to improve your overall profit.
- 2. Shipping price. It refers to the cost incurred to get your products delivered to the customer's doorstep. Options like EMS shipping can help you earn a higher profit.
- **3. Marketing costs.** These are the expenses you'll incur while promoting your products via Facebook ads, influencers, etc.
- **4. Price you charge/branding.** This is the price you'll charge after factoring in your product, shipping, and marketing costs. You can charge more for a product that's branded as a premium.

We'll talk more about pricing in Chapter 5.

How long does it take to make the first sale?

That depends on you. It can be your first day or after a month. It mostly depends on how much work you put in, the type of audience you're targeting, whether those people actually like your products, and how much success your marketing activities have.



i'm sure you have a million more questions. But don't worry, we're going to cover everything you need to get started in this book. Next up: how to manage your expectations and keep your attitude in the right place.

2

How to Keep a Positive Mindset

Amanda here.

Albert Einstein once said, "The only source of knowledge is experience."

He was right, but it doesn't have to be *your* experience. You can leverage knowledge from other people's lessons. You can stand on the shoulders of giants. And luckily for you, this ebook is a ladder to get you to those shoulders.

To kick things off, we're going to talk about the absolute most important thing that you have control over in this whole dropshipping process: your mindset.

Let's look at some important things to understand about finding success with dropshipping – including some of the toughest challenges – and how to align your mindset so that you're ready for the adventure.



Overnight Success Is a Myth

You see it everywhere: The rags-to-riches story of a guru who swears they found success overnight. Sometimes, they're trying to sell you "one simple trick" – the trick that made them millions.

It's so important to understand that this just isn't real.

But the hard part is that we live in a world that loves the thought of instant success. We love it because it skips the hard part: the work.

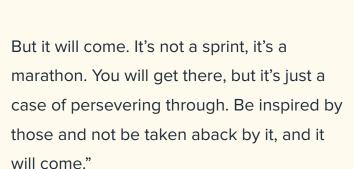
It doesn't help when we're constantly being bombarded with images and stories of people who shot up to fame and fortune in a day. No one writes about the slow and sometimes painful grind most entrepreneurs have to push through every day.

There's no miracle shake that can actually cut inches off your waist. There's no sleep rhythm that will add hours to your day. And there's no "hack" that will flood your store with orders and turn you into a millionaire while you sleep.

T FROM THE PROS

Harry Coleman kept building his business to become an incredible multimillion-dollar empire. He advises new dropshippers to be patient, and not to let all the flashy talk make you feel like you're not doing good enough right now.

"When people are posting screenshots of them making \$10,000 a day when you're only making \$100 it's very easy to beat yourself up and think, 'Why are they having the success and I'm not?'





There is no shortcut. Success must be earned.

The keys to success are hard work and learning. Once you've got all the right tools in your kit and combine them with a dedicated work ethic, success becomes inevitable.

So ask yourself:

- Do I have the determination to continue working on my site and brand long before making a single sale?
- Can I find the courage to send emails to a small list, or make content for a Facebook page only friends have (reluctantly) liked?
- Will I wake up an hour earlier or give up my lunch to work on building my dream?
- Can I push through when I'm frustrated or feeling beat down?
- Do I have faith in my process, my tools, and myself?

If you answered yes to these questions, you can learn how to be successful.

But remember: it won't happen overnight.

Face your venture with courage, humility, and patience. As long as you push your business, you'll continue to fail, because failure is a part of growth.

But over time, you'll finally find yourself seeking failure for the learning opportunity that follows it.

That's the key to success.

5 Traits of a Growth Mindset

Sure, we all have our bad days. It's totally fine if you find yourself needing to let out a good cry. I know I've been there... more than once.

But one of the biggest differences between overall success and failure is how you look at the bigger picture. Are you stuck in a negative mindset day after day? Do small challenges feel like huge barriers? Are you only looking at your failures instead of celebrating your victories?

Here are five traits of people who have a growth mindset. Try to work toward these each day, and you'll be surprised how it affects your new business – and even things like your mental health and relationships.

1. Positivity

Successful entrepreneurs with a positive mindset have an overall optimistic attitude.

Pessimism and negative thoughts will always happen, but these entrepreneurs are careful not to fall prey to them. This goes for negativity from their own brains as well as from others.

Entrepreneurs with growth mindsets know that even if they don't have the <u>skills</u> necessary to run a dropshipping business right now, they're smart enough (and willing) to learn.

Most importantly, positive thinkers know the difference between an obstacle and a dead end. Yes, Facebook targeting is tough to understand – at first. And yup, customer complaints can wear you down. But these are just obstacles to overcome, not world-ending events that will always lead to failure.

2. Forward-thinking

Successful ecommerce entrepreneurs think about growth and progress every day. They don't get weighed down by unnecessary details or unimportant problems. They understand the importance of <u>weighing opportunity costs</u>.

Successful entrepreneurs with a positive mindset prioritize the options that lead to actual growth, and they delegate or get rid of the rest.

Every day they ask themselves, "How does this serve my goals?"

3. Action

Successful store owners don't sit around waiting for the "perfect opportunity."

You can spend some time thinking about the perfect domain name, but don't sweat the small stuff too much if it doesn't come to you easily. Even when it comes to something important like a marketing plan, it doesn't have to be 100 percent filled out for you to get started.

The best store owners know their store and process will never be completely perfect, but they don't let this stop them. Instead, they get creative with what they have. The important thing is to get going and keep your momentum. You can always improve it later.

T FROM THE PROS

Jordan Bourque learned this the hard way, before his outdoor hobby store raked in 10,000 orders and \$100,000 in revenue. At first, he was obsessed with learning as much as possible, without focusing on getting started and improving as he went.



"I would over-consume content and learn strategies from a bunch of different socalled gurus, but just be overwhelmed with the material. I would forget to implement it into my business.

When realistically what you should be doing is learning a little bit and implementing it, learning a little bit and implementing it... Don't expect to know everything, because the fact of the matter is that you never will."

4. Realism

Keep in mind, mindsets aren't delusions. They aren't tools to trick yourself into believing lies. In other words, the most important mindset you'll find in successful ecommerce entrepreneurs is realism.

Ecommerce isn't a get-rich-quick scheme. It's definitely profitable, but as I mentioned before, it's not an overnight path to wealth and fame.

But building your website and loading it with products is the easy part. Marketing your store, building your brand, and serving your customers require attention, dedication, and hard work.

Many entrepreneurs dive into dropshipping with the "if you build it, they will come" mentality. Those people often end up pretty disappointed.

5. Focus

Entrepreneurs with a positive mindset prioritize their store above all other projects. They aren't distracted by new projects or the next internet gimmick opportunity of the week. They aim their sights on that single goal, and invest all of their efforts into achieving it.

Most importantly, successful store owners finish what they start. They aren't satisfied with an incomplete job. They know if they don't follow through and meet their goal, then they've wasted a lot of time and energy.

Resourcefulness Is More Important than Resources

According to Gallup, 84 percent of potential entrepreneurs never start a business because they like the security of a steady income. And 68 percent say they don't have enough personal savings to start.

How many business ideas or opportunities have you passed over because you didn't have the money to get started? How many have you abandoned because they would've required you to take on piles of debt or wait years to make a profit?

Money is definitely a legitimate concern, but it's just a resource – not a dead end.

At the end of the day, you have to make your own resources. That's called resourcefulness, and it's the single most important skill you can have as a new dropshipper.

Let's talk about some of the ways you can become a more resourceful ecommerce entrepreneur.

Accept That You Don't Know Everything

If you find something confusing or difficult, it's just because you haven't learned it yet. Before you can find the solution to a problem, you first have to realize the gaps in your knowledge and abilities.

If you're anything like me, this can be really tough. But once you accept that there's room to grow, the doors open for you to become stronger, faster, and smarter (instead of just frustrated and exhausted).

Lean on Other People

Find solutions to problems any way you can, even if it means consulting others.

This is especially important if you hire an assistant or a freelancer. If you're paying them, you may as well use them as much as possible.

Don't be afraid to speak up when you have a problem. Tell everyone you meet, even if you don't think they could help.

Let them know you're struggling with something and you'd like their input. You never know where a good idea can come from and where they might lead you.

Join Communities of Other Store Owners

Many new dropshippers deal with the same problems you're facing. Solving a problem is often as simple as reaching out to someone who's been there before.

Join a few or all of the communities listed here. Engage with other dropshippers regularly (before you ask for help) to build a rapport.

- Ecommerce Fuel Forum
- The Shopify Ecommerce University Forum
- Digital Point Ecommerce Forum
- Shopify Entrepreneurs
- The Reddit Ecommerce Section

Optimize What You Have

In the 80s, an American TV show called <u>MacGyver</u> showed an amazingly resourceful secret agent who could make bombs and other devices out of common household items like string, duct tape, and a tile cleaner.

He got out of sticky situations and saved the day using only the stuff at his disposal and his own resourcefulness.

As an ecommerce store owner, you have to be your own MacGyver. When there's a challenge in front of you, ask yourself, "What tools do I already have that I can use to solve my problem?"

Solve Today's Problem, Not Tomorrow's

Solve the problem in front of you instead of worrying about the state of your business down the road. You'll find your problems are smaller than they seem when you trim them down to the essential few.

Don't build solutions for a million-dollar business. You're not there yet. And you won't be there for a while.

Instead, focus on building solutions that solve the problems you're already dealing with. For example, you don't need a top-of-the-line email marketing tool today because you hope to have 100K subscribers tomorrow. That's expensive and complex.

For now, run with <u>some free tools</u> to get your system running right away. You can worry about your 100K subscribers when you have them.

Take Care of Yourself

You'll also need to make sure that you're taking time off to care for yourself.

That's because you'll probably find yourself awake at 3 a.m. writing product descriptions or frantically fixing a PayPal issue. This is especially true if you're starting a store as a side job to your regular 9-to-5.

To make sure you don't burn out and totally crash, try to set some time every day for self-care. Here are some tips for doing that.

Try to Get Enough Sleep

You might be tempted to power through the night to get more work done, but the quality of that work will be questionable. <u>Sleep deprivation</u> robs you of your creativity and ability to make good decisions. This means you're likely to produce low-quality work you'll end up redoing anyway.

It would be ideal to get seven to nine hours of uninterrupted sleep every day. I know, this is a lot easier said than done. While this just isn't always possible, keep it on your mind so that you can squeeze it in whenever you have the opportunity.

Don't Forget To Reward Yourself

It seems counterintuitive to reward yourself before you build a business. Isn't the reward supposed to be a healthy ecommerce store that makes loads of cash?

Still, we need to celebrate our smallest victories, even if we do it alone. You don't have to take crazy trips, but give yourself a pat on the back every time you achieve a milestone (a minor goal that contributes to your main goal). Get yourself a delicious treat, watch a movie, or crack open a beer – whatever makes you feel good.

And don't fall into the trap of working through every weekend and holiday.

Sure, those feel like "extra hours" when you can get ahead. But if you don't stop and celebrate anything, your life will become one long work day. Spoiler alert: eventually, it'll drive you nuts.

\P FROM THE PROS

Remember Jordan Bourque? Celebrating his victories was one of the biggest lessons he learned about entrepreneurship.



"What I learned about entrepreneurship is that it can become a constant uphill climb of always seeking more and never being fulfilled with where you're at.

It's a scary thing when you think about it: you're never being fulfilled, so you have to put on the breaks and look back and see what you've already accomplished. That's what I'm doing now."

Interact with People in Real Life

Loneliness can creep up on you, even if you're someone who doesn't mind being alone. Long stretches of time without human contact can make you feel anxious and depressed. Over time, <u>loneliness can manifest as physical health problems</u> like heart disease and cancer.

If you work a full-time job during the day, you might have enough human interactions to keep you sane. But if all your work takes place online, put yourself in situations where you'll meet other people.

You could take your laptop to a coworking space or coffee shop, or consider joining entrepreneur meetups.

Don't Saddle Yourself with Debt

It's guaranteed you're going to spend some money growing your business. The best part of the dropshipping model is that you don't need a ton of cash to get started, but there will be expenses: Tools, software, ads, and so on.

Debt doesn't just slow your growth. Like loneliness, it can cause stress and multiple physical health problems.

But be careful not to sink too much money into your business until you take some out, especially if you need that money to live. As a rule, don't spend what you can't afford to lose.

Create a Positive Workspace

Dark, tight, and unappealing spaces can be hard on your mental health. You don't need a big, swanky office with pricey furniture and a view of the ocean, but it's helpful to work in a space you enjoy being in.

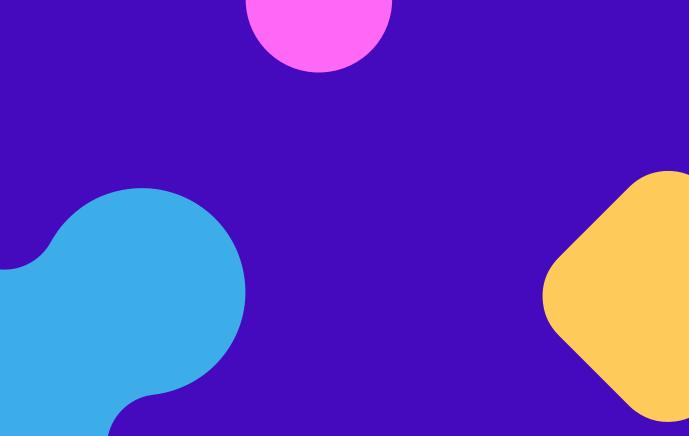
Small improvements like a plant, an extra lamp, or a family photo can help make work relaxing and enjoyable.



Mow, you have the low-down on how to keep your head on straight. Next up: let's get to the good stuff. First step to starting your store is to choose your niche.

3

Choose Your Niche



Amanda here.

One of the biggest and most stressful questions a new dropshipper asks themselves is, "What should I sell?!"

Obviously, this defines your whole business. But don't lose sleep over it.

Because no matter what you do – no matter how many hours of research you put in – you'll never know how well your store will perform until you get out there and try.

T FROM THE PROS

Mandie and Aubrey started with a Facebook group to sell various household, beauty, and kids products with a slight markup. It really caught on, so they decided to build a dropshipping store. They launched the store in April 2018 and earned more than \$100,000 in six months – without ever spending a dollar on advertising.

Now, they have a Nike-esque "just try it" philosophy. Aubrey says:



"It's surprising sometimes what does and doesn't do well. Our joke is, 'Hey, do you think this will sell well?' And it's like, 'Just try it. I don't know.'

I thought last week that a product was going to be a killer and it didn't sell any... and I thought another product was totally stupid and we sold 400. So I just don't know anymore, which is funny."

And here's a secret that most people won't tell you: it's not really about what you sell. It's about why you sell it. In the end, even an amazing product is nothing without a valuable experience for shoppers. (I'll show you all about that when it's time to build your store and create a brand.)

One more thing. A lot of people talk about making sure that you don't choose a saturated niche, which is a niche that a lot of people are already selling in.

But the truth is, you can find success selling just about anything if you really put in the time and learn how people shop and what motivates them to buy things.

All that said, there are some steps to help make sure you're choosing a promising niche without pulling all your hair out on day one.

Let's dive into those steps.

What's a Niche, Anyway?

Before you find a niche, you should probably know what it is. As you can see in the dictionary, a niche is a distinct, targeted market inside a bigger market.

For example, you can divide the clothing market into niches like men's, women's, and children's clothing. But these are still huge.



ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

niche: Short for niche market. A niche is a distinct, smaller part of a bigger market. For example, in the broad 'clothing' market, 'women's clothing' is a niche.

You can – and should – go even smaller. Women's clothing still has many styles like bohemian, vintage, punk, high-fashion, or minimalistic. And even then, you can still go smaller like vegan bohemian or punk for teenagers.

Dropshipping entrepreneur Tim Kock once built a store that made almost \$9,000 in one month. The secret? His niche wasn't just sunglasses. This would have been too broad.

He only marketed his sunglasses to bloggers and people with a social media presence. He aimed for people who love to share their newest fashion accessories on Instagram.

L TIP TIME

People who make up niche markets have more specific wants, needs, and buying habits. That's why you should cater to a niche instead of being like a big chain or department store that sells a little bit of everything.

There are some key benefits to this strategy:

- When you're marketing to a niche audience, it will be waaaaay easier to find and reach your best customers, because they'll share superspecific traits and habits.
- Generally, the narrower your niche, the less competition you'll have.
- You'll have a better chance of getting loyal customers who trust you to meet their unique needs and wishes.
- And in the game of dropshipping, loyal and trusting customers are a golden ticket.

Here are some more niche ideas. Keep in mind that this is just barely scratching the surface!

Beauty

- All-natural makeup
- Eyeshadow palettes
- Body scrubs
- Fake eyelashes
- Men's skincare products
- Nail art

Fitness

- Running
- Women's cycling
- Bodybuilding
- Yoga
- Children swimming
- Crossfit

Health*

- Vegan or organic products
- Weight loss products
- Digestive health
- Teeth whitening
- Massagers
- Anti-stress toys

Home

- Minimalist decor
- Kitchen appliances
- Cooking accessories
- Terrariums
- Rustic furniture
- Outdoor gardening

Fashion accessories

- Scarves
- Hats
- Hair accessories
- Sunglasses
- Jewelry
- Vintage purses

Tech

- Smart speakers
- Smartphone accessories
- iPhone repair kit
- Projectors
- Senior-friendly desktops
- Air purifiers

U TIP TIME

Be careful in the health category. Some countries have laws and regulations about what you can sell. If you choose a health niche, make sure you do your research.

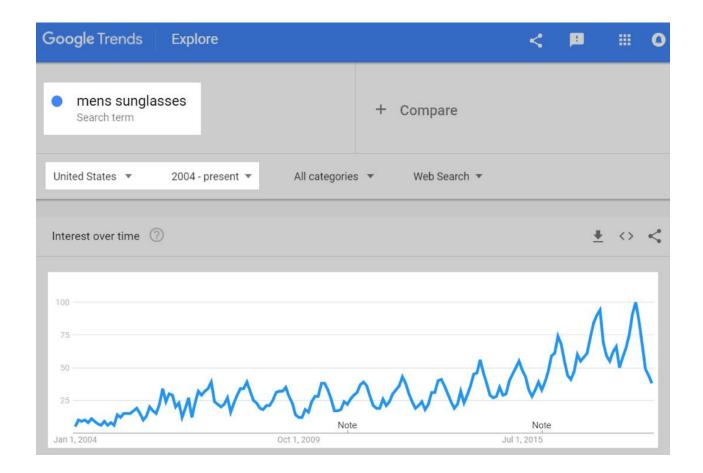
Steady vs. Trending Niches

A steady niche (also called an evergreen niche) is one that will have demand yearround, for a long time to come. It's the kind of product category that isn't going away, like various types of clothing and accessories, personal hygiene products, home goods, and sports and hobby items.

You can check easily if a niche is steady or trending with Google Trends. For example, I typed in "men's sunglasses" and U.S. as the location and "2004 – present" as the timeframe.

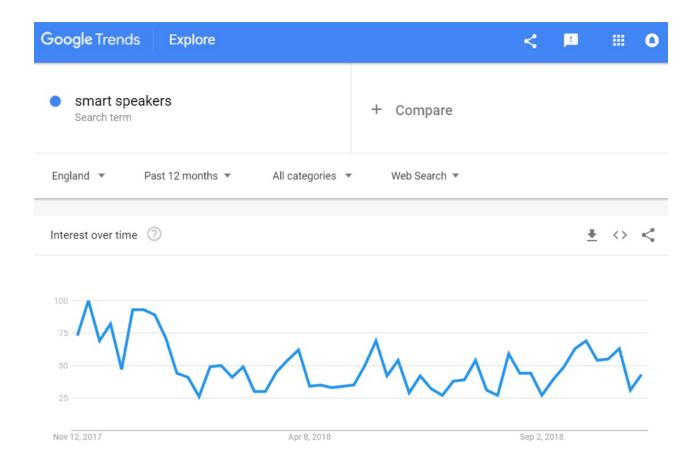
You can see that it's a pretty steady niche that's actually growing. Since 2004, more people are looking for men's sunglasses online.

As you can see, searches peak every June and July – which makes perfect sense, since that's the peak of summertime sunshine in the Northern Hemisphere.



You can also change things like your time range and the region where people are searching.

Here, you can see results for "smart speakers" from users in England over the past 12 months. You can see that it's fairly steady too. It peaked in November and December, which shows that it's probably a popular holiday gift.



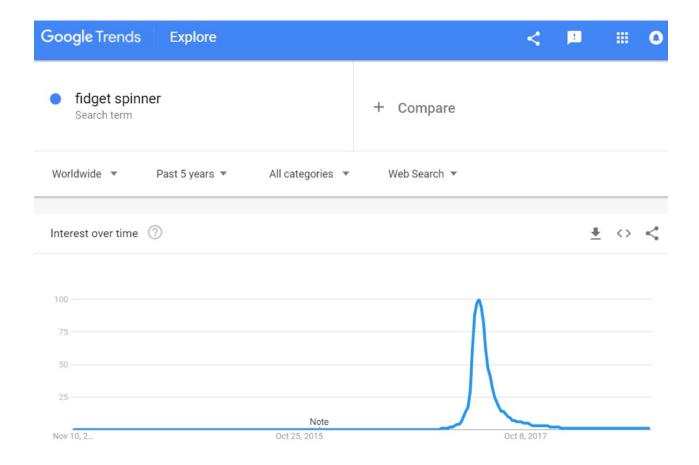
A trending niche, also known as a fad, is more temporary – it might be a hot-seller now, but the trend will eventually die off, like fidget spinners or the recent unicorntheme craze.

There's definitely money to be made by jumping into a trend (if you can get into it early enough), but keep in mind that your business will slow a lot once the trend is over.

• TIP TIME

Choose a steady niche if you plan to have a solid, long-term store. Jumping into a trending niche can be risky, especially for a beginner.

Back to Google Trends, see what I mean about fidget spinners? A massive peak in May 2017, then it disappeared.



Choose a Good Steady Niche

One of the best ways to get niche and product ideas is to simply look around you, at your own buying habits and what others are buying.

Check Yourself

- What are the last things you bought online? Where did you buy them and how did you come across them in the first place?
- What kinds of products do you buy even if you don't necessarily need them?
- Which online stores do you shop at the most?
- What are you passionate about? What items do you know so well you would do a good job of selling them?

\P FROM THE PROS

Tired of his 9-to-5, <u>Karolis Rimkus</u> began dropshipping as a side-hustle to fund a three-month trip around the world with his wife. Over ten months, the store brought in \$14,960, allowing him to live the digital nomad lifestyle of working while he travels.

As a passionate runner, he decided to stay in his own niche because he had a lot of knowledge and experience.



"I'm an avid runner. I've run marathons and races and trained five times a week. I knew if I did this that I could source really good quality products from AliExpress, because I know first-hand what a good quality product is in that category. I can usually tell from the pictures."

Check Your Surroundings

Go to the mall or some other public place and people watch.

- What are people wearing, using, and carrying? Clothes, jewelry, accessories, shoes, and tech are all fair game.
- What kinds of products are they buying?
- Go to some retail stores. What's on the shelves? Are any particular products sold out?

TROM THE PROS

This technique is how dropshipping pro <u>Ashley Banks</u> found success with one of his store items. He started in the coffee niche and eventually came across a penguin thermos that went viral and made £4,713.38 (or about \$6,000 USD) in three months.

"I just stumbled across added extras like the thermo mugs. Because every time I got on a train or bus, I'd always see people with these thermo flasks.

So I thought, 'Okay, I'll add one of these products to the site.' And lo and behold, that became the most successful thing."



Check Influencers

Follow some popular social media influencers on Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube. Look up "product placements" and see what types of products other brands are trying to promote with the help of those influencers.

This can work well if you're following "high fashion" influencers (luxury brands like Gucci, Armani, D&G, etc.). You'll be able to offer similar styles but for way less money.

(L) TIP TIME

If you want some more ideas, check out <u>Oberlo's "What to Sell" section</u>, as well as the Oberlo YouTube channel.

Traits of a Good Dropshipping Product

It's hard to look at a niche without looking at products too. For a lot of people, they find their product when they're looking for their niche.

So here are a few characteristics to keep in mind when you're looking for products inside your potential niche.

Less than \$100. When products are too expensive, people will spend more time thinking about it. This means more work for you before you can get a customer's trust to buy. You might also need to worry about warranties and more returns.

Not super common. Don't sell something available at a store down the street. If it's so common, what incentive do customers have to buy from your store and wait 2–3 weeks to get it?

Impulse buy items. The kind of thing you don't really need, but you want anyway! Affordable and unique impulse buy products are a perfect way to rack in sales that don't require much thought or planning in advance.

Not easy to guess the price. If it's something unique enough that you can't really guess the price, it can help avoid the issue of customers trying to find it somewhere else online for cheaper.

Stay tuned for Chapter 4, where we'll talk a lot more about choosing the right products.

How to Make Sure Your Idea Is Actually Good

Before you make a decision, you definitely want to do some research to make sure it's a good niche. This is called *validating* your niche.

In a way, we've already been low-key validating. Using Google Trends, checking your surroundings, and looking at social media are all small-scale forms of niche validation. After all, it's proof that people are buying and using these products.

Let's go a little further by looking at the three top tools to find solid product ideas in high-performing niches:

- 1. Oberlo
- 2. Amazon
- 3. AliExpress

1. Oberlo

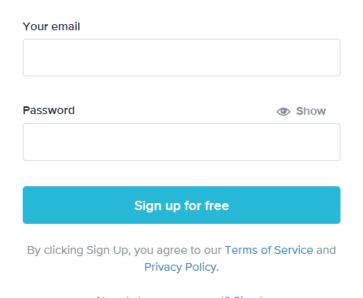
First, you'll need to make an Oberlo account. Go to the <u>Oberlo homepage</u> and click 'Get Oberlo Now.'

Fill in your email and make a password. Then click "Sign up for free."



Open your free Oberlo account

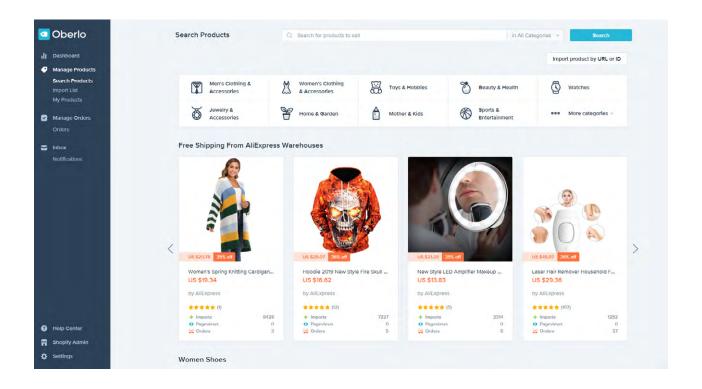
Find and add products into your Shopify store and ship them directly to your customers.



Already have an account? Sign In

And boom, you're in. You'll then be taken to the Oberlo dashboard.

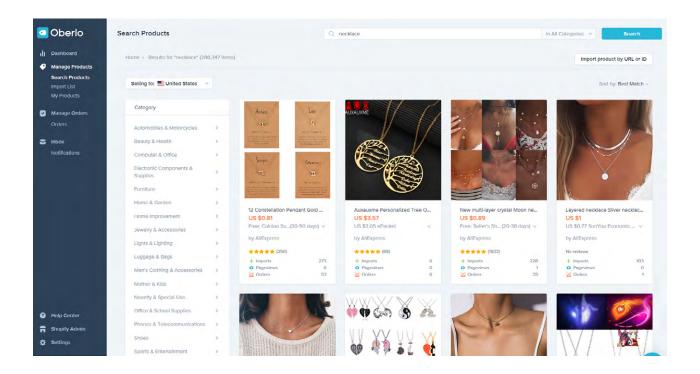
In the sidebar on the left, click "Search products."



I recommend poking around on this screen, as Oberlo will show you loads of high-performing products in different categories.

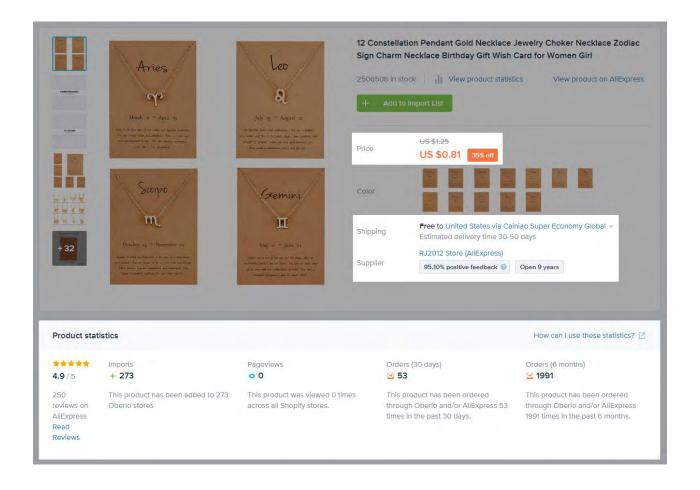
And of course, type as many searches as you want into the search bar.

Let's say I'm interested in necklaces. Here's what I see when I type it in.



When I click a product's page, I can see helpful information like:

- How much the item costs
- How much shipping costs and how long each shipping method takes to get to customers in different countries (click the arrow to explore the different options and times)
- The supplier who's selling it and if they have good reviews from other dropshippers
- Product Statistics, like a product's rating and how many people have ordered it



Stay tuned for Chapter 4, where we'll dive into Oberlo Product Statistics and how they can help you choose the specific items to add to your store.

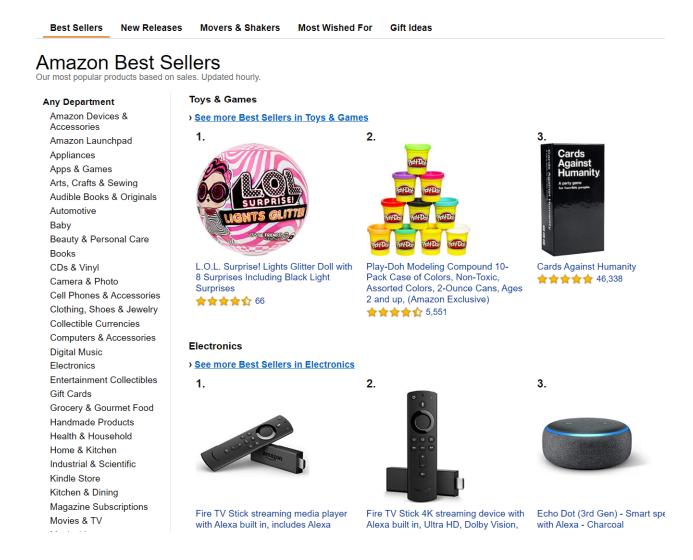
• TIP TIME

A safe strategy is to look for products that have high ratings, plenty of orders, and lots of good reviews. This shows that it's a strong, popular product that people really like. It also shows you how successful that niche might be.

2. Amazon

Check out the <u>Amazon Best Sellers</u> page for more inspiration. You can also look at "Amazon Most Wished For."

Keep looking for high ratings, lots of orders, and lots of good reviews to get an idea of how much people like the items.



You can browse by category on the left sidebar to investigate the types of products that you're leaning toward.

Look at the products' ratings and reviews. You can get some insight into things that people love or wish were better.

3. AliExpress

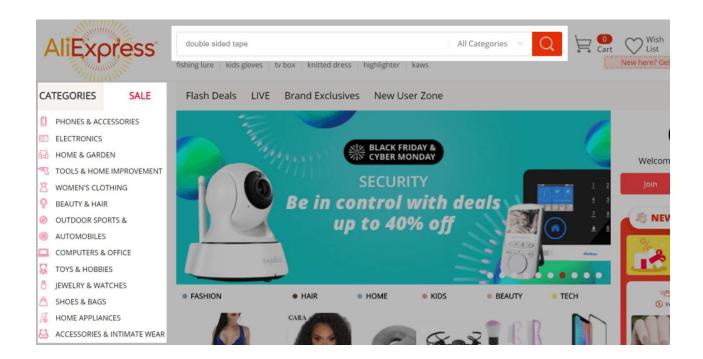
If you've never heard of it, <u>AliExpress</u> is a marketplace like Amazon and eBay. It's popular because it lets you directly buy from manufacturers in China or from huge wholesalers with thousands of products in stock. You can find pretty much anything you can think of, and many prices are close to wholesale costs.

AliExpress can be a valuable tool for you, because you can use it to look for product ideas and also actually sell those items in your store. There are many companies that use AliExpress suppliers for dropshipping.

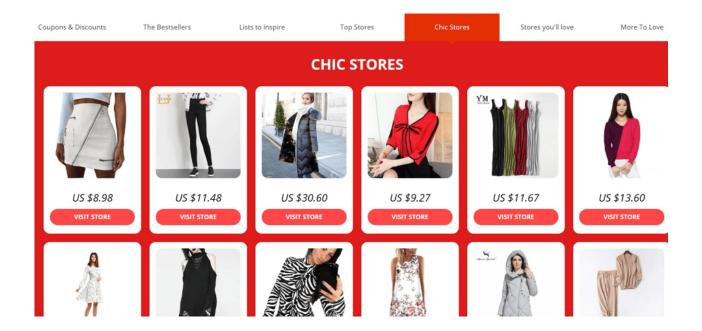
I strongly recommend going through <u>Oberlo</u>, because the process will be a lot easier for you. But that said, you can also go through AliExpress if you're a daredevil like that.

We can get into using AliExpress suppliers and products later. For now, we'll just talk about how to use the platform for picking and validating your niche.

Go to the AliExpress homepage. You can type items into the search if you have specific ideas, or you can use the "Categories" tab on the left sidebar.



When you click a category, it will show all sorts of good stuff like best sellers, top stores (suppliers) on AliExpress, and top niches. For example, searching "Women's Clothing" brings up top "Chic" stores, which must be a popular category of women's clothing.



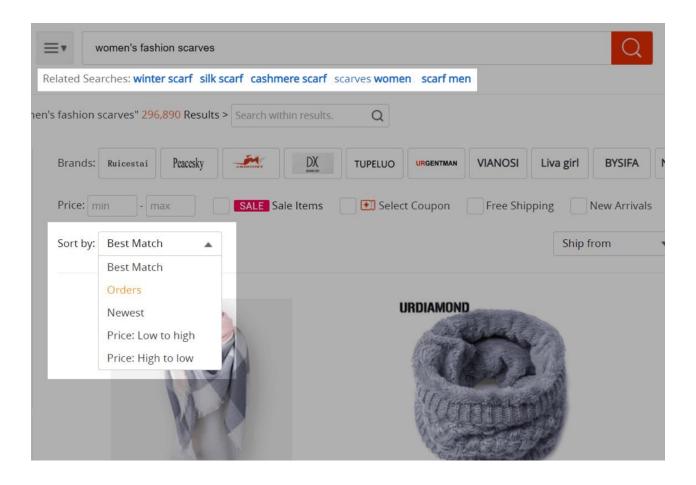
If you use the search bar, type in what you're looking for. On the results page, go to "Sort by" and click "Orders" in the dropdown menu. This way, you can see the most-ordered products.

Take note that under the search bar, AliExpress also shows you suggestions for related searches. This can be an awesome tool for getting more inspiration and validation.

For example, I typed "women's fashion scarves" and saw helpful suggestions for:

- Winter scarf
- Silk scarf
- Cashmere scarf

Sounds like silk and cashmere are pretty popular.

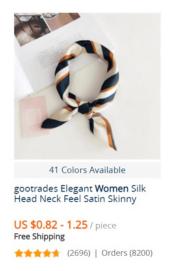


And if you sort by orders, you can see the top-performers. Continuing down the scarf search, it looks like plaid is popular.

Right from the search results, you can see that these top results have great ratings, lots of reviews, and lots of orders. Good contenders.







As you can see, finding a good niche and product ideas is all about digging and observing. Keep going until you've found an idea that you feel good about.

Want some more info on finding and validating a niche? Check out this in-depth video:



Now that you know how to pick and validate a niche, you can choose what types of products to sell. The next step is to look at how to choose specific products and suppliers so you can start adding them to your store.

4

Choose the Right Products and Suppliers

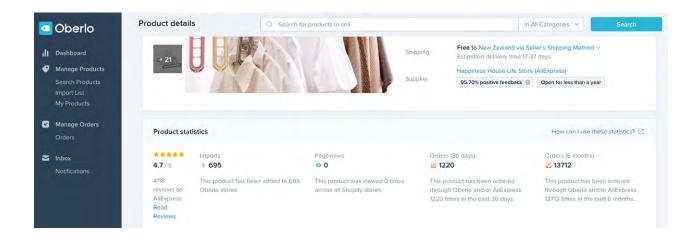
Amanda here.

A good store is nothing without good products, right? On top of that, you need to make sure that you have a strong relationship with high-performing suppliers. Since you won't have total control over your products, it's critical to have suppliers who are timely and have good business practices.

Trust me when I say choosing good products and suppliers will save you a whole lot of headaches in the future. They'll also set you up for more success, faster.

There are three key elements for choosing a good product that will make and keep customers happy:

- The quality and demand of the product itself
- The reputation and practices of the supplier who ships it to your customers
- The shipping options to your customers



Let's break these down.

Have received a 5-star rating or close to 5 – under 4.6 is approaching the danger zone! Have overwhelmingly good reviews from past customers Preferably have at least 100 orders already, to show that there's demand Have appealing photos for you to use in your own store (though there are other ways you can get photos) Supplier Have 95 percent or higher feedback rating Preferably have ePacket shipping available to countries that offer ePacket, which is often the fastest option Shipping times as short as possible to minimize customer service needs from customers wondering where their products are

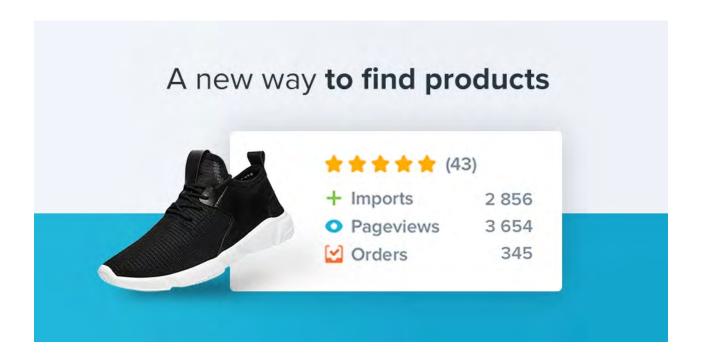
Now that you have the general guidelines, let's look at the details of choosing killer products and stellar suppliers.

Your Secret Weapon: Oberlo Product Statistics

I want to get rid of some of the guesswork that comes with finding a product, and help you make data-driven decisions about which products are best for your business.

That's what Oberlo Product Statistics are all about.

In the sections below, we'll look at the data points that Oberlo has added, and explain how you can use them to find awesome products.



When you search for products in Oberlo, you see four product statistics for every product. They are:

- **1. Star ratings and reviews count:** What the average rating is out of five stars, and how many customers left a review on AliExpress. Look for products with high ratings and a lot of reviews that's how you know it's a product that people really like. If you see a product without any reviews, it might be because it's not sold on AliExpress, or because it's new to Oberlo.
- **2. Imports:** The number of Oberlo merchants who have imported a product, or pulled a product into their store, in the past year. This number is more affected by what the dropshipper wants in-demand, well reviewed products than what the customer wants. This can tell you whether a product has already been discovered by other dropshippers, or whether it's a diamond in the rough.
- **3. Pageviews:** The number of times a product has been viewed across all Shopify-powered stores in the past 30 days. Basically, pageviews reflect the amount of website visitors that merchants were able to bring to that product in their store.
- **4. Orders:** The number of times a product has been ordered through an Oberlo-powered store *and* through AliExpress in the past 30 days. When you click on a product and go to the product page, you can also see the six-month order statistics to see how well it has performed historically.

By themselves, these statistics are great info. But when you put them together, you can find awesome opportunities. To show you how to do this, let's look at four different categories of winning products:

- 1. Hot Products
- 2. Rising Stars
- 3. High Potential Products

We're going to look closer at each one, and how you can spot them using Oberlo Product Statistics.

Category #1: Hot Products

Look for products with:

Over 500 orders in the past 30 days.

Orders are a pretty straightforward statistic: there's no better sign that a product will sell than evidence that it's sold before. Products with over 500 orders in the past 30 days already have a track record of success.

Because we combine Oberlo and AliExpress orders, if you see a product with lots of orders, you still have to test it in your store. That's because you need to determine if the product is suitable for dropshipping or just selling well on AliExpress.

Here is an example of a Hot Product:



AOLIKES 1PCS 2019 Knee Suppor...

US \$4.93

by AliExpress



+	Imports	18135
		120.202

Pageviews 3419✓ Orders 1057

Category #2: Rising Stars

Look for products with:

- 100 to 500 orders in the past 30 days
- < 500 pageviews</p>

Low pageviews aren't necessarily bad!
Rising Stars, which have low pageviews
but a few orders, are products that are
selling well despite limited web traffic.
Jump on these products quickly so you
can get ahead of the competition.

Here is an example of a Rising Star:

To take advantage of Rising Stars, ask yourself these questions:

• Is there a big difference between imports and pageviews? If imports are much higher than pageviews, many stores may have imported this product but few have been able to drive traffic to the product page. That signals an opportunity for hardworking marketers. If you're willing to research and invest in marketing, you might be able to squeeze more sales out of this product.



Funny Cute Pet Cat Costume Lion...
US \$1.2

by AliExpress

★★★★ (943)

+ Imports 4086
• Pageviews 134

✓ Pageviews 134

✓ Orders 128

Are orders < 1 percent of pageviews?

If the number of orders is less than

1 percent the number of pageviews,
customers may have been interested
in the product but turned off by other
merchants' product pages. To win
those customers back, create a great
product page. Pay special attention to
product pictures: if they aren't highquality, take your own. And make sure
to write epic product descriptions.

Category #3: High Potential Products

Look for products with:

- 50 to 500 orders in the past 30 days
- < 100 pageviews</p>
- Multiple 5-star ratings, where available

Products with a few sales, low pageviews, and positive reviews (where available) fall somewhere between Rising Stars and Hidden Gems (below).

That's why it's really important to study the numbers. Go through the same questions listed for Rising Stars, above. In addition, ask:

• How many orders in the last six months? A product that had one sale in the past 30 days and a few dozen in the past six months may have more potential than meets the eye. These numbers could signal a steady-seller – which are good additions to any dropshipping store. Also keep in mind that a product that has had no sales in the past six months could be new to Oberlo.

If it's from AliExpress, are there
reviews? If a product with these
statistics is from AliExpress, look
for 4- to 5-star reviews from more
than one reviewer. High reviews, in
combination with low imports and
pageviews, may signal that a product
is simply new to dropshipping.

Based on the criteria above, here is an example of a High Potential product:



BHflutter Women Dress 2018 Ne...

US \$5.99

Free: China Post R...(14-25 days) V

by AliExpress



+	Imports	2723
0	Pageviews	54
[Orders	101

Searching on AliExpress

Before you start, <u>download the Oberlo extension</u> for the Chrome browser. If you don't use Chrome, I recommend <u>downloading it</u> and using it for Oberlo.

To download the extension, <u>click here</u> from inside Chrome and then click the "Add to Chrome" button.



Now, when you go to AliExpress, you'll see that many of the results have green boxes around them.

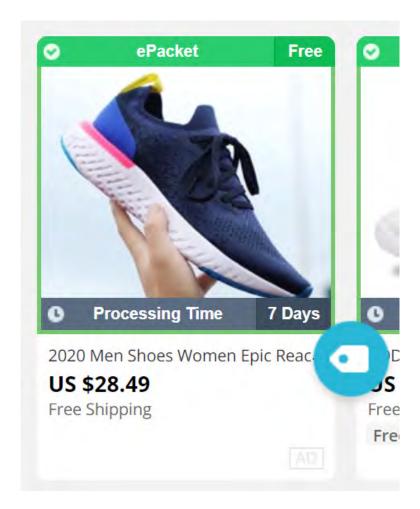
That's the extension telling you if the product has ePacket availability and how long the processing time takes for each order.

And when you hover your mouse over a product, you'll see the blue Oberlo logo icon. When you click that, it will push the product to your import list automatically, so you can add it to your store.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

import list: In Oberlo, your import list shows all the items you want to add to your store.

There, you can edit all the details, like the name, description, and photos. The import list acts like a 'drafts' folder meaning that no products will appear live until you manually push them to your store.

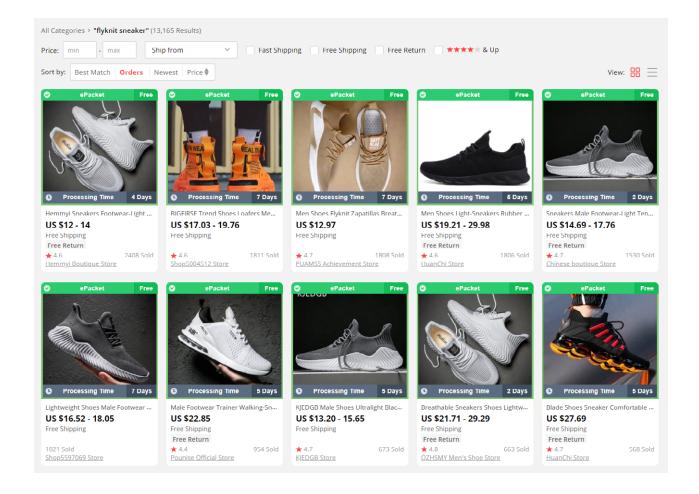


So let's get back to the search results.

If you look at the first page of results, you'll see a lot of information before you even click on a listing. Like:

- The product cost per piece (including any current sales)
- Shipping cost and ePacket availability
- The product's rating, including how many people rated it
- How many people ordered it

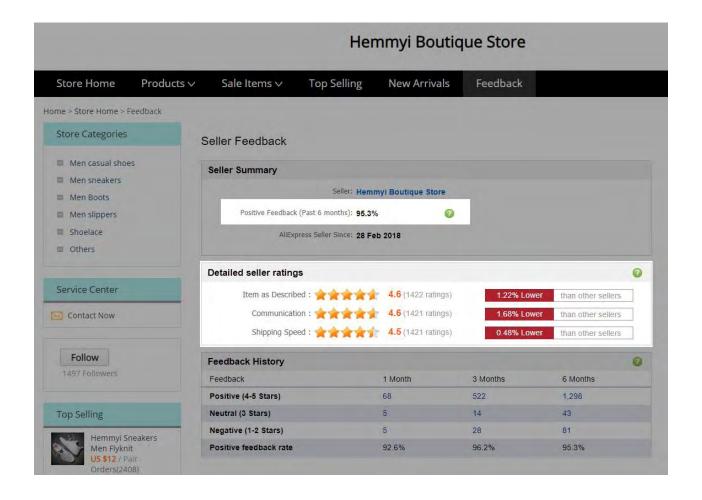
If you sort by "Orders," you can see products that have been ordered often and usually have good ratings.



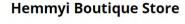
While these are quite solid, these strong numbers aren't completely necessary. I would say that you're good to go around 100 orders at a minimum and 4.8 stars or higher. Below 100 and you start playing with fire.

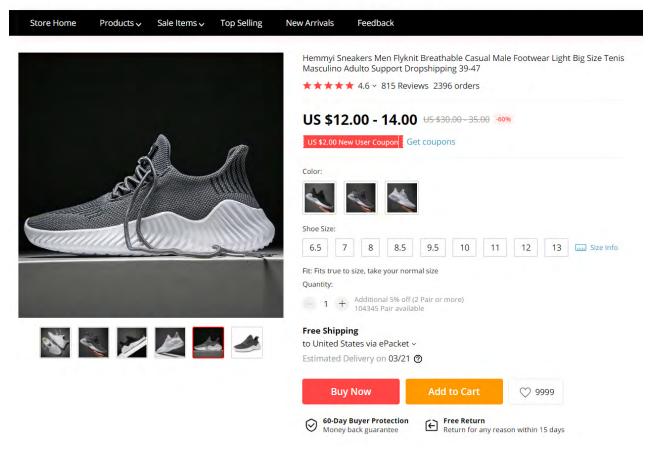
Let's click a listing and see what we find.

At the top, you'll see the supplier's rating. Don't bother with any supplier that's rated lower than 95 percent.

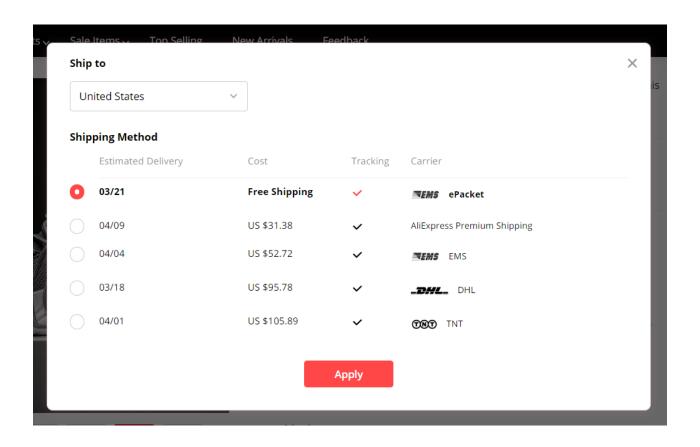


In the main section, you can see all the variations of a listing – like different styles and colors available.





You'll also be able to see the shipping options. Similar to Oberlo, just click the arrow and you can explore shipping options and prices for different countries.



Then if you scroll down, you can see more details about the products as well as more photos.

(L) TIP TIME

If you use AliExpress, keep this in mind: at some point, they'll put your credit card on hold and require you to verify your identity. You'll need to submit a copy of a passport, driver's license, or other identity card, as well as a photo of your credit card and a statement from that credit card. Don't be alarmed – this is how AliExpress prevents fraud. Once you do this, it will take 1-3 business days to be verified.

Choose Products with ePacket

By now, you've seen **ePacket** a few times in this book. It's only fair that you finally find out what it is.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

ePacket: A shipping option offered by suppliers and merchants in China and Hong Kong. It allows for faster ePacket delivery of products coming from these countries to dozens of countries around the world.



ePacket delivery is one of the most popular shipping methods offered by merchants from China and Hong Kong. For good reason – there are loads of benefits:

- It's one of the fastest delivery options for international shipping. Other methods might take months to get to your customers, while ePacket averages about three weeks.
- It has lower shipping rates so you can keep your products lower to keep up with your competition.
- You have the ability to monitor your ePacket tracking numbers through companies like <u>EMS</u> and <u>USPS</u> – a huge benefit for your customer service abilities.
- You get free returns on any items that couldn't be delivered.

Countries that Use ePacket

There are more than 40 countries that can get ePacket deliveries from China or Hong Kong suppliers. This means that you can use ePacket shipping for any of your customers who live in one of these countries:

Australia	Israel	Poland
Austria	Italy	Portugal
Belgium	Japan	Russia
Brazil	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia
Canada	Korea	Singapore
Denmark	Latvia	Spain
Finland	Lithuania	Sweden
France	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Germany	Malaysia	Thailand
Greece	Malta	Turkey
Hong Kong	Mexico	Ukraine
Hungary	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Indonesia	New Zealand	United States
Ireland	Norway	Vietnam

ePacket Delivery Requirements

There are a few requirements for a product to qualify for ePacket:

- Weight: The package must weigh less than two kg (4.4 lbs).
- Value: The product cannot be worth more than \$400 USD.
- Size: The package should be at least 14 cm long, but not longer than 60 cm on the longest side. If your item is smaller than 14 cm, the merchant will probably use a bigger box and add some filler material.

L TIP TIME

The moral of the story is: try to sell smaller items so that you can ship them with ePacket. This will save you a lot of money in the long run. Plus, the ability to track the item will probably save you a lot of customer service headaches too.

Find Trustworthy Suppliers

Even if you already know which products you want to sell, and you're sure that they'll prove to be successful, you need to make sure that you find dropshipping suppliers that can provide the high-quality service that your business deserves.

You want to make sure your suppliers:

- Are easy to communicate with (this can be an issue if your suppliers are in Asia and don't speak much English)
- Answer all of your messages in a timely manner, ideally in 24 hours or less
- Get your orders right the first time, so you don't have to deal with a lot of customer complaints and returns
- Have good reviews from other people who have ordered items from them

Here are some tips for finding the right ones.

Research

You might need to choose whether to go with a domestic or overseas supplier depending on the number of suppliers in your chosen product niche. Look at things like:

- The types of raw materials they use to make their products
- Their delivery times, and whether they offer ePacket for items that are small enough
- Their customer service options, like whether they offer refunds for returned items
- How good their reviews are on Oberlo and/or AliExpress

Contact Them Before You Decide

Talk to the dropshipping supplier that suits your needs and start a relationship with them. Talking to them lets you ask questions about the service that they provide.

Keeping a good relationship with your suppliers from the very start means that when you start doing business together, you'll have trust. This will make it easier to get questions answered quickly, and disputes resolved straight away.

Order Samples

Once you've chosen your top two or three suppliers to do business with, order samples from them yourself. Test their quality of service, delivery times, packaging, and other supplier-related questions that you may have so you are entirely happy with the choice you make.

Ordering samples from a dropship supplier is an essential part of selecting suppliers as it will allow you to see first-hand how your customers will experience your store.

Choose a Good Match for Your Business

When you're selecting suppliers, many can seem great when you look at their reviews and the products that they offer, but once you dig into the business they may not suit your audience. This could be because of the raw materials they use, the way they do business, or how they deal with returns.

Be sure to talk to suppliers and get to know how they do business before you commit to working with them. Although you can choose not to use a supplier after issues arise, your brand can be harmed if you already have problems that upset your customers.

Dropshipping Suppliers to Avoid



It's hard to know which dropship suppliers to choose. But there are some tell-tale signs that a supplier is to be avoided at all costs. Apart from bad reviews, negative feedback, and cheap quality products, there are other factors that can mean the supplier might be shady.

Here are a few red flags:

- If a dropship supplier says you must pay monthly or ongoing fees to do business with them. Ongoing fees could mean a supplier is part of a directory as opposed to a single supplier.
- If they have minimum order fees, like forcing you to buy 200 items up front. Stay away from this kind of arrangement unless you're sure that the item is a winner. Otherwise, you can end up wasting money.

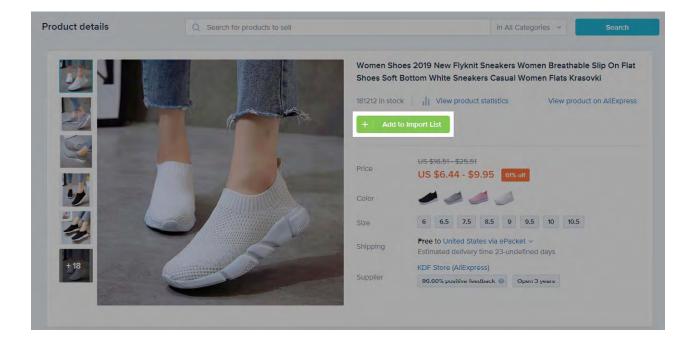
Want some more tips on finding the right supplier? Watch this video.



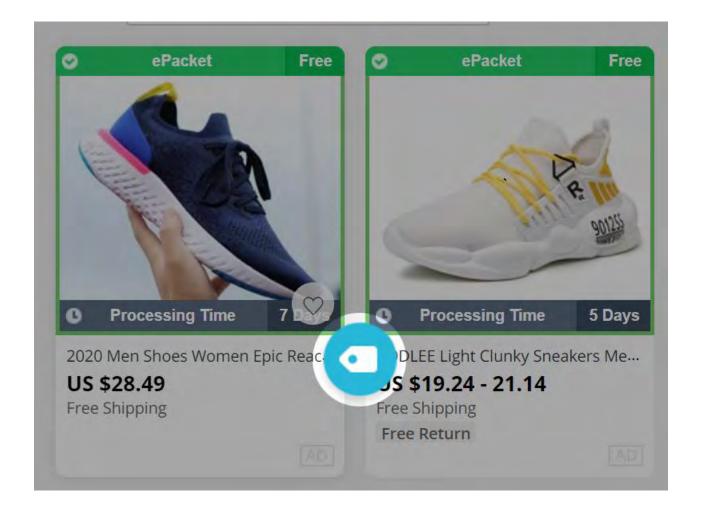
Add Products to Your Import List

Once you've decided which products you'll sell, add them to your Oberlo import list.

This is super easy. In Oberlo, just click the "Add to import list" button above the details on the product page.

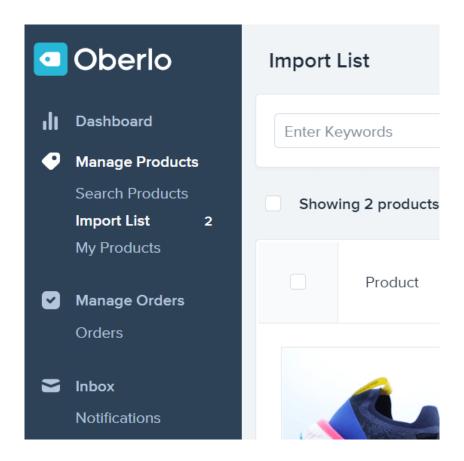


In AliExpress, click the blue Oberlo logo that shows up next to the product (we talked about this earlier).



FYI, that same button shows up at the bottom right corner when you're inside an AliExpress listing, too. It does the same thing there.

Once your list is populated, you can look at it by going to the left sidebar inside Oberlo.



(L) TIP TIME

Adding products to your import list is the first step to getting them inside your Shopify store. Stay tuned for Chapter 5, where we'll talk about how to customize each product and then add it into your store.

3 Tips from the Pros

1. Use AliExpress reviews to gauge opportunity

<u>Yuanda Wang</u> shared a clever strategy with us. He looks at a supplier's order history to determine if the supplier is dropshipping, or if the recent demand is organic from individual customers.



He then uses this intel to see if there's a solid opportunity to capitalize on. He says:



"Before I started my store, I searched up the product on AliExpress, found a supplier, and I realized that there were a lot of organic purchases from people who actually are buying the product for themselves.

They weren't just one-off purchases, because in the order history, you can usually tell if someone is dropshipping. If there's a string of names, they're probably dropshipping, especially if it's to the United States.

And that's one of the biggest criteria now that I look for in products: organic sales from people who use AliExpress as consumers and not dropshippers. Because that shows that there is a demand for the product, and in that exact moment, that supplier is not dropshipping heavily, so you have an opportunity to come in and get a slice of the pie."

2. Accept that your first products might not be your winners

Shishir and Namrata spent months testing products on Facebook Ads, adjusting their ads, and spending money without seeing significant returns. Altogether they tested around 20 to 30 products, spending about \$50 to \$100 per product to determine if it was a winner or not.

Although this might seem like a lot, it was money well spent. They were able to recoup those costs – and much more – when they found their first winning product.

"In the beginning, when you're still looking for products, the number one thing would just be patience – having enough patience to test the products."



3. Use less suppliers so you can build strong relationships

When you use too many suppliers, there's a lot more work you need to do to coordinate everything you need while keeping good relationships. Not to mention that it can be super stressful.

Andreas and Alexander told us that dropshippers are really missing out when they use too many suppliers. By limiting to only two suppliers and keeping a good relationship, they were able to get great info that they wouldn't have known otherwise.



"We had 40 products in the first store from different suppliers. Big mistake. Now, we have two suppliers and a really good connection with them.

It's better to work like that because when we have a winning product and the connection with the supplier works well, I can talk to them and ask them what they're selling that's also very popular in their store.

Then they can give us input. They know what that type of customer wants too, because they're in the same niche."



The Now, you know how to choose awesome products from suppliers who will help your business. Next up is bringing your beautiful store to life.

5

How to Build Your Shopify Store in an Hour

Adeel here.

The time has come. Now we're going to start building your store!

Shopify is a fast and easy way to get online and start selling. Using Shopify, you can get access to an admin panel where you can add products, set shipping prices, and even customize the design.

Of course, I don't expect you to make the perfect store upfront. When you're a first-time dropshipper, you can waste a lot of time there before you even know what works. Like we mentioned earlier, the formula should be to start small now, then learn and improve along the way.

So the first step is to simply build your ecommerce store. You can dig into things like logo designs and ad campaigns, once you have the basics.

\P FROM THE PROS

Dropshipping pro Ross Madden also believes in the power of a steady and stable approach. He went through three failed stores before finding success with a store selling charcoal-related beauty products – a success that earned 30,000 sales, to be exact.

"My advice is to not start off big. One thousand products on your website sounds impressive, but you don't know the workload involved in it, and it will put you off.

With Charcoal Beauty, I launched with only six products. Once it's up and running you can add more products."



In this chapter, I'm going to share step-by-step how to build a Shopify store in under an hour. No bells and whistles, just what you need to get started and build your momentum.

Step 1: Create Your Store (10 Minutes)

Pick a Name

Picking a name is important, but don't spend too much time on it.

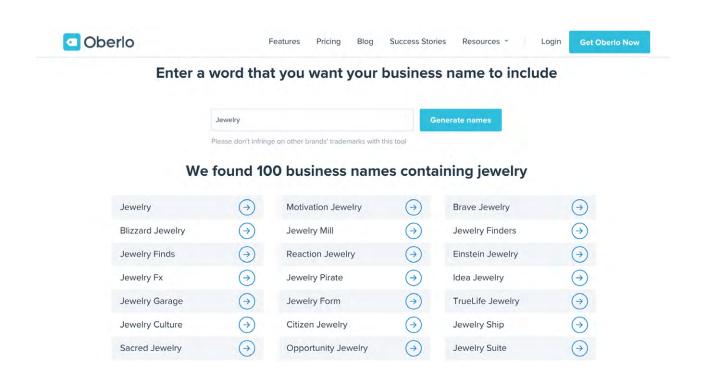
Think of something random and simple. For example, you could opt for a name like "PetsOne Shop" or "The Pup Store" – that might work while you're running a pet supplies business.

I recommend adding "store" or "shop" because you will need to find an available internet address (domain). It's easier to find an available one when there are several words in the name.

A useful tool for coming up with a dropshipping store name is the <u>Oberlo Business</u> Name Generator.

You can add a word or two that you'd like to have in your ecommerce store name and it will provide you recommendations.

Then you can simply scroll through the options and select your desired business name, and launch your business.



Not only is the Oberlo Business Name Generator free, but it's also extremely easy to use. That's one less thing to worry about when starting your own business.

Additionally, make sure the .com domain name is available for your business. Why? It's simple, ".com" has been around since the start of the Internet, and most professional brands use this type of domain as well.

(L) TIP TIME

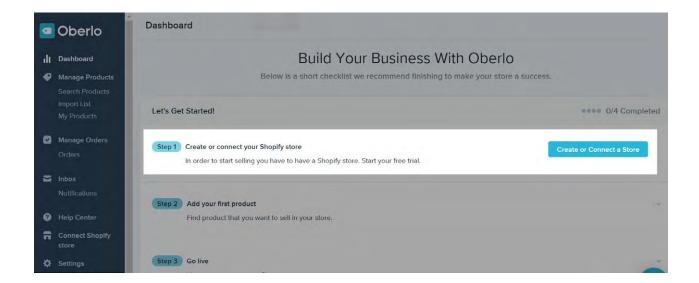
Use Shopify's <u>Domain Name Registration tool</u> to search for available domains. You can search for domain names, check how much they cost, and buy and install them to your store too.

Create a Shopify Account

Shopify lets you create an online store in just a few clicks. Here's what you need to do:

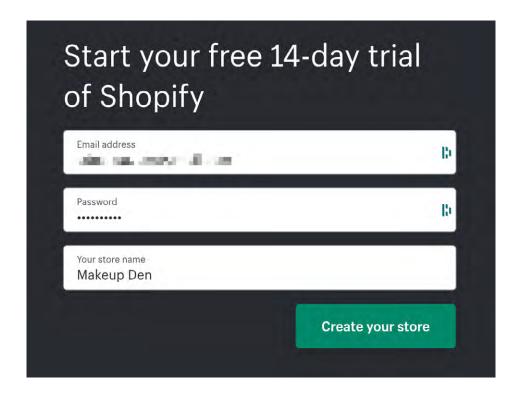
1. Log into the Oberlo account you made in Chapter 1. Go to your dashboard and click "Create or Connect a Store" in the area that says "Step 1." You'll get a popup that asks you if you have a store already. Click "No, I don't have a store yet." Then click "Create your Shopify store."

Keep this window open, as you'll be coming back to it in step 3!



2. You'll automatically be taken to Shopify.com. Click "Start free trial" in the top right corner of the homepage. Enter your email, create a password and business name, and click "Create your store."

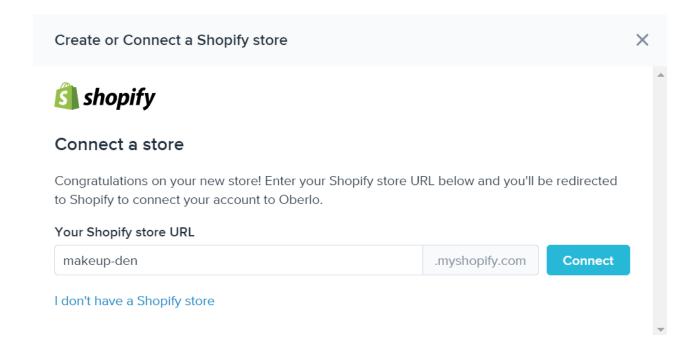
Keep this window open too.



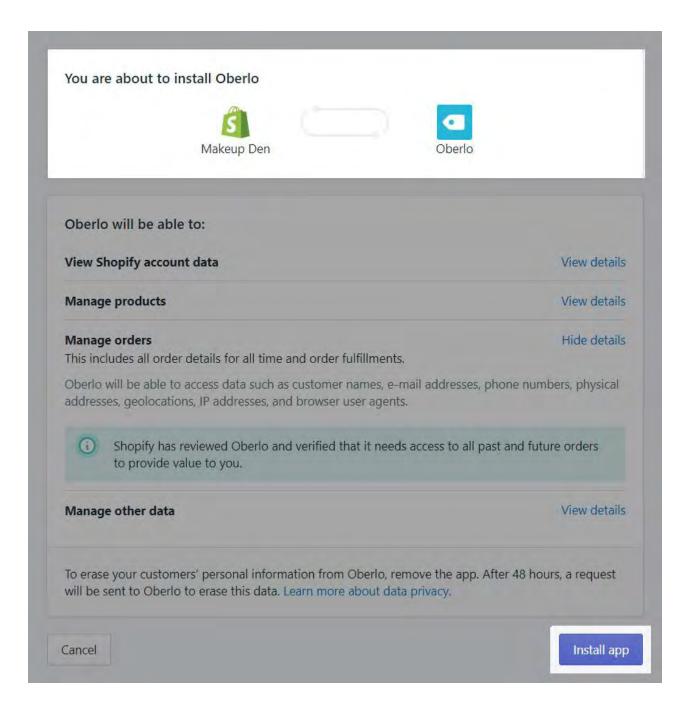
(L) TIP TIME

There are a whole lot of Shopify stores, so your favorite store name might be taken. Don't worry, because if you buy a custom domain URL later on and connect it, no customers will ever see this name. Just keep it professional because your Oberlo suppliers will see this name! 3. Go back to the Oberlo window. There will be a new popup asking you to enter the store URL. Copy and paste the URL from the Shopify window. This will be the store name you typed in, except with dashes instead of spaces between the words.

So the store URL for my store **Makeup Den** is **makeup-den**. When you're done, click "Connect."

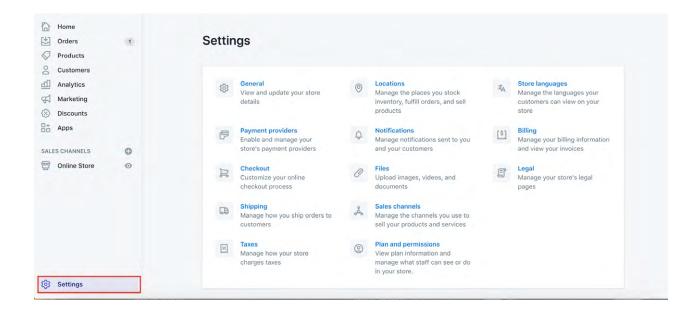


4. You'll then be taken to your Shopify dashboard, and asked to install Oberlo into your Shopify. Scroll down and click "Install app."



Step 2: Configure Your Settings (15 Minutes)

You'll need to set up a few things to get the store running smoothly. Let's run through the settings. In the bottom left corner of the dashboard, click the "Settings" button with the gear icon.

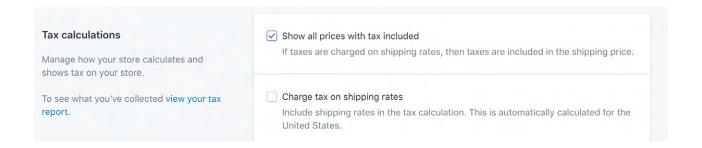


First, go to "General" and fill out all your store details.

Set Up Taxes

Then, go to "Taxes." Select if you want to just include taxes into your prices, or if you want the customer to pay for taxes based on the location they're making their purchase from. In the US, this would be based on their state/county/city. In other places, this might be based on their country.

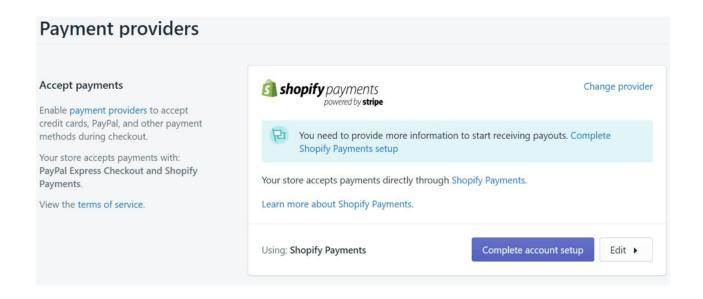
Most dropshippers choose to include taxes into their prices. This is usually my recommendation too. Check the appropriate box and click "Save," go to "General" and fill out all your store details.



Set Up Payments

I'm a fan of using Shopify Payments and PayPal Express (for US customers). They make it super simple for you to get paid, and they're lightning fast to set up.

Some of the other payment gateways can take weeks to set up completely. So let's do Shopify Payments first. Go back to settings and click "Payment providers." Click "Complete account setup" to use Shopify Payments.



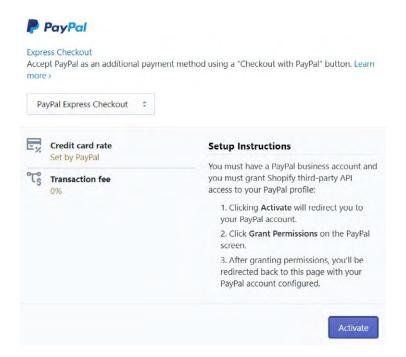
Fill in your personal details, including:

- Business details
- Personal details
- Product details (just a quick description like "Women's fashion accessories store")
- Customer billing statement (how you want your company to be listed on their credit card transactions)
- Banking information (bank account and routing numbers)

Double-check and make sure it's all correct, then click "Complete account setup."

Next, set up PayPal by going to the "Payment providers" page and click the "Activate" button in the PayPal section.

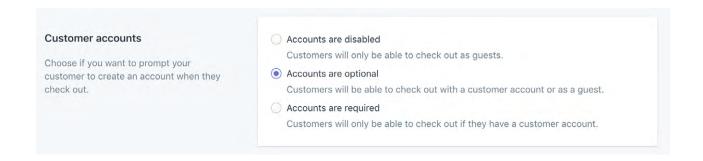
To set it up, click the "Activate" button in the PayPal section of the "Payment providers" page.



Click "Save" and you should be good to go.

Set Up Checkout

Let's set up the checkout process for your customers.



Here are my recommendations for settings for new store owners:

1. Customer accounts → Accounts are optional

2. Customer contact

To check out → Customers can only check out using email

3. Form options

- Full name → Require first and last name
- Company name → Hidden
- Address line 2 → Optional
- Shipping address phone number → Required

4. Order processing

- While the customer is checking out
- Use the shipping address as the billing address by default
- Enable address autocompletion
- After an order has been paid → Do not automatically fulfill any of the order's line items
- After an order has been fulfilled and paid → Automatically archive the order
- **5. Email marketing** → Show a sign-up option at checkout
- 6. Abandoned checkouts → Automatically send abandoned checkout emails
 - Send to → Anyone who abandons checkout
 - Send after → 10 hours (recommended)

Note: You'll learn more about abandoned cart emails in Chapter 9.

Be sure to click "Save" when you're done.

Set Up Shipping

Let's talk about free shipping. You know customers love it, but is it the right choice for your business?

To help you answer the question, I'm mentioning a few scenarios where offering free shipping makes good sense (and where it doesn't). We'll also see how it compares to free shipping threshold and paid shipping.

When should you offer free shipping:

You've calculated the costs and can afford to. Sometimes, dropshipping suppliers offer ePacket, which may not be free but has a low cost. What you could do is include the ePacket's price in your retail price and offer free shipping to your customers.

Your competitors offer it. If other brands in your niche are offering free shipping, you should offer it to stay competitive. But even if they don't, you might be able to have a competitive edge over competitors if you do.

You've adjusted product costs to accommodate free shipping. If you need to pay for shipping, you can include the shipping cost into your product cost. Use Oberlo to bundle the prices (cost of goods + shipping fees) into one retail price. This will help you make a profit and also save your customers from getting sticker shock.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

sticker shock: Shock or dismay when people find out the price of a product is much higher than expected.

When shouldn't you offer free shipping:

You're trying to increase average order value (AOV). AOV or average order value measures the average amount a customer spends on your website. When the focus is on increasing AOV, you'll still offer free shipping but there's a catch. The customer must spend a certain amount of money before they can access free shipping. Common thresholds include \$25, \$35, \$50 and \$100.

When the shipping costs are too high. Another time when you shouldn't offer free shipping is when the shipping costs are too high. For example, when products are delivered within seven days, it's often regarded as "express shipping," which increases the cost.

♥ FROM THE PROS

Dropshipping pros Rodney Zachariuk and Kory Szostak are long-time besties who made \$346,071 within nine months of launching their fantasy gaming store. They had great results when they started using a shipping threshold.



"We did a 'free shipping when you spend \$50' offer. We saw a huge increase in our average order value, which was massive.

I think our average order value before that was \$12-14, and now it's about \$35-40. The margins you make on an order like that — you don't have to hold your breath until you make your next sale."

Should I offer free shipping, a free shipping threshold, or free plus shipping?

The best way to answer the question is to test all three methods on your store. You can try one method for a few weeks and compare it to another method shortly after.

For example, you offer free shipping on all products for a month. The month after that, you can switch to free shipping on orders over \$35 next month onwards.

Then you can compare the revenue made in the first month with the revenue made in the second. This should give you a good idea of what shipping method to use for your store.

How to set up shipping in Shopify

In Shopify, you're required to enter an address for the "Shipping origin," and this should be your business address (which is probably your home address too, unless you decide to rent a mailbox).

But don't worry, customers won't see this once we change the settings.

First, delete the existing pre-set shipping zones. Click "Edit" next to the pre-existing zones.

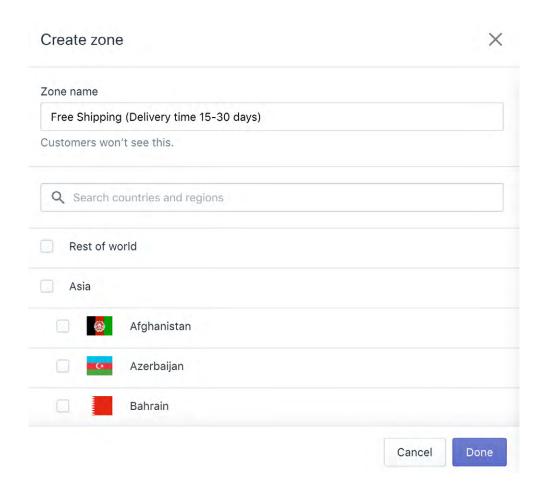
Now Scroll down to the bottom and click "Delete zone" and then "Delete shipping zone" in the confirmation window that pops up.

Repeat for all of them (there are usually two – one for "Domestic" and one for "Rest of world.")

Once it's clear, click "Add shipping zone."

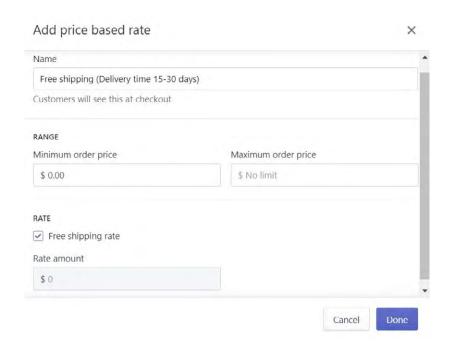
If you're offering free shipping, just type that in. Customers won't see this label.

You can add the countries you plan to ship to. Just add "Rest of world" if you're ok with shipping to other places.



Go to the "Add rate" in the "Price based rates" section.

Here, you can select "Free shipping rate" if you plan to include shipping in your prices. If you want to charge customers for shipping, you can add a flat rate here instead. (In this case, change the name to something like "Flat rate \$2 shipping" so it accurately reflects your plan.)



Click done.

When everything's set up, don't forget to click "Save" as always.

Create Policy Pages

There are four important legal pages that you'll need to make at a minimum:

- 1. Privacy Policy
- 2. Refund Policy
- 3. Terms of Service
- 4. Shipping Policy

To make them, go to "Sales Channels" → "Online Store" → "Pages." On the top right, click "Add page."

Now let's talk about each page.

Create a Privacy Policy page

Especially with the recent GDPR laws in Europe, it's critical that you have a strong Privacy Policy in place to cover yourself legally.

Luckily, Shopify has a handy privacy policy generator tool that spits one out for you.

Just go to the Privacy Policy Generator page.

- 1. Click "Get Started"
- 2. Enter your company info and website URL and click "Send me my privacy policy"
- 3. Done! Easy.

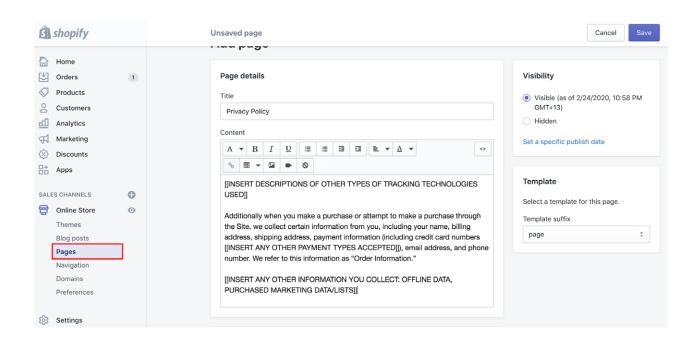
Then check your email for an email from Shopify. Go to the link to your policy and copy it.

Add a page like I showed you earlier. Write your page title ("Privacy Policy" will do) and paste in the privacy policy you got from the Shopify generator.

You'll notice that there are several parts where the Shopify team put some text in brackets. These brackets are to help you customize your policy. Read each one and decide what to do based on your store.

If certain bracket items don't apply to you, just delete them. Make sure none of those ugly brackets are left when you're done.

Make sure you read every single word and have it reflect your business. This is just a template, it's not set in stone.



Click "Save" and your page is published.

Create a Refund Policy page

Shopify has a refund policy generator page too. <u>Click here to fill in your info</u> and have a template page emailed to you – the same way you did before.

Again, read every single word and make sure it all applies to your store. Then publish the page the same way you did with the privacy page.

Create a Terms of Service page

Once again, Shopify saves the day with a generator. Click here to generate a template for your "Terms of Service" (also called "Terms and Conditions") page.

Read every single word, make edits where needed, and publish like the previous pages.

Create a Shipping Policy page

Since you're dropshipping, it might take a little while for products to get to your customers. Sometimes, it can be as much as 60 days.

But don't worry – this usually isn't the case, and you can choose your suppliers wisely to try and help prevent this.

That said, having a shipping page is a good idea to help inform your customers of potential shipping times. It can also give you a leg to stand on in case any customers claim you didn't tell them about the shipping times.

Your shipping page should include the following info:

- **Shipping options:** The types of options you provide. Include anything like standard shipping, international and domestic shipping, etc.
- Shipping cost: Discuss the costs of shipping as they relate to different methods. Note: free shipping is a great competitive advantage, and could be a way to help explain the longer shipping times. Worth considering.
- Shipping & handling times: How long does each shipping method take? How long can a customer expect between them placing their order and actually receiving it?
- Restrictions: Are there any restrictions for your shipping abilities? Like if you don't ship to certain states, countries, P.O. boxes, etc.

And of course, create this page the same way you made the others.

Just like any page you make on Shopify, you have to add these to your website's header or footer or else customers can't access them without the direct link. Let's add these four to the footer.

- Go to "Sales Channels" → "Online Store" → "Navigation."
- · Click "Footer menu."
- · Click "Add menu item."
- Then type the page's name how you want it to appear in the footer.
- Click "Link" → "Pages."
- Find and select the corresponding page. Then click "Add."
- Then repeat this until you've added all four pages.

Once everything is done, don't forget to click "Save menu" at the bottom of the screen.

You don't need to worry about any other things beyond Policy Pages.

And you've got the settings configured! Now to content.



Step 3: Add Products and Content (25 Minutes)

Before you import products into your store from your Oberlo Import List, it's important for you to customize them with your own names, descriptions, the right photos, and other details like assigning them to collections or adding tags.

Trust me when I say that it's a **huge** headache to import first and customize later. Just don't do it.

So before you start, watch this video that explains the anatomy of the Oberlo Import List, and what you should do before you click that powerful little "Import to Store" button.



In addition to your products, the content that you use to customize your products is extremely important. This is an area that should really get a lot of love from you in the future, as you test and tweak your store.

Remember, people can't touch or hold your products. So the only way to help them get a sense of how amazing they are is to write good content that really sparks their interest.

We're going to look at some tips for customizing these things:

- Description
- Images
- Pricing and inventory

Product Description

The goal of the product description is to provide the customer with enough information to make them want to buy the product immediately.

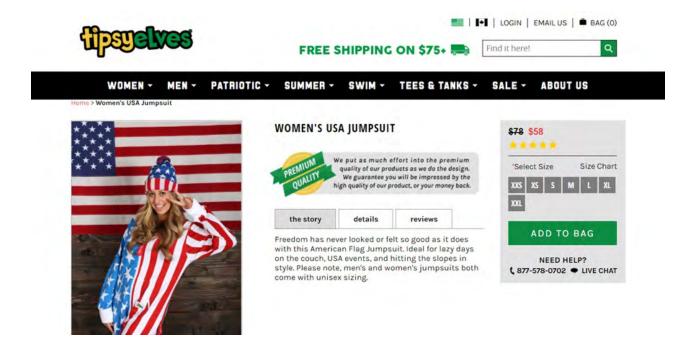
Ask yourself:

- What problem does the customer have that your product solves?
- What does your customer gain from using your product?
- What separates your products from others on the market?

Your brief description needs to answer these questions in a way that is easy to read.

Keeping it casual and positive can also help your product description stand out. You're not writing a thesis, but an enticing description to bring your product and your customer together.

Here's an example of a simple-yet-great product description:



Tipsy Elves uses their product description to showcase the item's benefits. Their short and sweet two sentence description mentions that this jumpsuit is perfect for "lazy days on the couch, USA events, and hitting the slopes."

For those looking for an outfit for the 4th of July, their problem is solved as it mentions that this outfit is ideal for it. Notice how the first word in the copy is "freedom," which is a positive word and is often associated with American pride products.

Their product details aren't very scannable. However, they mention the benefits for some of their features such as mentioning that the material is thinner for "year round wear."

It's worth mentioning that each store has a different layout, personality, and style which may require a different product description template.

Some stores may convert best with only bullet point descriptions. Others may need a long paragraph, or a mix of bullet points and a paragraph. Don't be afraid to test different formats!

PRIME YOUR PUCKERS, PETROLEUM-FREE

Pucker Paste™ Lip Balm gives your lips much-needed nourishment all day long. Petroleum-free and paraben free, this will keep your kisses soft and supple.

- Handcrafted in Austin, Texas with real, edible ingredients
- Softens lips without feeling waxy
- Moisturizes and protects, even in cold, dry environments
- Lightweight and non-glossy
- Smooth, creamy finish lasts for hours no need to re-apply!

WHAT'S THAT TASTE?

The tranquil serenity of Lavender Pucker Paste is an instant remedy for everyday stresses, big or small. Close your eyes, take a breath, and allow the rejuvenating power of lavender to bring the calm. Woosah, baby.

WHAT'S IN IT?



 $Ingredients\ list: Organic\ Coconut\ Oil,\ Organic\ Beeswax,\ Organic\ Shea\ Butter,\ Organic\ Sunflower\ Oil,\ Natural\ Flavors,\ Stevia\ Leaf\ Extract,\ Vitamin\ E$

Pucker Paste[™] - BPA-Free Plastic Tube - 0.15 oz. (4g) Net Weight. Contents are Biodegradable.Best if used within 12 months after opening.

PRIMAL PIT PASTE PROMISE



ADD TO CART





STARTING AT \$27/MO WITH affirm. LEARN MORE					
SIZE		WIDTH			
7	~	D	~	ADD TO C	ART

DO YOU NEED SIZE ADVICE?

The Bradley is designed and made to last in both style and quality alike, a shoe that you'll get stopped and asked about more than every once in a while. The shape, pattern, and two rows of double stitching on the toecap of the shoe give it enough class to wear with a suit, while the HELM signature white midsole and the rubber fineline bottoming give it just enough versatility to wear with denim. Whether it's a collared shirt or a t-shirt, the Bradley is your go-to shoe.

U TIP TIME

When writing a product description, try breaking information into short, digestible chunks. Bullet points, headings, and graphic icons are a great help for making this happen.



Product Images

While I strongly recommend taking product photos of your own, it's not 100 percent necessary if you're dropshipping. That's because dropshipping suppliers often include decent product photos in their listings.

But using other people's photos can only get you so far. If you want true control over your brand, the way to go is to order samples and take photos yourself. This way, you can have a consistent look and feel for all of your photos, which will give your brand a huge boost.

You can shoot several types of product images. Here are some of the most popular.

Lifestyle: Helps people envision themselves using your product.



Group: Features other items that complement the original one, like a case and screen protector for a smartphone.



Plain background: Helps ensure visitors can see all the details, including the natural color of your product.



If you're selling a common product, you may not need to order its sample. That's because you may be able to find suitable product images on stock photography websites.

You can check out free stock photography sites like:

- Shopify's Burst
- <u>Unsplash</u>
- Pxfuel

• TIP TIME

Besides images, you can also add custom videos to your product pages. Read our guide, <u>How to Create Simple and Effective Product Videos</u> to get started.

Product Pricing & Inventory

The Pricing section in Shopify has three fields:

- 1. Price
- 2. Compare at price
- 3. Cost per item

Make sure to use the second field if you want to tell people that an item is on sale. Mention the original price of the product in the "Compare at price" section and the sale price under "Price."

Pricing

Price Compare at price
\$ 70.00 \$ 100.00

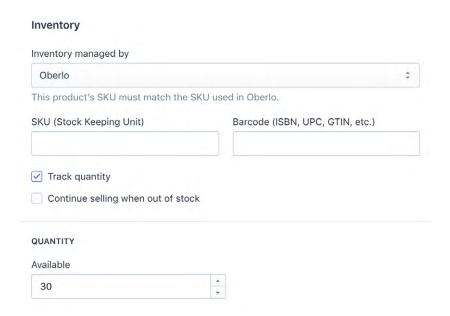
Cost per item
\$ 0.00

(L) TIP TIME

Don't just set a random price. You need to make sure you're covering your costs while still making a profit. Check out this helpful <u>article about pricing strategies</u>.

You can also tell Shopify that you want to track the inventory of your products. To do this, click the "Track quantity" checkbox and define the number of items available to buy.

So if you sell 30 units of a product, Shopify will display "out of stock" and stop people from placing orders until your suppliers refill the stock.



(L) TIP TIME

Building an awesome product page is an art and a science. That's why we wrote a whole book on it! Check out <u>The Ultimate Guide to Building Powerful Product Pages</u> here.

Step 4: Create Your Layout (10 Minutes)

We're almost there. Layout and designs are the last two things you need to spend time on.

Thankfully, Shopify automatically assigns a default theme to your ecommerce store. You can make a beautiful website on top of it through your banner graphic, color scheme, and other visual elements. I'll tell you how to design these elements in Chapter 6.

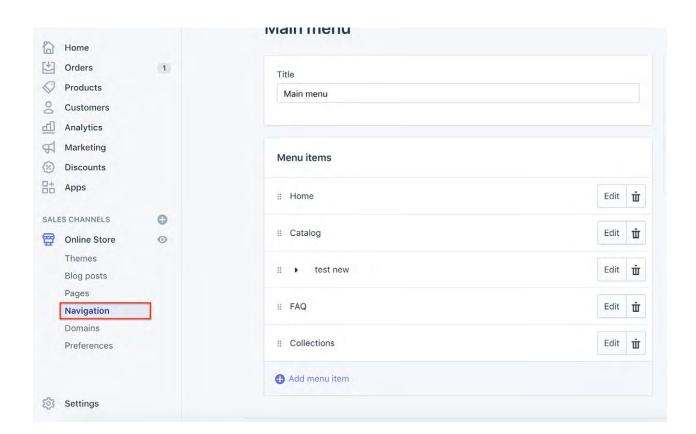
For now, let's focus on the layout. You'll need to create a few menus and make an edit to make it look appealing.

Main Menu

The main menu shows up on every page of your website. It's usually displayed as items across the header, or as a list of items in the sidebar. People will probably use your main menu to find information about your store.

Follow these steps to create a main menu:

- 1. Log into your Shopify account
- 2. From the Shopify admin area, click "Online Store"
- 3. Now click "Navigation" > "Add menu"
- 4. Write "Main Menu" as the title
- 5. Add items such as Home, Catalog, FAQ and Collections to the menu
- 6. Click "Save menu"

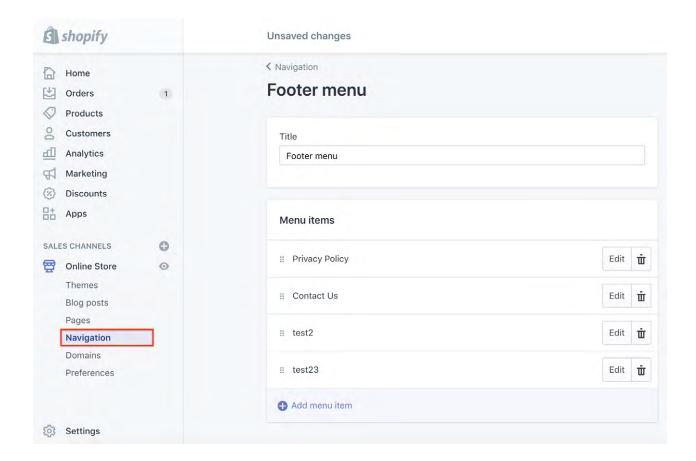


Footer Menu

The footer menu shows up at the bottom of your website. People will probably look at it to find details about your contact information and store policies.

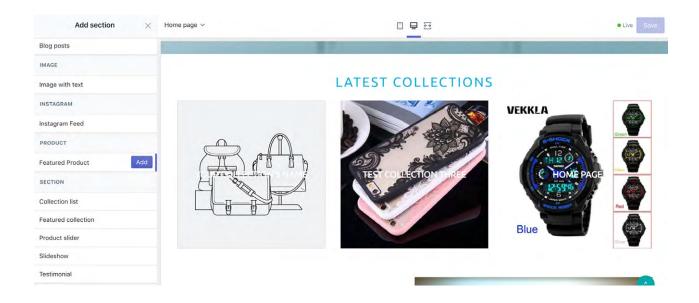
Here's how to create it:

- 1. Log into your Shopify account
- 2. From the Shopify admin area, click "Online Store"
- 3. Now click "Navigation" > "Add menu"
- 4. Write "Footer menu" as the title
- 5. Add items such as "Privacy Policy" and "Contact Us" to the menu
- 6. Click "Save menu"



Editing Featured Products

If you navigate to your Shopify admin area > Themes > Customize > Featured Products, you can choose a collection for featured products.



If you create a collection like you did earlier, name one featured by giving it a tag called "Featured."

Every time you add a new product that you want to showcase, add the "Featured" tag to the tags section. It will automatically appear on the homepage under "Featured."

Step 5: Make That Baby Live!

Once you're happy with the first version of your store, you're ready to go live.

U TIP TIME

You won't be able to go live unless you have a paid Shopify account. So if you're not already past your two-week free trial, now's the time to upgrade to a paid account. To upgrade, go to "Settings" and "Account" in your Shopify dashboard. If you're completely new to all this, I recommend starting with the \$29 per month plan until you learn the ropes.

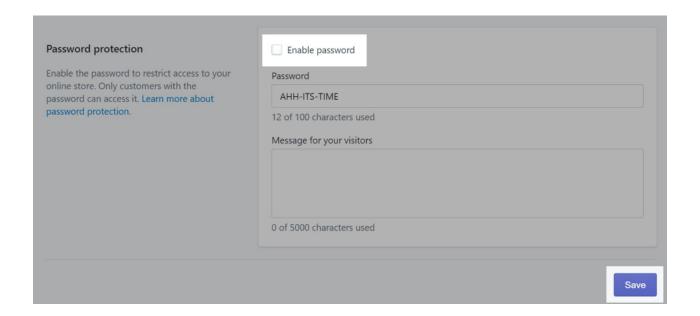
It's kind of funny how much work goes into building a store versus how easy it is to make it go live. It's just a few clicks.

Go to "Sales Channels," then "Online Store," then "Themes" in the left sidebar.

The screen will have a "Disable password" button. Click it.



On the next screen, uncheck the "Enable password" box and click "Save."



You should see a notice that says your store is live. Click "View store" to check out all your hard work.

Congratulations, you have just launched your first dropshipping store!

Although it didn't take a long time, it's an excellent achievement. You're now running your own online store and can officially call yourself an ecommerce entrepreneur.



from You should also remember that you've only figured out how to start an ecommerce store, now you need to figure out how to take it to the next level.

Now that this store-building part is out of the way, let's move ahead with some branding.

6

Create a Memorable Brand

Adeel here.

A brand encourages people to take action by highlighting the unique aspects of a business. It also gives depth to your online presence and tells your audience that they can trust your company.

Think about Nike and LEGO for a moment.

What attracts people to those websites? Personality. Branding.

So if you want to succeed as a dropshipper, you need to create a memorable brand.

"Your brand is the single most important investment you can make in your business."

- Steve Forbes, Editor-in-Chief of Forbes Magazine

Building one from scratch, though, can seem intimidating. There's a logo to be designed, a story to be told, a font to be picked and the list goes on.

Yet if you understand what goes into each step of ecommerce brand building, you can make one that can help take your store to the next level.

So let's start with the first step of branding your store: logo creation.

Create a Logo

A logo is probably the first thing people notice when they visit an online store. And it's not hard to understand why – it's the face of a brand, after all, and is potentially representing the company on all fronts, including the web, social, and even offline.

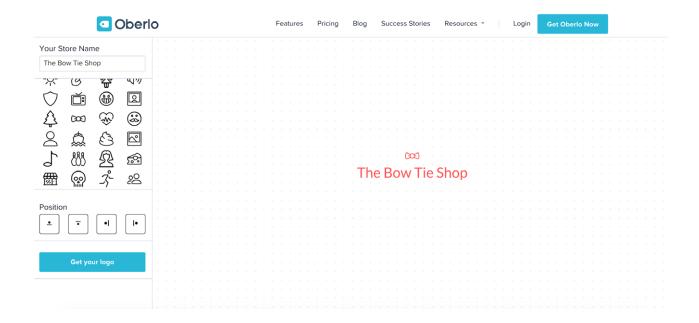
Coming up with a stunning logo, however, is not just time-consuming, but can also be a big challenge to overcome for non-designers.

That said, creating a unique, identifiable logo is still possible. And you have more than one option for achieving the purpose.

You can:

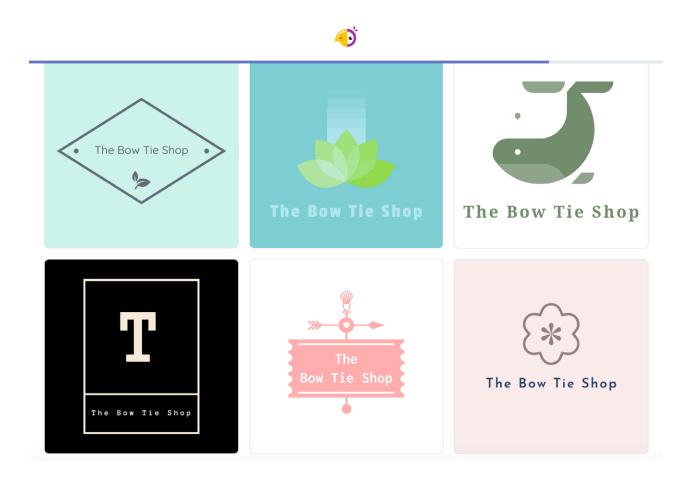
Use an Online Logo Maker

You can't afford to hire a professional designer when you're working with a limited budget. Thankfully, Oberlo offers an <u>online logo maker</u> that'll let you create the logo of your choice.



Once you've entered your store name, you can choose between a great selection of icons, and play around with the color, size, frame, and positioning. And the best part is that it's free to use.

Another option at your disposal is <u>Hatchful</u>. It's a free logo maker by Shopify that lets you create elegant designs. Launch its website, choose your business space, select the visual style, and pick the logo that fits your needs.

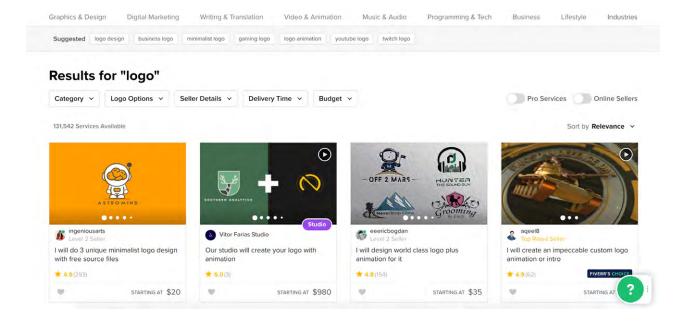


L TIP TIME

If you're looking for more options, here are the <u>top 20 logo makers</u> that'll help you create a nice logo.

Outsource It

You can hire someone to design a logo for a low cost (\$5-\$20) on Fiverr.



The site connects you with designers who can execute your brand's vision with a good-quality logo. It also lets you choose design partners if you don't have a clear idea of what you need or want someone to help you pick a design direction.

I've personally used Fiverr to get a logo made for one of my stores.

One of the main things I learned is that the instructions you provide to the designer need to be as clear as possible.

Otherwise, you may end up being disappointed with the result.

T FROM THE PROS

Dropshipping pro Tim Kock – who's had many dropshipping stores, one of which earned him \$6,667 in under 8 weeks – emphasizes on giving a thorough explanation of your requirements:

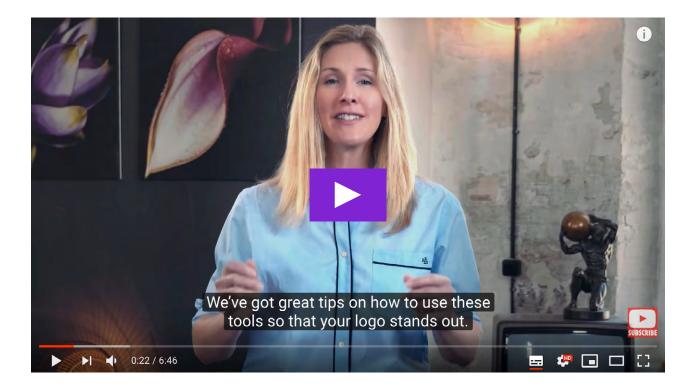


"I have basic Adobe Photoshop skills, but I didn't want to create a logo for my business – I'm just not as good as a professional. So, I hired a freelance web designer on Fiverr to help me create the logo for my store. After receiving a short description of what my business was, and the expectations that I had for the design, they got to work. I received my final design two days later.

I wasn't thrilled with the outcome, but I decided to keep it with slight changes. I accepted that this is my mistake and that I didn't provide clearer instructions. Fortunately, this could be fixed easily. Although the logo had the color gradient I wanted, I changed it to an orange tone instead and got the desired result."

Both Fiverr and using an online logo maker work well for aspiring dropshippers.

I recommend having your logo in a couple different file formats, including a JPG and a PNG. Create a folder on your computer to keep these branding elements in.



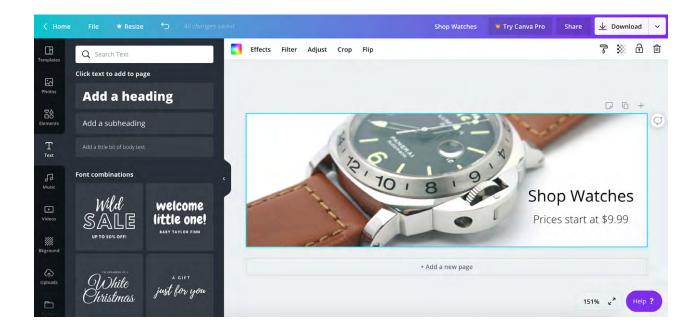
Design the Main Banner

One of the most exciting features of Shopify stores is the homepage banner. You can create a cool looking banner in a matter of minutes. Google "banner creators" and the search engine will present you with a variety of solutions to help design your main banner.

One of the best banner creation tools is Canva. Here's how to use it for making a banner image:

- **1.** Open Canva's <u>online banner maker</u>
- 2. Select banner dimensions (1200x360px)
- 3. Upload an image of one of your products
- 4. Select a contrasting background
- 5. Insert a few lines of text
- 6. Add a "Buy Now" button

And you're done.



You can also use Canva's templates to design something visually appealing. They have shapes you can incorporate into your design to make things pop. Look through the templates for inspiration to design a banner that wows.

Overall, Canva is user-friendly and allows even someone with little design experience to create a unique banner.

You can now insert this banner into your ecommerce store by taking these steps:

- **1.** Log into your Shopify store
- 2. Click Online Store > Themes
- **3.** Choose Customize Theme > edit Homepage Slideshow.
- 4. Upload your banner

That's it.

Pick a Font & Color Scheme

Apart from your logo, your font and color scheme will be essential parts of your brand. You probably got an idea of different fonts if you were making a logo in Canva.

Take a minute to think about logos you've seen and what kinds of moods they create for you when you look at them.

As for colors, you'll just need two or three.

For example, if your target audience is feminine and super girly, you might want to consider traditionally feminine colors like pink and purple.

But there's actually a surprising amount of research about color psychology.

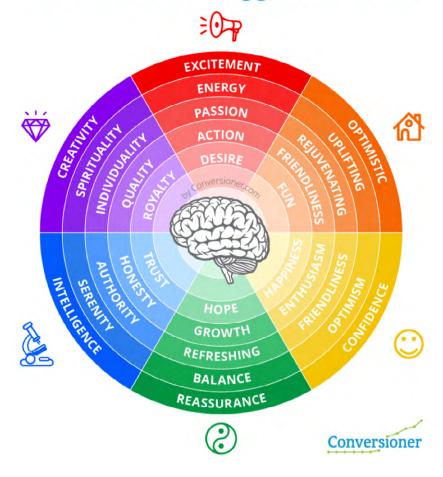


ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

target audience: The group of people who you think will be the best customers for your products. Companies use marketing and promotions to try and make sure their target audience sees their products and wants to buy them.

Conversioner made this graphic to show some basics of what certain colors mean, and the types of emotions they can trigger in people when used in branding:

The Emotional Triggers of Colors



Write down the HTML codes of your colors so that you have them handy for when you're building your site. You can get this from the <u>color palette generator</u> in Canva, or ask your graphic designer.

If you want to learn how color meanings affect your brand, you can read our post on <u>color psychology</u>.

Tell Your Story

What do leading ecommerce brands like ASOS, Forever 21, and Warby Parker have in common? They all have killer brand stories.

Telling your company's story is a crucial aspect of brand building. It helps to shape how consumers look at you, which helps them develop a connection with your brand.

In your story, talk about what's different about your company. Or highlight how your brand has evolved over time. Use a narrative to tie a positive experience to your products and company.

Here's an example of a great story:

SkinnyMe Tea(SMT) is an Australian based company whose mission is to help people like you achieve their health and wellness goals.

Founded in 2012. Gretta (<u>@gretta</u>) started the business from her home in Melbourne, combining her passion for tea and detoxing into a single product, creating the world's first 'Teatox'.

The popular two-step program combines a Morning and Evening Cleanse products as well as Eating and Exercise tips to achieve the results you have been looking for* All of our products are Made in Australia from the highest quality herb and extracts.

The team of health professionals in nutrition, naturopathy, and exercise are here to provide the support you need. We are proud to have assisted over 350,000 people just like you to achieve their health goals, and it is success stories such as these that motivate our team to provide the best product and service possible to make sure you do too.



SkinnyMe Tea's brand story appeals to people who are into detox (or, as the brand calls it, teatox). The company ties in a positive experience to its offerings by saying they've helped 350,000 people achieve their health goals. The story works, as it helps potential buyers imagine being better off with its products.

What about dropshippers who don't have a story?

Inexperienced dropshippers often post false company stories on their About Us page. This is a mistake because anyone with good research skills can find out the truth and expose you for being intransparent with potential audiences.

A better approach is to think about what parts of your business are important to you (and also to your customers) and highlight these on your About Us page.

Some examples:

"At Makeup Den, we pride ourselves on finding the most colourful new makeup products so you can feel unique."

"We founded Tech Heaven to collect the best new technology products at a low price."

"At Yoga Club, we care about supporting the community and donate 10% of profits to Feed America."

TIP TIME

You can also share a personal story as long as you're not trying to fake authenticity, e.g. "I'm Adeel, and I founded Adventure Travel Shop while I was hitchhiking in Europe" (I've never hitchhiked in my life!). People tend to appreciate genuineness.

Once you're done writing your brand story, create an "About Us" page in Shopify and add it there.

Speak Your Customer's Language

People prefer doing business with companies that speak their preferred language.



'Language' here implies market preferences, industry terminology, and culture differences. Let me explain it with the help of an example.

Imagine five men and five women signing up for the same exercise session. The men are telling their peers that they want to "get shredded." The women are all saying they want to "tone up" for the beach season. Both genders have a similar goal but use different language.

If you can figure out what language your customers speak, you'll change people's perception of your store.

How can you know if you're speaking your audience's language?

By examining their social conversations. Facebook Groups and Instagram feeds are two places to start. These are the platforms people use to casually (and naturally) speak about their passions, interests, and problems.

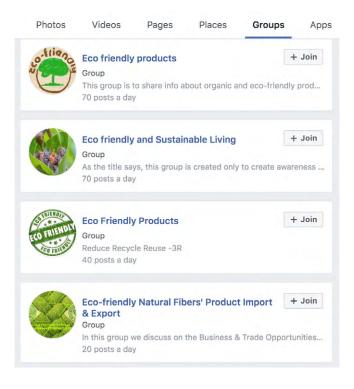
Here's a quick look at how each of them can give you an insight into your target audience's language.

Facebook Groups

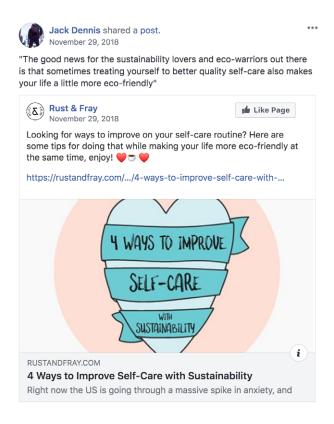
People join Facebook Groups to engage in casual discussions with like-minded people.

Typically, they find it to be a safe place where they can share their thoughts with others, comment on breaking news, and open up a bit more. This is why it makes sense to observe the conversations that happen there.

For example, if you're selling eco-friendly items through your store, you can join "sustainable living" and "eco-friendly" groups to see the type of language people use there.



I joined one of such groups to see if I could find any specific words and references for the "eco-friendly" audience. And it worked!



One of the first posts I came across gave me some ideas of the language that could be used for an eco-friendly audience. People selling in the same niche could sprinkle phrases like "eco-warriors" and "self-care routine" in their branding to engage audiences better.

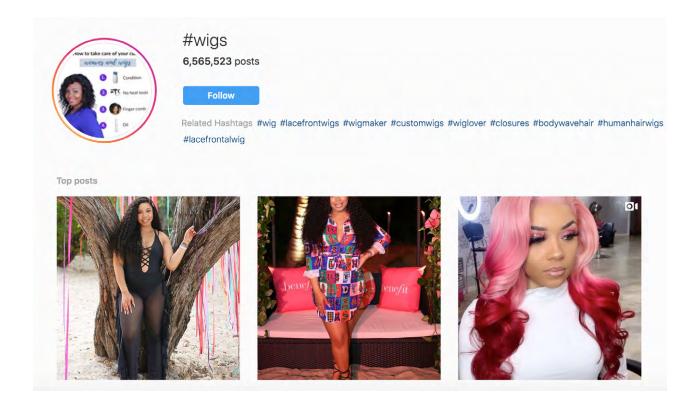
You can take a similar approach by joining Facebook Groups that are relevant to your niche.

Instagram Feed

Another place you should explore is the Instagram feed of your ideal customer.

Let's assume you're selling <u>wigs</u>, <u>extensions</u>, <u>and other hair-related products</u> through your store. What you could do is search for product-related hashtags on Instagram to find people who are passionate about hair products, and then look at their Instagram feed to see the way they talk about it.

Here's what comes up if I search for #wigs on Instagram.



Digging further into their profiles, I came across a few words that someone selling hair products could use in their branding, like "rocking a wig."

6. Create a Memorable Brand





wigsbybongi @pmavundhla6 rocking a wig by me. The wig that has brought multiple customers. Thanks a lot for the support and the continuous referral @ @ @ I am your lady for wigs.

#wigsbybongi #wigs #wigsale
#wigmaking #wigsforsale #wigbusiness
#wigsalon #lacewigs #blackwoman
#blackexcellence #blackgirlmagic
#blackhair #blackbusiness
#blackgirlhairstyles #black
#supportblackbusiness #blondehair
#longwig #melanin #johannesburg
#southafrica #blackhairsalon #african
#africa #africanhair #blackwoman
#beauty #beautiful

64 εβδ.

Just like their conversations in Facebook Groups, the Instagram feed of your target audience can help you understand your customer's language – you just need to do a bit of research.

By using your customer's language, you'll be able to create copy and updates that sound like their own, setting the expectation that your brand is familiar with their interests.

With that, you've created an ecommerce brand. Now it's time to promote it!

We'll talk more about promoting your brand through social media in the next chapter.

You can reinforce brand awareness every time someone reads your content, punches in your URL, or sees your products.

Check out this video for more tips on how to brand your store:



With the right personality, colors, and voice, you can make your brand more appealing for both your staff and prospective customers.

Let's keep this party going. Next up: how to build your brand through social media.

7

Grow Your Brand with Social Media Marketing



Amanda here.

Social media marketing is more important than ever before. Today <u>more than 3.5</u> <u>billion people</u> use social media, and that number is growing every day.

On top of that, people are spending an average of three hours a day browsing sites like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter (just to name a few).



And every day, more and more people shop for products on social media. It's estimated that on Instagram alone, more than 130 million people per month tap on the little shopping bag icon to learn more about ecommerce items.

This chapter is all about tapping into the massive potential to make sales and skyrocket your store using social media.

We're going to look at the top channels and tell you exactly how you can get more followers and more engagement from those followers – and ultimately more sales.

How to Post Damn Good Content

When looking at ways to use social media for marketing, you can split the activity into two main categories: organic content and paid tactics.

Organic content

Organic content is an umbrella term that describes any unpaid content that you post, like photos, videos, stories, and comments. These posts should be at the heart of your social media marketing strategy, because it'll be much easier to make those sales if you can keep your audience interested organically.

Paid tactics

Anything that you pay for, like running advertising on a platform. Influencer marketing also counts as a paid tactic, because you'll likely need to give the influencer money or free stuff to get them to partner with you. We'll get into influencer marketing later in this chapter.

- Selling your products
- Getting more followers and engagement
- Building relationships with potential customers and other brands
- Generally boosting your brand's reputation

Let's look at how you can use social media to draw in your audience and smash all of your goals.

Tips for Making Posts That People Love

Here's the golden rule of social media:

Don't just promote your products all the time. You'll lose followers fast (or never get them to begin with) if every post is just "Hey you, buy this!"

The point of social media is to engage people. You have to show them things that they're actually interested in. And you need to do this in ways that are fun, creative, and entertaining.

(L) TIP TIME

Here are a few ideas for things you can post about:

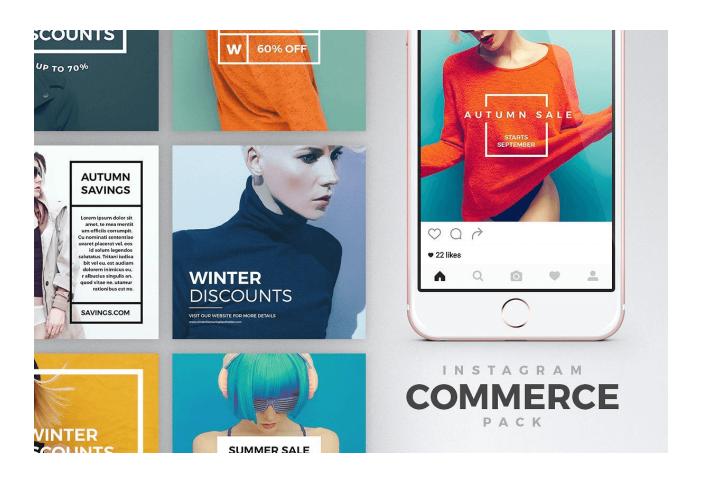
- Answer popular questions within your company's niche or about your company specifically
- Show "behind-the-scenes" content to give your audience a peek at how you do your thing
- Promote your content, like a new blog, ebook, or infographic
- Have a "takeover" where one of your employees (or an influencer
 more on them later) posts their own content for a day
- Poll your audience on a popular topic or ask them for feedback about your company
- Host a contest or giveaway in which you ask users to create a post or story that tags your account or includes a branded hashtag
- If you have a quirky brand, post funny or viral memes
- If you have a lifestyle brand, post inspirational quotes

In addition to keeping your content interesting and varied, here are some more tips for making content that really resonates with your potential customers.

Keep a consistent "vibe." For example, if your brand is high-fashion, make sure all of your images are high-quality, with the feeling of elegance and sophistication. If your brand is quirky or funny, let your true colors shine.

Get valuable intel from your friends and enemies. See what's hot by checking out top-performing posts from similar brands, your biggest competitors, leaders in specific niches, and the most broadly popular accounts on the platform. Unleash your inner detective.

Try free templates to give you a boost. Check out this <u>Instagram templates article</u>, or try buying a template pack like this 48-template <u>Instagram Commerce Pack</u> from Tugcu Design Co. (You can totally still use these on other platforms, by the way.)



Know when to post. Good posting times vary depending on the channel. For example, Sunday is one of the worst days to post on Instagram, but one of the best to post on Facebook. This video will tell you more juicy tips.



Tips to Use Hashtags, Stories, and Live Video

There are a lot of super popular features that different social media platforms have in common. We're going to focus on three important ones: hashtags, stories, and live video.

Here's a chart that shows you what features you can use and where.

Feature	Major platforms that use it
Hashtags	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, TikTok, Snapchat
Stories	Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat
Live video	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok (must have at least 1,000 followers)

Let's look at some tips on how to use these features, which you can use on any platform that supports them.

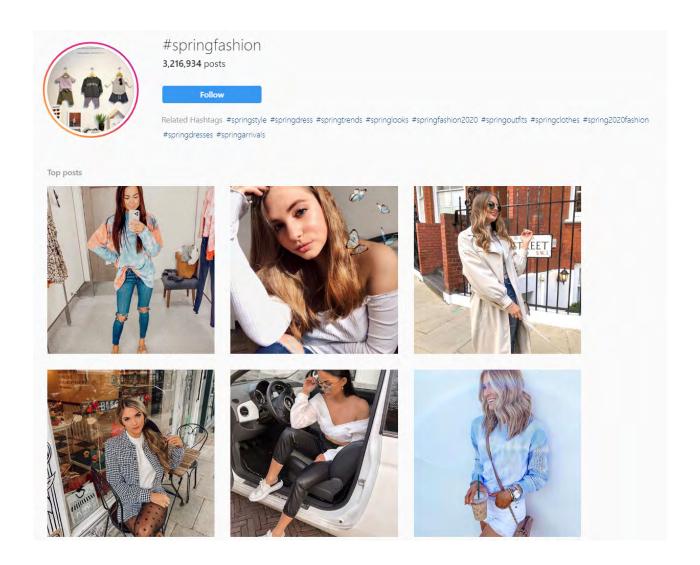
Hashtags

It seems that hashtags are virtually everywhere these days. That's because they're a clear signal to users that your posts are relevant to what they're looking for.

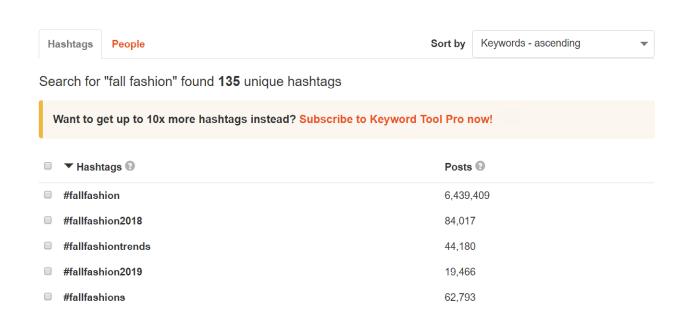
In fact, many users look for content based on hashtags alone. So if your posts are related to a trending topic, be sure to include the associated hashtag. This can help you get in front of the eyes of people who are genuinely interested in what you have to say.

You can search directly in the social media platform's search bar to find trending hashtags and scope out content that others are posting.

For example, this #springfashion example on Instagram shows you top posts and recent posts, as well as related hashtags that you can use as suggestions.



Other cool tools like <u>Keyword Tool</u> will generate hashtags for you based on your keywords. Many of these tools offer some free results, but require a paid upgrade for more extensive lists.



It's also a smart idea to create a branded hashtag and use it frequently. This hashtag might include your company's name or the name of a particular campaign, event, or promotion.

Stories

People love Stories. The psychology makes sense: they're a more exciting and short-lived way to share with your followers, since they disappear after 24 hours and they aren't listed on your main profile or feed.

Stories are a worthy addition to your social media marketing strategy. They give you an opportunity to touch on things that are more timely or in-depth, or don't quite warrant a regular post.

Men's clothing brand <u>Chubbies</u> has a creative "Welcome Back from the Weekender" series every Monday, which features a compilation of stories that act as a fun news-style show.



Live Video

Live videos let you engage your audience in a real time "live broadcast" format.

This is an especially helpful feature for if you're attending an event or talking about anything timely or urgent.

It's also great for having real-time chats with your followers, like explaining something or asking their opinions.

The cool thing about live videos is that on some platforms, like Instagram, your story will show up first in your followers' Story feed, and they'll also get a notification that it's happening when they open the app.

U TIP TIME

With great power comes great responsibility: don't use the live videos feature unless you have some truly good and interesting content to share. Otherwise, you might push users away if they feel like you're wasting their time.



Now, let's dig into the two most popular – and super powerful – platforms: Facebook and Instagram.

A Closer Look: Facebook

Facebook is hands-down the most popular social media site out there. Two out of every three U.S. adults use it. Dang.



That's part of what makes it a great idea to boost your dropshipping business. And if you plan to run Facebook or Instagram Ads in the future, you'll definitely need to have a Facebook business page. So let's get to it.

U TIP TIME

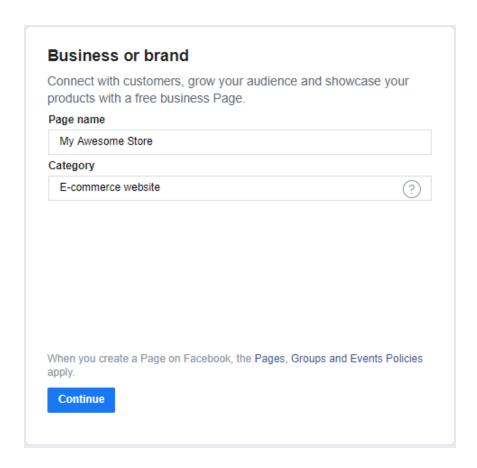
We're going to show you all about Facebook Ads in the next chapter. So hang onto your bootstraps.

How to Create a Facebook Business Page

Before you dive into Facebook marketing, make sure you have a proper business page – not just a regular personal page. You'll need this to use business features like ads and Facebook Insights. Plus, it's more credible in the eyes of your audience.

Here are the steps.

- To get started, <u>click this link</u> or head to "facebook.com/pages/creation" while logged into your personal Facebook account. Click "Get started" under "Business or brand."
- 2. Fill out your page name and the category. You can choose "E-commerce website." There are many other options that you can choose based on your specific business, like Health/beauty, Home decor, Electronics, Women's clothes shop, and a bunch more. Fill out what works best for your niche and products you can choose up to three. Then click "Continue."



- 3. Next, upload a profile picture. Most businesses use their logo, but you can also use a graphic or icon that shows off your brand. Upload a square photo so it doesn't get distorted.
- **4.** Then, add a cover photo. You can use the banner you designed in Chapter 6, or a graphic that promotes a special sale or event that you want people to know. It should be eye-catching and on-brand with the rest of your store's visuals, and the dimensions should ideally be 1200 x 628 pixels.

Here, you can see that Oberlo uses their cover photo to promote the Dropshipping 101 course. And for the profile photo, they use the tag icon that's part of the logo.



5. Scroll to the "About" section in the left sidebar and fill out your info, including your website URL, company story, and contact info.

L TIP TIME

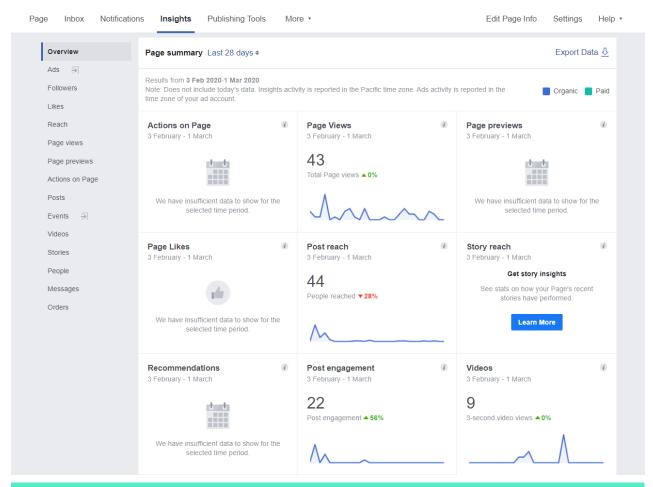
There's a lot you can do with your Facebook page. To learn more, check out these 19 easy steps for setting up a killer Facebook Business Page.

Use Facebook Insights to Track Your Performance

Most social media platforms give you a free tool to look at key performance metrics of your account, like how much attention your posts are getting and how engaged users are. Then you can create more posts like those to keep the party going.

You can also see demographic info on your followers, giving you better intel on finding your target audience on each platform. While these built-in analytics tools usually aren't mind-blowingly comprehensive, they're perfect for starters.

See your Facebook Insights by clicking the "Insights" tab inside your business page.



L TIP TIME

Want to learn more about Facebook Insights? Check out our article, <u>Your Guide to Facebook Analytics</u>.

A Closer Look: Instagram

Facebook may be the biggest, but Instagram isn't far behind in second place. And like Facebook, Instagram can be a powerhouse for brands looking to boost their reputation and sales.

In a Facebook survey, 80 percent of people said that Instagram helps them decide if they should buy a product.



How to Create an Instagram Business Profile

Just like with Facebook, you'll want an official business profile instead of just a personal one. Let's take a look at how to create a business profile and some best practices that can turn a good profile into an awesome one.

To create an Instagram business profile, you'll need two things:

1. An Instagram account, which can be your existing personal profile or a new one you've created just for this purpose. We strongly recommend creating a new handle with your company's name for brand recognition. It also just looks more professional and trustworthy.

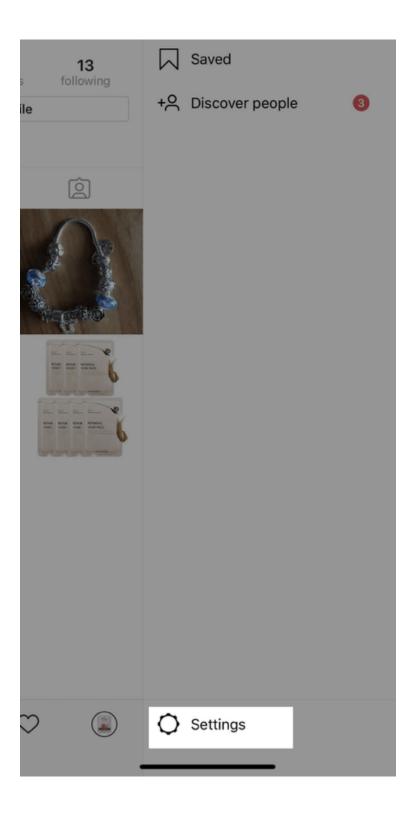


handle: Your username on a social media site. Handles usually start with the @ symbol. For example, Oberlo's Instagram handle is @oberloapp.

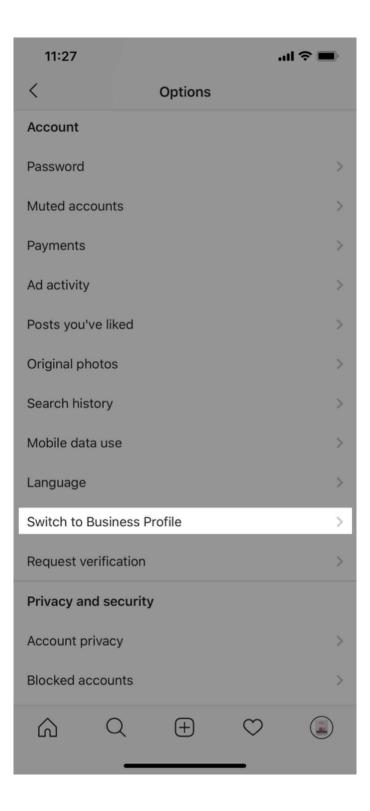
2. A Facebook business page for your company. Instagram requires this for verification purposes. Lucky for you, we just went over everything you need for this step. You're welcome.

Without further ado, here's how to make an Instagram business profile:

- 1. On your smartphone, log in to Instagram with your company handle. Instagram doesn't let you do this on your computer, unfortunately.
- 2. Tap the circular icon in the bottom right corner. The screen will expand to show another menu. Tap "Settings" in the bottom right corner.

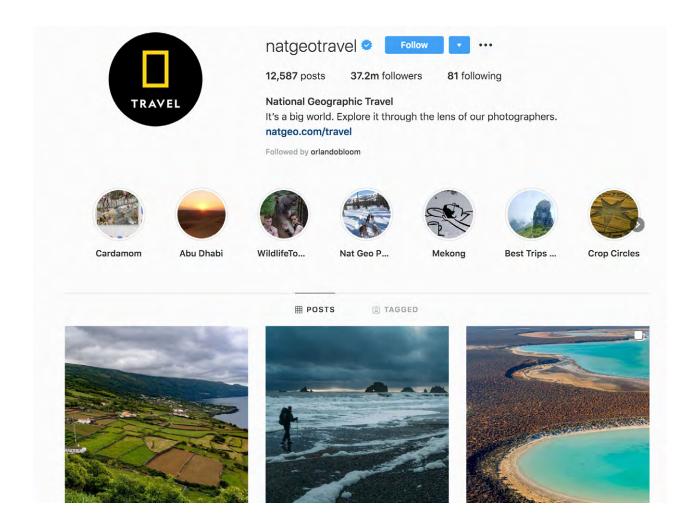


3. On the Settings page, scroll down until you find "Switch to Business Profile."



4. Instagram will then ask you to connect the account to your Facebook business page and edit your business's public contact info: email address, phone number, and location. This will be public on your profile, so avoid adding private info. Here are some tips for making a good Instagram profile:

- Stay consistent with your brand. Use the same colors, fonts, and images
 that you have in other places, like your website and other social media
 accounts.
- Use your logo as your photo. This is the fastest way for users to know it's you. You can try using a branded image or icon, but it's a good idea to make sure it's close to your other brand visuals.
- Make your bio about your customers, not your business. Explain the
 benefits that you're offering. Instead of saying something business-oriented
 like, "We post amazing travel photos," National Geographic's Travel account
 says, "It's a big world. Explore it through the lens of our photographers."



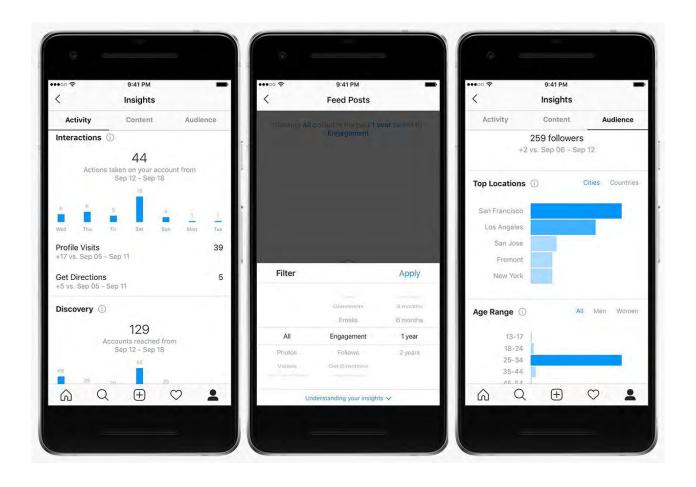
- Use your bio as a promotion opportunity. Have any big sales, events, or content up right now? Mention and link to it in your bio.
- Include a link in your bio for users to explore. Your bio should lead users to
 experience your brand, whether it's linking to your website, a specific sale
 or piece of content, or a content aggregation tool like <u>Linktr.ee</u> or <u>LikeShop</u>
 listing.
- Use emojis in your bio. Most brands use them because emojis are a quick,
 visual way to get your point across. Not to mention they're super trendy.

Use Instagram Insights to Track Your Performance

Like Facebook (and many other social media sites), Instagram gives you free analytics to see how your profile and posts are performing. It shows you three types of analytics:

- Activity. What actions people take when they're on your profile.
- Content. How well your posts, promotions, and stories are performing.
- Audience. Details about the types of people your page is attracting.

See your Instagram Insights by tapping the icon with three lines = at the top right corner of your screen, then tapping "Insights."



(L) TIP TIME

Want to learn more about Instagram Insights? Check out our article, <u>How to Use Instagram Insights to Accelerate Your Growth</u>.

Other Platforms to Consider

While you should definitely dip your toes into the powerhouses that are Facebook and Instagram, there are loads of other platforms you can benefit from.

Let's look at five of the most popular runners-up. We'll round up some big takeaways and unique features of each one, and some notes that you should consider when making your choice.

Platform	Details & Features	Takeaways
Pinterest	 Users create collections of "pins," or saved photos and links they like from browsing the web Most U.S. adult users are age 30-49, mostly female 322 million monthly active users 	The nature of Pinterest makes it a good opportunity to drive traffic to your website. Just make sure your audience is the right demographic.
Snapchat	 An app for photo and video sharing, as well as messaging All posts, or "snaps," disappear shortly after users see them 90 percent of users are age 13-24 190 million active daily users 	A good option if your ideal customers are Gen-Zers and you have a fun, quirky brand. Because the posts disappear quickly, you need to pack a punch with your content.

Platform	Details & Features	Takeaways
Twitter	 Every post (called a tweet) must be 280 characters or less A fast platform where tweets come and go quickly Many people use it as a customer service channel 62 percent of users are age 35-65 330 million monthly active users 	If you want to focus on great customer service, this is a good channel to have. But to really make an impact with marketing, you'd need to post several tweets a day. So weigh out your resources.
TikTok	 Exclusively a video sharing app, with a 15 second limit on videos Big opportunity to go viral, but it can't be boring marketing content 41 percent of users are age 16-25 – huge in the Gen Z audience 500 million users worldwide 	A good choice if your audience is Gen Z-ers, and you have a young, spunky brand. You also need the ability to make fun and engaging video content, because videos are the only option.
LinkedIn	 Mostly geared toward professional users – every profile is basically a résumé/CV The second most popular B2B (business-to-business) platform behind Facebook 37 percent of U.S. adults age 30-49 use it 660 million users in more than 200 countries 	With a big professional network, this can be a great option if you have an older, businessminded audience. Otherwise, it's probably not worth the effort.

How to Get More Followers

Everyone wants to get more followers. But the question is: *How do I do that?* The answer is that it takes time, effort, and really great content.

(L) TIP TIME

Do not – I repeat, do not – buy fake followers for any of your social media accounts. Here are the three biggest reasons why:

- 1. You won't make any sales from fake followers, so what's the point?
- 2. You'll have really low engagement, which will make your brand look bad.
- 3. It will destroy your credibility to potential customers and partners.
- **4.** It's against the terms of service for many platforms.

Here are some of the methods you can use right now to grow your following on all your social media channels.

1. Host a Giveaway with Another Business

Partnering with another business to host a contest or giveaway can work wonders for your following.

The idea here is that if both of you have similar customer profiles, you'll both gain high-quality followers. Request that everybody who enters the competition likes the post and does some secondary action, like a tag or a follow.

Take a look at this example from Kylie Cosmetics.



This Instagram post starts by capturing users' attention: "GIVEAWAY ALERT." Then it points out how easy it is to enter – "comment to enter." Finally, it highlights what users stand to gain.

Keep in mind that the easier it is to enter the contest, the more entrants (and followers) you'll likely get.

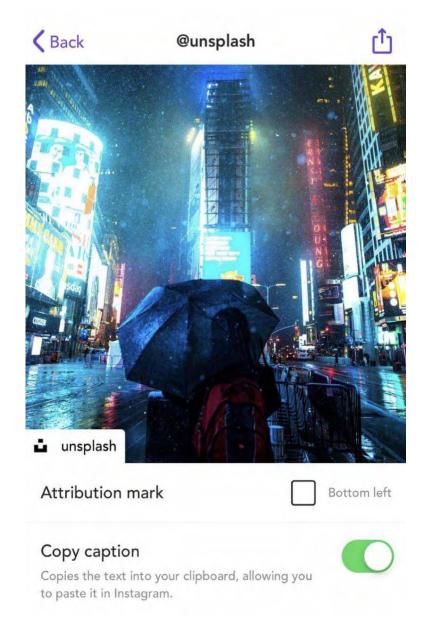
2. Repost Other Companies' Content

This is both a smart and a natural way to get more exposure for your business. When you tag another business in your post and promote their content, they're likely to reciprocate.

In some cases, they'll follow you back and promote your business as well. And just as crucial, their followers are likely to take notice of your profile.

On sites like Facebook and Twitter, sharing is a piece of cake. (The "Share" button on Facebook and the "Retweet" button on Twitter).

For Instagram, you'll need to repost manually or use an app like Repost for Instagram. This app is great for Instagram because it lets you quickly select the accounts you'd like to repost. Plus, it automatically tags the original profile, giving it the credit for the content.



3. Give and Receive Shoutouts 🌦



This is where you ask another business in your industry if they would like to post your content, and in return you post theirs. The cool part of it is that you can give and receive shoutouts in various ways.

On Instagram, camera brand Canon allows photographers who own a Canon camera to give it a shoutout using the hashtag #MyCanonStory in the description of their post.

Canon regularly returns the favor by sharing some of the most enticing work from those photographers. Here's an example:



The company shares posts on Facebook too:



(L) TIP TIME

You can learn more about Instagram shoutouts in our <u>ultimate guide to</u>
<u>Instagram shoutouts</u>. The key is to find the right partners who find mutual value in the trade.

4. Write Captions That Move Your Audience

Many people scroll through their Instagram feed when they're bored or looking for entertainment. You can attract and get this audience to follow you by creating intriguing captions.

The goal is to convey the story or feeling behind your video or image.

If the video or image is about a product, the caption is a good place to fill in a quick description of your item. Explain why people should care, and don't forget to include a few emojis.



In general, posts with strong captions can help shape your company's personality and story. The key is to craft a copy that encourages people to engage and makes them realize they need what you're offering.

(L) TIP TIME

Looking for more tips on how to get followers? Check out these packed articles:

- How to Get Followers on Instagram: From 0 to 10k Followers
- 18 Ways to Increase Facebook Followers and Likes in 2020
- How to Get More Twitter Followers (Without Really Trying)

Get Sales with Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is one of the most popular forms of social media marketing out there today.

Influencers are people who have grown an organic, dedicated following based on their content niche. They exist in every industry, from fashion to tech to finance. And influencers in general exist on pretty much any social media platform you can think of.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

influencer marketing: A type of social media marketing where you form partnerships with influencers, who then promote your brand or products on their social profiles. Influencers are people or groups with a dedicated and often large following, usually in a specific niche.

When you can find the right influencers to match your brand, it can give you a serious boost in followers, sales, and overall brand recognition. The key here is that you have to find the right influencers.

In this example, <u>Audible's Canada</u> division partnered with tech influencer @ <u>thetrendytechie</u>. In her typical post style, she explains what she's listening to and why she likes using Audible.



A foodie example: Pierogi brand Mrs. T's Pierogi's collaborated with Ashley C. of spoonfulflavor to create unique content. Ashley made a recipe using the pierogies and shared it with her followers, encouraging them to try it for themselves.

She sealed the deal with a relevant hashtag, #easyweeknightmeal, which makes the post searchable to Instagram users who want home-cooked meals but don't have extra hours to slave away in the kitchen.



Another common form of influencer marketing is partnering with other brands to cross-promote contests and giveaways.

In this example, recipe curator <u>@thefeedfeed</u> partnered with <u>DeLallo Foods</u> and furniture company <u>Room & Board</u> to host a contest with prizes from each of the three brands.

As an added bonus, the image used to promote the contest is an actual entry – a gorgeous and mouth-watering appetizer spread from one of TheFeedFeed's existing followers.







1) Follow @thefeedfeed & @DeLalloFoods

2) Show us your best boards using antipasti, charcuterie, cheese, olives & more + tag @thefeedfeed, @DeLalloFoods, #DeLalloEats #feedfeed & #contest (must be in main caption of a new post or reshare an old post)!

TWO Winners will each receive the following prizes & ONE Grand Prize Winner will receive the below prizes AND a trip to NYC to join #TeamFeedfeed & @DeLalloFoods for our Ultimate Entertaining Event on





3 HOURS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

(L) TIP TIME

To learn more about the wonders of influencer marketing, read this article: The Complete Guide to Getting Started With Influencer Marketing. Also check out the sweet video below.



And that's a wrap on our intro to social media marketing. Now, let's look at how to take your social media strategy a step further with Facebook Ads.

8

Get Sales with Facebook Ads

Adeel here.

You should consider running Facebook ads. It's one of the best ways to promote your products to more than 2.45 billion people around the world.

In one survey, 78 percent of Americans said that they've discovered new products to buy while cruising through the platform.



Fortunately, you can get great results with Facebook Ads even if you don't have thousands of dollars to spend. Part of this is because of the incredible targeting abilities that Facebook gives you, which we'll get into soon.

If you've never used Facebook ads before, don't worry. That's what this chapter is for.

I'll guide you through exactly how to set up, run, test, and optimize your Facebook ads campaigns.

An Intro to Facebook Advertising Costs

There's no predefined budget that you have to set for Facebook advertising.

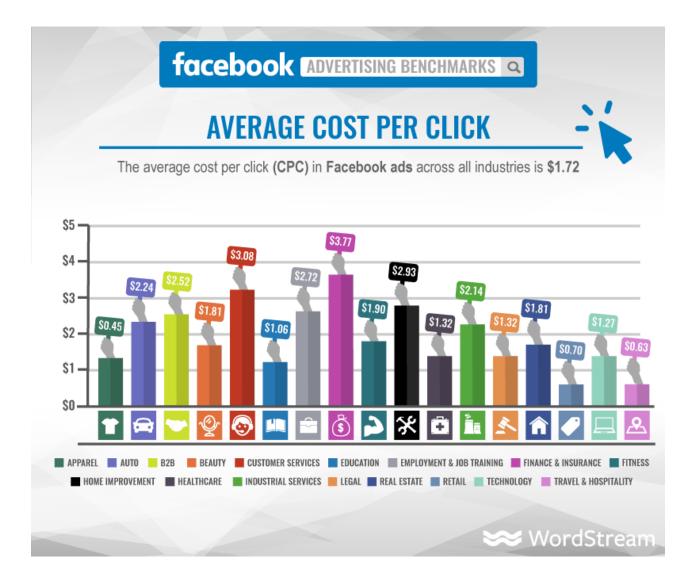
Depending on your situation, your ad spend could be as much as \$50 per day, or as little as \$5.

However, you should make yourself aware of Facebook advertising costs before you decide on a budget. This is crucial to ensure that you're spending just the right amount of money to get desired results.

To get an idea of the costs, let's take a look at how much you'd need to pay for a click on your ad.

According to <u>WordStream</u>, the average cost-per-click for Facebook ads is \$1.72 across all industries.

But not every industry has such a high average. For example, Facebook ads for travel & hospitality businesses cost \$0.63 per click on average.



Depending on what industry your business is in, your per click costs would be somewhere between \$0.50 and \$2.00.

Remember, you should take these averages with a pinch of salt. That's because your actual costs will vary depending on your:

- Target audience
- Competition
- Daily and lifetime budget

Let's talk about each of these a bit more.

Target Audience

People with certain demographic and psychographic profiles cost more to reach than others.

So if you're targeting a highly sought-after audience, your Facebook ad costs will be higher. It's basic economics: supply and demand.

As a result, you might be tempted to slim down your target audience to narrow the pool of your competition.

But beware. Creating small target audiences can lead to higher costs because there are fewer placements available, or fewer places your ad can be shown.

Competition

Arguably, this is the key factor that influences your Facebook ad costs.

Why? Once again, supply and demand.

If there were no other businesses trying to reach your target audience, there would be no demand and so your Facebook advertising costs would fall.

But let's get back to reality. Your Facebook advertising costs will largely depend on how many competitors you have, and what they're willing to spend.

Daily and Lifetime Budget

Although there are countless variables at play, there are two surefire ways to define your Facebook advertising cost: your bid and your budget.

Your budget is the overall amount of money you're happy to spend on a single ad set or campaign.

What's more, Facebook provides two budget types:

- Daily Budget: The average amount you're willing to spend on a campaign each day
- Lifetime Budget: The amount you're willing to spend during the entire campaign

Budget & Schedule

Define how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear.

Optimization for Ad Delivery 1	Ad Recall Lift		
Cost Control 1	Facebook will aim to the most ad recall lift and spend your entire budget.		
Budget and Schedule 1	Daily Budget ▼	\$5.00	
		\$5.00 USD	
	Actual amount spent daily may vary. Run my ad set continuously starting today Set a start and end date You'll spend no more than \$35.00 per week.		

Your bid is how much you're willing to spend to land an ad placement.

If you don't choose a bid, Facebook will automatically calculate one based on your chosen budget and the duration of your campaign.

Now that you have some knowledge of Facebook advertising costs, let's have a look at what you need to do before you make your first campaign.

Types of Facebook (and Instagram) Ads

As you may know, Facebook bought Instagram in 2012. That means that you control ads for Facebook and Instagram inside the same Facebook Ads Manager.

So the point is that there are a whole lotta ad types that you can choose from. Let's look at the three most common ones:

- Image and video ads
- Carousel ads
- Story ads

Image and Video Ads

These show up in user feeds the same way that organic posts from other users do, so your ads can be front-and-center in the user's experience. As you may have guessed, an image ad refers to an ad that features an image, and a video ad features a video.

These ads include a <u>call-to-action</u> (CTA), or a button that encourages users to take a specific action, like:

- Shop Now
- Book Now
- Learn More
- Watch More

- Contact Us
- Send Message
- Listen Now

Here's an image ad from Doodly, a doodle video-making tool.



For a short time, we are offering Doodly for a 1-time price of just \$67 (Normally \$468/year).

https://www.doodly.com/lifetime

The power is in your hands to create professional, hand-sketched doodle videos whenever you want for any project.

NO MONTHLY FEES (forever.)
AND A 30-DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE!

NO technical or design skills needed. Point and click easy! Doodly is the PERFECT video creation software for...

Digital Marketing, teaching and training, sales videos (VSLs), creating fun & inspiring videos!

And so much more!

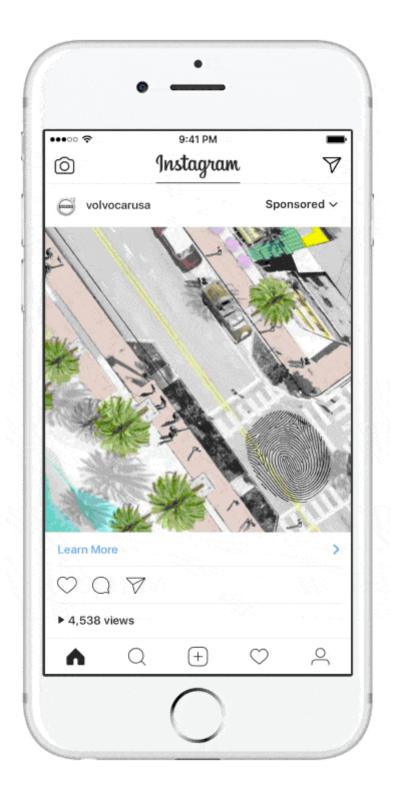


DOODLY.COM/LIFETIME

1-Time \$67 Price. Lock In The Price Now

Learn More

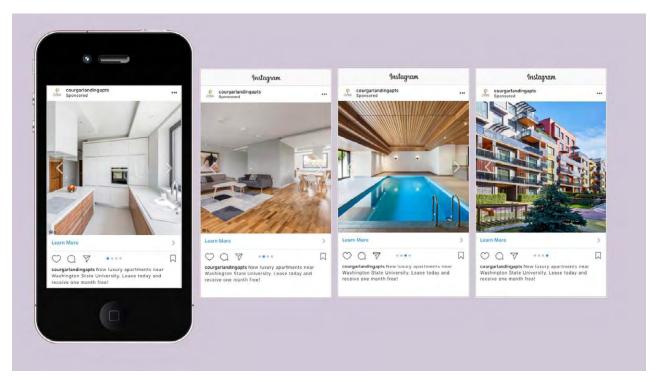
And here's a cool <u>video ad example</u> from Volvo that invites users to take a "thumb drive" of its new XC60 luxury SUV.



Carousel Ads

Carousel ads function in a similar way to organic posts that feature more than one image or video. They appear in a user's feed along with other posts, allowing you to show up to ten images or videos per post. What's cool is that each of these items can have their own unique link to lead your users to.

You can use these to highlight a few sale items and lead potential customers to your website to shop, or show several photos of the same product.



Source

Story Ads

Story ads are immersive, full-screen units that let your brand infuse creativity to make the ads more appealing for your audience.

According to the findings from <u>Kenshoo's quarterly trends report</u>, advertisers' are spending more and more on Story ads. Their spending doubled year-over-year from 9 percent to 18 percent in the second quarter of 2019.



Story ads pop up in between
Facebook and Instagram Stories
from the accounts people
follow. They can deliver a
positive experience to potential
customers. They also feature a
call-to-action at the bottom.

To make money with Story ads, run a campaign that promotes your product or service, and ensure you add a call-to-action at the bottom to encourage people to buy.

You'll have a choice in ads to publish either an image or a video. Whatever you decide, make sure your Story is attention-grabbing to snag the users who swipe fast through their content.

Here's a great video if you want to learn more about Story ads.



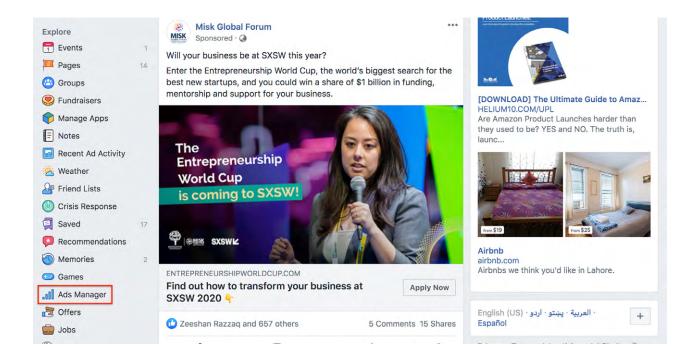
Get Familiar With Facebook Ads Manager

In this section, we're going to get familiar with Facebook's Ads Manager so you understand what button is where, and how the important things work.

Then, we're going to install your Facebook Pixel. Your Pixel is super important for making sure that your ads perform well, so don't skip that part!

To set up and manage your ads, you'll need to go to your Facebook Ads Manager. When you made a business page in the last chapter, Facebook automatically made an Ads Manager account for you.

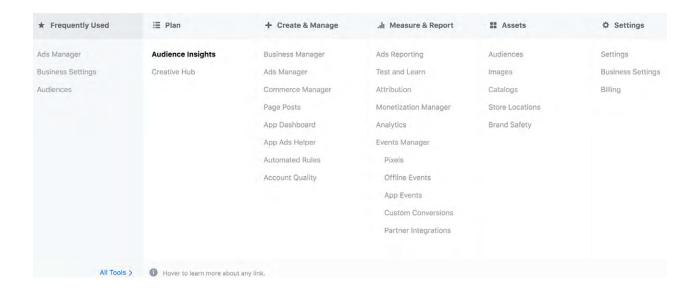
You can access it from the tab on the left side of your personal Facebook profile.



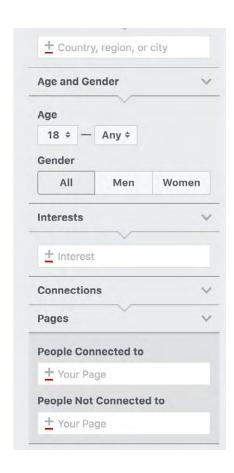
The other way to access it is through the Settings menu. You can open it by clicking the little down-pointing arrow at the top-right corner of your screen, then clicking "Manage Ads."

Research Your Audience

The Ads Manager menu is broken up into different sections. To identify the right audience to target, go to the "Plan" section and click "Audience Insights."



The Audience Insights tool shows you detailed information on any audience targeting metrics you choose.



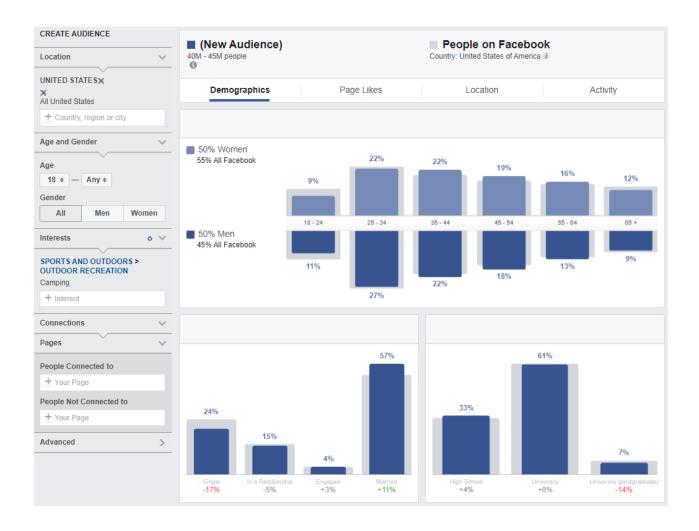
These are your options for selecting an audience.

You should avoid using generic interests, like nature, sports, or food, and choose very specific ones instead: relevant brands, authors, books, magazines, websites or even other Facebook pages.

Use the results to make decisions about your strategy. For example, if you find that the majority of your audience are men, you can run more masculine ads. Or if they like a particular product, you can offer that product on your store and run ads to it.

Let's say I want to sell camping gear. In the "Interests" section, I can go to "Sports and outdoors," then "Outdoor recreation," then select "Camping."

I see that men aged 25-34 are the biggest market, making up about 27 percent of the people on Facebook who like camping.



• TIP TIME

If you look at the "Page Likes" tab in Audience Insights, you can see what pages your audience likes. If you notice that a lot of the people who have "liked" your page also tend to "like" another page, you can create ads targeting people who like that other page.

	(New Audience) M - 45M people		People on Facebook Country: United States of America i			
	Demographics	Page Likes	Location	Activity		
1	Brand	RTIC Outdoors				
2	Product/Service	Mossy Oak • GoPro				
3	Outdoor and sporting goods company	REI				
4	Sporting goods shop	Cabela's				
5	Sport & recreation	Bass Pro Shops • Tough Mudder				
6	Clothing (brand)	Grunt Style • Under Armour				
7	Actor	Phil Robertson "The Duck Commander"				
8	Musician	Upchurch • Reba McEntire				
9	Public figure	Heavy D • Jase Robertson • Si Robertson • Mike Rowe • Dave Ramsey				
10	News Personality	Tomi Lahren • Ben Shapiro				
	See All					

After you've created a list of potential interests, click the "Save" tab and give your audience a name. Now click the "Save" button at the bottom. This will save the audience you defined in the Audience Insights tool. The audience will then be available in the "Audiences" section of your Ads Manager.

Install Your Facebook Pixel

First, you have to set up your

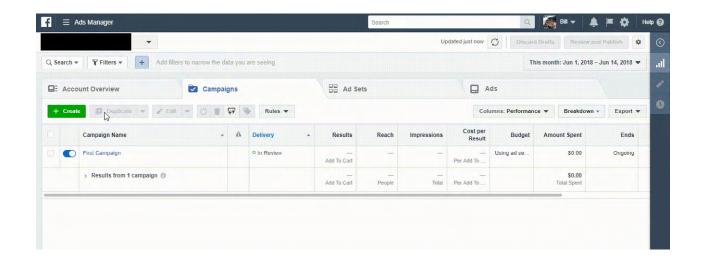
Facebook Pixel on your website.

You can think of the Pixel as a "smart" tool that progressively learns about the people who are more likely to buy. The tool then shows your ads to people who fit those characteristics.

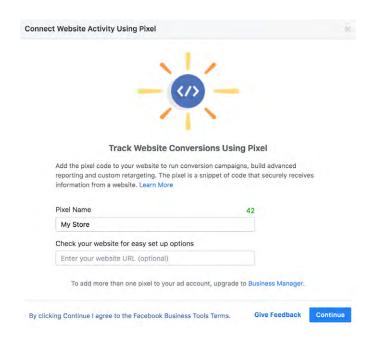
Let's install it.

Facebook Pixel: A small piece of code you put on your website pages to track activity that users take when they're on those pages. The Pixel captures information on your visitors like what they bought, what pages they visited, and more.

Go to your Facebook Ads Manager, click "All Tools," and select "Pixels."



Now click the "Create a Pixel" button and give a name to the Pixel.



I recommend naming it after your store. Then click "Create."

Next, you'll be asked how you want to install it. If you're logged into Shopify in the same browser, it will know (creepy Facebook). Select "Set Up Using Shopify (online)."

It will give you your Pixel ID, which is a numeric code. Copy that code and paste it into Shopify by following these steps:

- 1. Log into your Shopify account
- 2. In the Shopify admin area, choose "Sales Channels" > "Preferences"
- 3. Find the "Facebook Pixel" field in the Google Analytics Section
- 4. Paste in the Pixel code
- 5. Click "Save" at the bottom of the screen

Facebook Pixel Facebook Pixel ID Change Facebook Pixel helps you create ad campaigns to find new customers that look most like your buyers. Learn more about Facebook Pixel.

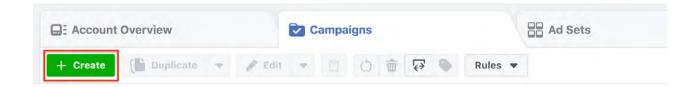
U TIP TIME

Take advantage of the "Send test traffic" feature in Facebook to make sure the Pixel is working. Type in your store's URL, click "Send test traffic," and wait for the little red dot that says "No activity yet" to change to "Active." Once the red dot turns into a green dot, click "Continue."

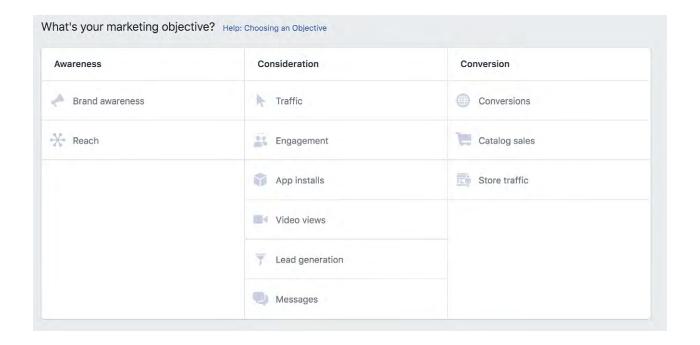


Set Up Your First Campaign

To create a campaign, go to your Facebook Ads Manager, open the "Campaigns" tab, and click "Create."



You will immediately see a list of the main campaign objectives that you can choose from:

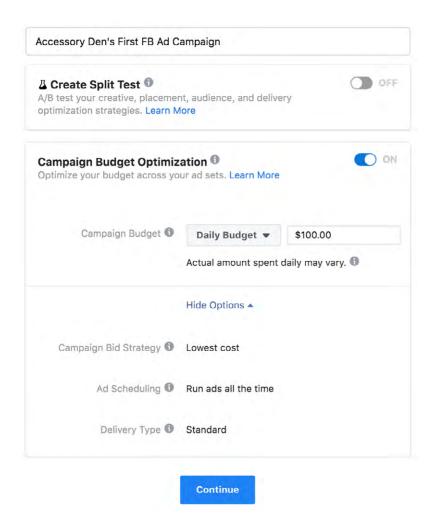


If you're promoting an online store with Facebook advertising, you'll want to choose either the "Store traffic" or "Conversions" objective, because that's what Facebook will optimize for – website traffic or website **conversions**.

Choose "Conversions," give a name to your campaign, activate "Campaign Budget Optimization," enter a daily budget, and click "Continue."

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

conversion: When a web user completes one of your desired goals. This goal can be a wide range of activities like clicking your ad, signing up for your newsletter, adding a product to their shopping cart, or buying a product from your store.

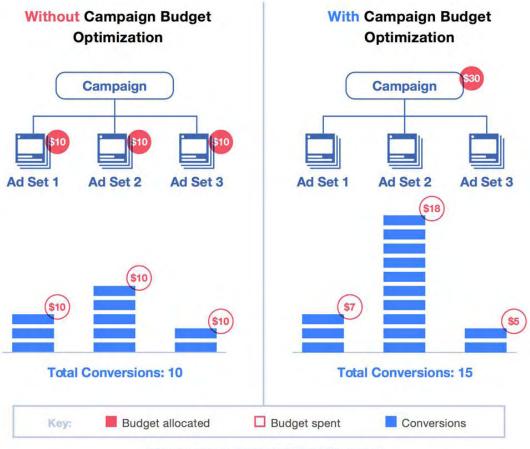


I highly recommend using the new Campaign Budget Optimization (CBO) feature. This allows you to set a budget at a "campaign level" rather than at the "ad set level."

CBO looks at your ad sets that perform better, then sends your budget to those. It does that on an opportunity-by-opportunity basis to get you the best results. CBO also aligns with your bid caps and spend limits for each ad set.

Remember that CBO may not distribute your budget equally towards each ad set. For example, if you have three active ad sets in a single campaign, it may spend 80 percent of your budget on the first ad set if it's performing well. But it won't spend more than your daily or lifetime budget.

Here's a graphic showing how it works:



FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Basically, CBO saves you time by choosing where your budget will be best spent.

Define Your Conversion Event

Conversion events tell Facebook where you want to send traffic.

At the beginning, choose "View Content" as the conversion event. This will tell Facebook to show your ads to those who are most likely to click on them to visit your store.

Once the Facebook Pixel gathers some data from the activity on your website, you can use "Add to Cart" or "Purchase" as the conversion event. This will tell Facebook to show your ads to people who are most likely to buy your products.

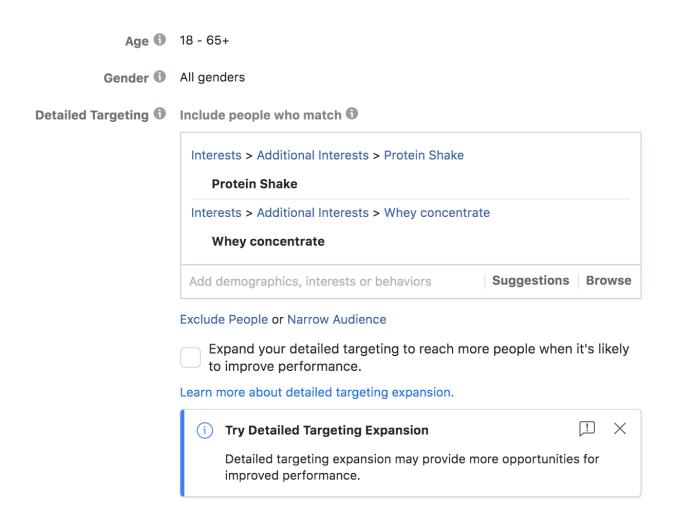
(L) TIP TIME

It can take a few weeks for the Facebook Pixel to gather and display activity data, so be patient.

Choose Your Audience, Budget, and Schedule

The next step in the process involves choosing an audience.

Facebook lets you target certain demographics, behaviors, and interests. Plug one or a few things you've already discovered into the "Detailed Targeting" section. For example, a supplements store can write "protein shake" as an interest.



You can create an audience from scratch, or use the one you created with the Audience Insights tool.

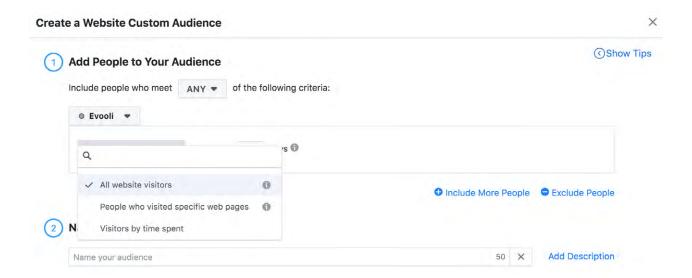
If you do it during the ad creation process, you'll get the option to expand your targeting. This feature will help your ads reach more people when they're likely to perform well.

Custom Audiences let you reach the people who've shown interest in your store.

To set up a Custom Audience, follow these steps:

- Open your Facebook Ads Manager
- Select "Audiences"
- Click "Create a Custom Audience"

From the list of options, consider targeting those who have already visited your website. You can also target those who have visited certain product pages. This process is known as "retargeting." You can use retargeting to remind people about products they've browsed on your store.



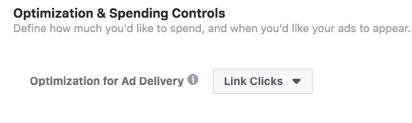
One important thing to note is that the Facebook Pixel should be installed on your website. Without it, Facebook can't gather the data on your visitors. Make sure to install it before you attempt to create a Custom Audience.

TIP TIME

Another great type of audience is called a Lookalike Audience. This allows you to target those who share the same characteristics as your Custom Audience.

It's almost the same process as making a Custom Audience (just select "Lookalike Audience"). But for now, you can skip Lookalike Audiences, as they work best when you have a good idea of your best audience. Use them later on, when you're looking for new ways to optimize your campaigns.

Once you've found an optimal audience, Facebook will ask you how much you'd like to spend, and when you'd like your ads to appear.



The lowest cost bid strategy doesn't have a cost control.

Facebook will aim to spend your entire budget and get the most link clicks using the lowest cost bid strategy.

Schedule
Run my ad set continuously starting

Set a start and end date

If you activated Campaign Budget Optimization at the beginning, you won't need to do anything. Just make sure to enter a decent daily budget (\$5-10 works for most beginners).

Also, set your bid strategy to "lowest cost." This will tell Facebook to spend your whole budget and get the most clicks at the lowest price.

Then, choose to run your ads between a certain date or continuously. If you choose to enter a start and end date for your campaign, and you see that it's not working well for your Facebook ads, you can always go back and change the schedule.

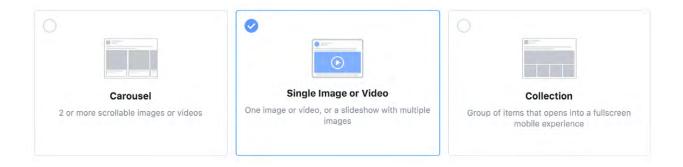
Also, make sure that Facebook charges you for a link click and not an impression by clicking "Show more options" and choosing "Link Click (CPC)" under "When you are charged."

Once you're happy with the budget and schedule, you can move on to the ad design.

Design Your Ad

There are two ways to design an ad: a new ad from scratch or choose an existing post that you've already published on your page.

Also, decide whether you want to use a single image or video in your ads, or go with multiple images and/or videos (also known as carousel or multi-product ads, as well as collections).



Let's keep it simple since it's your first campaign and choose "Single Image or Video." Then, once you get familiar with it and understand what to look for and how to improve your performance, you can go crazy with more complex types of ads.

Try using a video because they're an incredible way to get engagement. Our guide on <u>creating product videos</u> has a lot of tips to help get you started.

T FROM THE PROS

Dropshipping pro Ryan Caroll started his first women's swimsuit business in 2016, fresh out of high school. After two months, his sales started doubling every month and he made \$60,000 in four months. He believes that videos were a big help for getting him there:



"When I first launched the store, I was running basic photo ads, and then when competitors started coming in, I could tell that my ads weren't doing as well as they once were. And then I realized eventually it started slowing down and my Facebook ads were just getting crappy.

I was like, 'I really needed to custom-brand this with my own video ads.'

That will completely set you aside from all of your competitors, 100 percent."

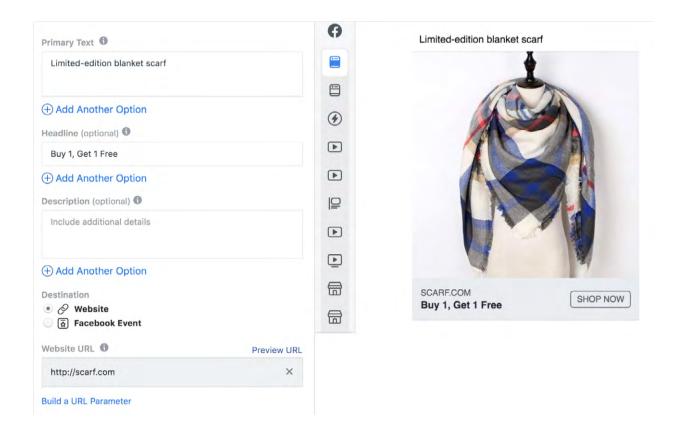
Bonus: If you're interested to hear more insights from Ryan, take a look at this video where he discusses some ideas for what to include in video ads.



After uploading an image or video, fill in the details of your ad in the next section.

Add:

- Text: The main text of the post. You'll link the button to a URL on your site, but you should also paste a shortened version of the same link inside the body. You can use bitly for this.
- Website URL: The page you want to point to this page should directly mirror the content in your ad, or you'll get poor results.
- Headline: What they'll see below your photo or video, next to the call to action button.
- Call to action: Choose what the clickable button will say.



When you're done, scroll to the bottom and click "Confirm."

Congratulations – you've just created your first Facebook advertising campaign!

Use Your Ads Data to Do Even Better

Once you've created ads in your Ads Manager, let them run for a few days and then analyze the results. Looking at this data is absolutely critical if you want to make your campaigns better in the future.

Think about it – what's the point running ads if you don't understand how they're performing?

Your Facebook Ad data lets you see what's working and what isn't. And, you can use that data to optimize your campaigns for the next round... and the next one, and the next one.

Here's an example.

Let's say you spent \$100 on Facebook ads, and you got five sales. That means you spent \$20 on each sale. That's pretty good when you're starting out, but you need to try and make progress with each ad that you launch.

If you dig into your Facebook Ad data and use it to guide your new campaigns, you can optimize your ads and reduce the amount of money you spend per sale.

So, you could end up spending \$15, or even \$10 for a sale using your data. That means more money to keep as profit or reinvest into your business.

• TIP TIME

As many dropshippers will tell you, it can take a lot of work – and a lot of errors – to make the most of your Facebook Ads. You'll need to find the perfect combination of creative, targeting, and spend for your Facebook campaigns. And even then, the problem might just be that all your campaigns are great, but nobody actually wants to buy the product you're advertising.

That's why you need to approach Facebook Ads with patience and a willingness to learn. You should constantly be looking at your analytics data, learning best practices, and making changes to your campaigns. Don't give up!

Understanding Important Metrics

Facebook offers dozens of metrics, so let's just stick with the basics for now:

- Reach: The number of people who saw your ad in their feed.
- Impressions: How many times your ad showed up in people's feeds
 (this number will be higher than your reach if some people saw your ad
 more than once).
- Frequency: The average number of times each person has seen your ad.
- Link clicks: The number of times someone clicked on a link in your ad.
- CTR (click-through rate): The percentage of times that someone saw your ad and clicked a link.
- CPC (cost per click): The average price you pay for each link click.

In addition to CPC, Facebook also lets you look at the cost for several other activities, like each time someone adds an item to their cart ("cost per add to cart").

You can even see when someone starts to check out but doesn't finish, and how much you're paying for that ("checkout initiated" and "cost per checkout initiated").

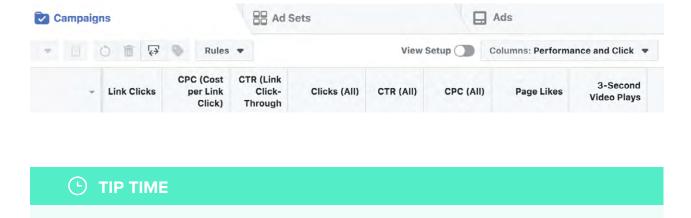
Here are a few starter tips for optimizing your first round of ads:

- 1. Don't freak out if you don't get any sales from your first round. Early on, your Facebook Pixel is warming up and collecting user data. Focus on things like reach, impressions, and clicks, which will tell you if your targeting and ad creatives are on the right track while your Pixel does its thing.
- 2. CTR can give you a good idea about whether you're targeting the right audience, or if your ads need some work because people didn't find them enticing. If your CTR is lower than 0.5 percent, your audience might be too narrow try making it broader. If you already have a broad audience, try tweaking your ad's text and visuals to better capture your audience's attention and raise your CTR.
- 3. Divide your content views by your link clicks to calculate your "bounce rate." If your bounce rate is more than 55 percent, try optimizing your landing page. Make sure that your ad is linked directly to the product page of the item you're promoting, and that it's clear what your product is for shoppers who land there.

How to Find Your Data in Ads Manager

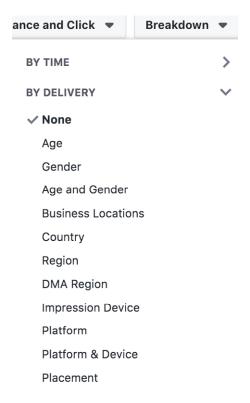
The easiest way to see your campaign's performance is to use the "Campaigns" tab. This section of the Ads Manager lets you see loads of important data.

You can also change the metrics you see by clicking "Columns." For example, you can check the Performance & Clicks report to see how the ad is doing overall.



Stay tuned for Chapter 10, where we'll give more tips for ways you can keep improving your ads.

Finally, check your Facebook ad campaigns by different breakdowns:



With Breakdown, you can very quickly analyze your results by various segments.

For example, look at age, gender, and placement to try and find any hidden gems that worked well.

Age: Look for the best performing age group, and target the entire campaign there. If several age groups are performing well, you could split them into several ad sets to get a better result.

Gender: If you see that either men or women are converting more on your products, exclude the other gender focus on only one.

Ad Placement: Find out if your customers are buying products more on desktop or mobile. Look at placement breakdown metrics and exclude placement that isn't converting.

Find those opportunities and focus on the elements that are giving the best results.

If you're looking for more info, you can also check out our video guide to interpreting your Facebook ad results below:



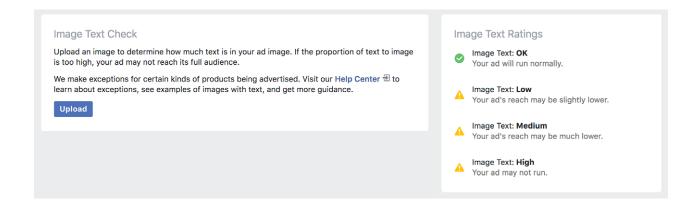
A Note About Facebook's Advertising Policies

Facebook reviews all ads to make sure they meet its advertising policies. If your ads constitute any prohibited content, it's going to get disapproved. Some of the things you're not allowed to advertise include:

- X Tobacco and related products
- X Illegal or counterfeit items
- X Unsafe supplements
- X Adult products
- X Anything that makes health claims



Facebook also doesn't like excessive text in ad images. Make sure the text you use in your images doesn't occupy more than 20 percent of the total space. Fortunately, this is simple to do with Facebook's Image Text Check tool.



There are rules related to video ads and targeting too, which you can read on Facebook's Advertising Polices page.



That's it! You've learned the basics to start getting more eyeballs to your store and making some sales with Facebook ads.

Now, it's time you follow these steps above and create your first successful Facebook ad campaign.

9

Engage People with Email Marketing

Adeel here.

You know you need to remind people about your new store. But you can't afford to put more time and resources into Facebook ads.

Good news: there's a cost-effective alternative available. And it gives you the ability to reach people in a place they visit daily – their inbox.

Email marketing is a powerful strategy that will help you build a strong relationship with your customers and grow sales.

Never tried email marketing before? No problem. The steps below will teach you how to make profitable email campaigns from scratch.

But first – what is email marketing?

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

Email marketing: A marketing strategy where you send emails with commercial material to a list of people who have signed up for your email list. You can use it to offer discounts, tell people about a new product release, and more. This kind of marketing can help you engage people and increase sales over time.

Check out this handy video to learn more:



How Does Email Marketing Work?

Email marketing can have many processes, but it usually works like this:

- You build a list of people who want to receive information about your brand
- People join your list by giving you their email addresses
- You use email to share information with these people
- People respond by engaging with the content inside your email

(L) TIP TIME

As a beginner, you can use email marketing tools to automate most of these steps. We'll tell you all about it later in the chapter.

Why Is Email Marketing Important?

Let's look at some statistics that show the importance of email marketing.

As stated by the <u>Direct Marketing Association</u>, you can expect to get \$42 for every \$1 you spend on email marketing.

That's incredible! No other digital marketing channel offers such a high return on investment.

Simply put, email marketing is an affordable way to promote your store that gives you a really good ROI.



Benefits of an Email Marketing Strategy

When you focus on building an email marketing strategy that caters to your industry and audience, you can reap some serious benefits.

- Low costs. In comparison to other marketing channels like paid ads, running an email marketing campaign is one of the cheapest options.
- Huge reach. The nature and ease of email marketing means you can reach hundreds, thousands, or even millions of people just by clicking the "Send" button.
- High engagement. When you send emails to those who have voluntarily joined your list, you're sending direct messages to people who are interested in your brand. This strategy is popular for generating quality engagement.
- More sales. Because your recipients are already interested, and you're (hopefully) sending them targeted messages and offers, they're more likely to make a purchase.
- Easy to implement. There are plenty of tools and platforms that can help you with developing, building, and launching an email marketing campaign without any coding expertise.
- Easy to measure. If you use tracking and measuring functionality, you can know exactly how each email is performing. Many email marketing campaign tools and platforms have this feature built-in.

\P FROM THE PROS

Dropshipping pros <u>Yuliya and Mike</u> made \$200,000 in their first year dropshipping. They credit part of the success to their experience in branding, customer service, and building customer loyalty. They believe email marketing isn't just helpful – it's necessary.



"The beauty of email marketing is once you get a customer's information, it's yours to keep. Whereas with a platform like Facebook, you don't have access to them anymore if Facebook shuts down.

So an email is such a great asset for a business because it's yours. Once you have that email, you can market to those people forever without paying the customer acquisition costs."

Getting Started With Email Marketing

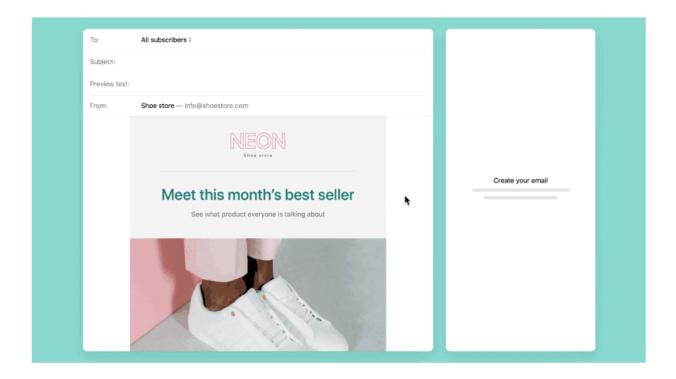
In this section, I'll break down the basics of everything from choosing an email marketing tool to the types of emails that you should be sending. So, grab your notebook, because things are about to get exciting.

1. Choose an Email Marketing Tool

Before anything else, you'll need to choose an email marketing tool that you'll use to build your campaign. Luckily, Shopify has one built into its platform.

Called <u>Shopify Email</u>, the tool lets you create, launch and measure email campaigns right inside Shopify's application.

Using existing brand creatives, customizable templates, and product visuals from your store, Shopify Email makes it extremely easy to launch your next campaign. Plus, you can send emails using your store's domain name with no setup required.



Note: As of this writing, Shopify Email is only available in a few countries. If you're not seeing it in the Marketing section of your Shopify admin, consider using another email marketing tool for building your campaigns.

The Shopify App Store has plenty of tools to choose from. Some good options are:

- <u>Klaviyo</u> offers a wide range of pre-built templates
- Privy lets you display pop-ups, fly-outs, and more
- Seguno seamlessly integrates with the Shopify admin and marketing
- <u>Jilt</u> automatically syncs your existing contacts

Each of these tools offer a free plan that you can use to get started.

You'll also want to make sure the tool you pick can handle your intended volume.

If you plan to send 1,000 emails a day to 100,000 subscribers, you don't want to pick a tool that falls short of those numbers.

That said, you won't have so many subscribers at the start. So a tool that offers a free trial or version should work until you build a bigger list.

♥ FROM THE PROS

Yuliya and Mike love email marketing tools too.



"The good thing about email marketing is that it's so accessible for every dropshipper as soon as you start, because there are amazing tools like Klaviyo that have templates already built-in.

All you have to do is turn them on. They're extremely conversion-driven and they work.

Email marketing can sound intimidating, but it's really so easy. Just use the automated email marketing flows, put your logo on it, and as time goes on, you can customize it and make it feel more like you."

2. Build Your Email List

The simplest way to build an email list is to embed a pop-up form within your dropshipping website.

Typically, this is a small box that asks people to submit a few details including their email address, and it's referred to as a pop-up form, opt-in form or web form.

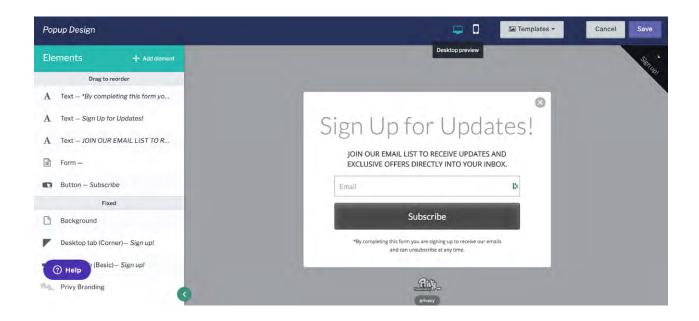
You can set pop-up forms to appear for certain actions or at certain times. Plus, they let you display **lead magnets**, which is one of the most effective ways to get sign-ups.



lead magnet: An offer or incentive that you give to potential customers in exchange for their email address. Ecommerce lead magnets usually have some kind of promotion, like a discount code, free gift, or giveaway.

Most email marketing tools let you make pop-up forms to display on your website.

For example, Privy includes templates for designing announcement bars, exit-intent pop-ups (where pop-ups are presented to visitors leaving your site), and more.



See if your email marketing tool lets you make pop-ups.

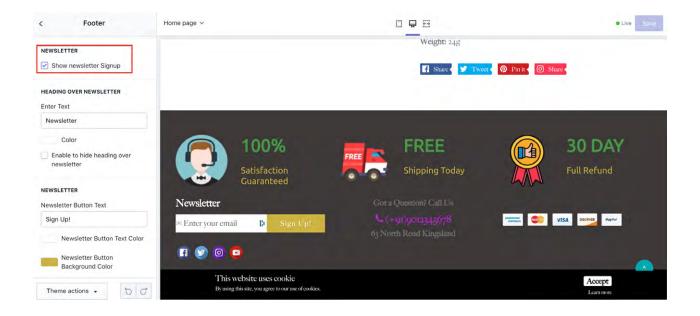
If it doesn't, consider using pop-up tools like Sumo and JustUno. They'll let you create pop-ups as well as integrate the collected emails into your email marketing software.

TIP TIME Making Pop-Up Forms That Work Use a single, clear call-to-action Use fewer form fields (2-3 at most) Offer an irresistible lead magnet like free shipping or coupon code Use contrasting colors to highlight the content and call-to-action Match the design of your pop-up with the design of your store

Besides using pop-ups, you can use Shopify's built-in newsletter form to collect people's emails.

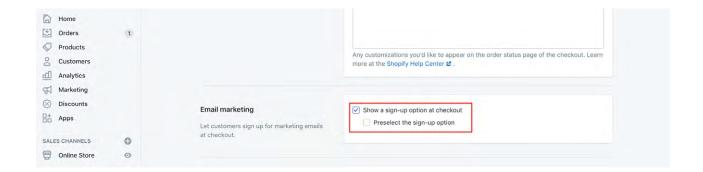
To collect emails from your site's homepage, add a newsletter signup form to your store. Here's how:

- 1. Log into your Shopify account
- 2. From the Shopify admin area, click the "Online store" menu and choose "Themes"
- 3. At the top right corner, click the button that says "Customize Theme"
- **4.** In the submenu of the "Footer," scroll down and tick the box for "Show newsletter sign-up"
- 5. Click "Save"



There's also the option to show the newsletter signup form on the checkout page. Here's how:

- 1. Login into your Shopify account
- 2. From the Shopify admin area, click "Settings" > "Checkout"
- 3. In the "Email marketing" section, tick the box for "Show a sign-up option at checkout"
- **4.** Check the box for "Preselect the sign-up" option if you want Shopify to preselect the sign-up form for customers without an account.
- 5. Click "Save"



Remember the GDPR laws we talked about in Chapter 1? To make sure you comply with them, send marketing emails only to people who have agreed to receive promotions from your website.

That means they added their email address to a pop-up form on your website, or submitted a newsletter sign-up form on your homepage/checkout page.

Get Fans and Sales with Memorable Email Content

You have a list. Now, it's time to set up an email that people want to open, read, and click through.

And it all starts with your subject line.



Email Subject Lines That Convert

When you send an email to your subscribers, the first thing they'll see is the subject line. This is the point where they decide whether to open your email or move it to the bin.

So how do you ensure that you're capturing your reader's attention?

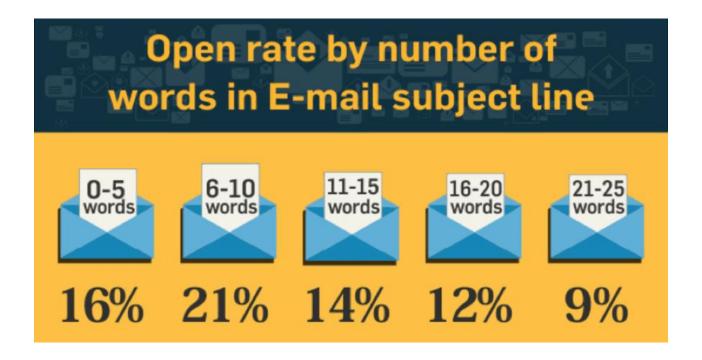
Here are a few basic tips for email marketing subject lines.

1. Tell them just enough

There's a sweet spot: you want to tell them what's inside the email, but don't overdo it.

Too many words risk diluting your message and getting cut off in their inbox preview.

One study suggests that about 6-10 words is this sweet spot, followed by 0-5 words, and 11-15 words.



But there isn't a hard rule, so don't overthink the word count.

The key is to be straightforward while still being concise and interesting.

Here are some examples of good email marketing subject lines that hit the sweet spot:

- Ready for summer? So are we See our new swimwear line
- Join Our Loyalty Program to Get an Extra 10% Off
- Get more kitchen space with these 5 quick fixes

2. Make them feel special

Use personalization tactics to make your readers feel appreciated.

Call out their name. Tell them they're a valued customer. Give them exclusive access, sneak peeks, and special privileges.

Examples of good email marketing subject lines to make them feel warm and fuzzy:

- We're so glad you joined us, Nicole
- Members Only: Access Our Cyber Monday Deals 24 Hours Early!
- Xavier, your private invitation expires tomorrow.

3. Show your brand's personality

If your brand is quirky, don't be afraid to show it!

Be self-aware, light-hearted, and crack a joke or pun if that's your style. 🗐



Examples of good email marketing subject lines that keep it fun:

- Are you breaking up with us? Say it ain't so...
- Woohoo, Your Order Has Shipped!
- 5 authentic Indian food recipes for naan-believers

4. Create a sense of urgency and personal investment

I don't recommend that you *always* create a sense of urgency, but it can be a great motivator when the time is right.

For example, time-sensitive offers, events, and reminders can encourage people to see what's inside the email.

Additionally, try appealing to their sense of accountability for themselves and their goals.

For example, emails sent to smartphone owners might include a question to get them thinking about an upgrade or their phone's performance.

Examples of good email marketing subject lines that motivate and inspire:

- Armando, your prescription is expiring. Time for new contact lenses?
- Final Notice: Buy One, Get One on Mother's Day Bouquets!
- Are you avoiding these common customer service pitfalls?

Email subject lines are a tricky subject. What works for one recipient might not work for another. Be flexible, test your subject lines, and get creative for the best results.

Email Body Content: Layout, Copy, and Visuals

There are no hard-and-fast rules for what a good email looks like. Some brands like fancy designs while others just use plain text and hyperlinks. This is all up to you, and it's an important part of telling your brand's story and building visual recognition.

But there are some basic email marketing design tips that you should keep in mind. We made a handy dos and don'ts chart that highlights key qualities that the best email marketing templates tend to have in common.

Our chart looks at three important elements of your body content: layout, copy, and visuals.

Keep these dos and don'ts in mind.

Layout	t

DOs DON'Ts

- Use an attention-grabbing headline with your main focus, supporting info, then CTA
- Create a visual hierarchy, like headings and subheadings, and different colors and font styles
- Use white space (the unused space in the layout) to create a visual balance and direct attention down to your CTA

- Don't write big blocks of text – instead, aim to make it
- skimmable and easy to digest
 Don't overwhelm with too many colors and font styles
 - aim for two or three and make sure they match your branding
- Don't make emails too wide, or they'll be hard to read – about 600 pixels wide will do the trick

DOs **DON'Ts** Copy Keep it short and sweet, with Don't send the same generic each word supporting and message to everyone relevant to your main focus Don't use technical words – Write clearly and write as simply as possible so no one has trouble conversationally – use language that's helpful, descriptive, and understanding actionable Don't focus too much on Link to everything that's features of your product or applicable to bring them back to service – instead, show them the benefits and impact your website or landing pages **Visuals** Include visuals that are eye-• Don't include visuals just catching, while adding real value because you feel like you to the message need to – simplicity is a virtue Format and resize images so Don't just use photos – that they're not distorted or have fun with other types of blurry when you put them in media like videos, GIFs, and your template illustrations Remember: there is such a thing Don't use big media files, which will take longer to load as too many images, which and lose readers' attention might distract from your CTA

CTAs and Buttons

A call-to-action (CTA) is what you want the user to do after reading your email.

You can think of it as the ultimate goal or reason you're sending the email to begin with.

This could be asking them to use a discount, check out a new product, or read your newest blog post.

The CTA is usually displayed as a button that leads the reader to a webpage (called a landing page) where they can complete this action.

One of the best email marketing call-to-action tips is to focus on a single CTA in each email. By giving one clear instruction, there's less distraction – which means more action.

Home appliance company Whirlpool learned this first hand. They <u>decreased their</u>

CTAs from four down to one and saw a 42 percent increase in clicks.

• TIP TIME

If you can't manage just one CTA, choose a primary and secondary one, but avoid using more than two in your emails. This email marketing example from City Slickers wants readers to shop for loafers. They've made it simple and clear with their "Shop Loafers" CTA button.



Now that you have an idea of the elements that make a great email, let's look at the different types of marketing emails you can send.

Types of Marketing Emails

Here's a list of marketing emails that you can send out to keep your subscribers engaged:

- Welcome emails
- Transactional emails
- Abandoned cart emails

For each type of email, we'll go over the basics, as well as some more advanced tactics.

Creating an Email Series

An email series includes several automated emails sent over the course of several days, weeks, or even months. You can use your email marketing tool to create one for your campaign.

Common types of email series include:

- Welcome series
- Cart abandonment series
- Post-purchase series

Welcome Emails

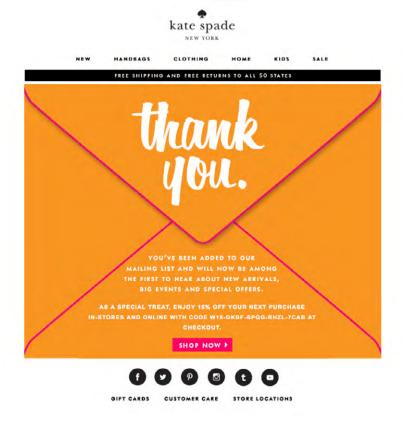
Welcome emails are generally the first message you send after you receive someone's email address. They can be sent after a user takes an action like:

- Signing up for your newsletter
- Creating an account on your website
- Joining a club, program, or utilizing another incentive
- Making their first purchase

It can be a single email or a welcome series.

In this first contact, aim for a specific call-toaction (CTA). For many ecommerce stores, this takes the form of a special discount or promotion.

In this welcome email, fashion retailer Kate Spade offers a discount code for 15 percent off an online or in-store purchase.



If you're not ready to offer a discount, you can try a different approach. Tell them about a program or offering that makes your brand unique, or direct them to some great content.



Welcome Series Tips

Say a customer just made their first purchase. A welcome series could have these four emails:

- 1–3 hours after purchase: Introduction. Showcase your company, team, and what you're all about. Give behind-the-scenes info and photos to make it more personal.
- 3–5 days: Social discovery. Build on your intro email and show the customer how to connect with your brand online – whether that's social media, your blog, or other channels.
- Two weeks: Product discovery. Shift the message from your brand story to your top offerings. Show off your brand and why people love you. You can also make personalized product recommendations for items related to their purchase.
- 3–4 weeks: Incentive email. Send a discount or other incentive to encourage their second purchase if they haven't made one yet.

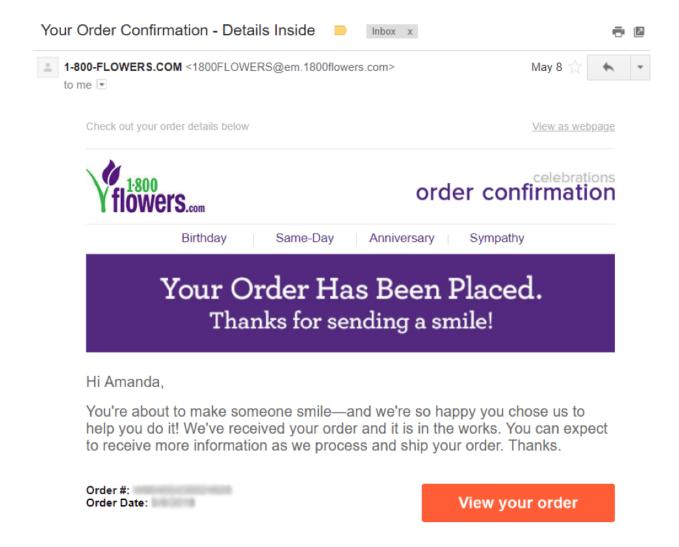
Transactional Emails

Like the name suggests, you'd send a transactional email after a transaction occurs. An example would be a company sending an order confirmation and a receipt after someone buys a product on its website.

The subject line of these emails is typically straightforward like "Purchase Confirmation" or "We've received your order." The email body gives main order details, like:

- Confirmation or order number
- Date purchased
- What exactly was purchased
- Cost of items and total paid
- Payment method
- If there's a delivery, a note about the arrival
- Shipment tracking number, if possible

Here's an email marketing example from 1800-Flowers that shows the details of a transactional email:



Transactional emails typically one-off emails instead of a series or campaign.

Abandoned Cart Emails

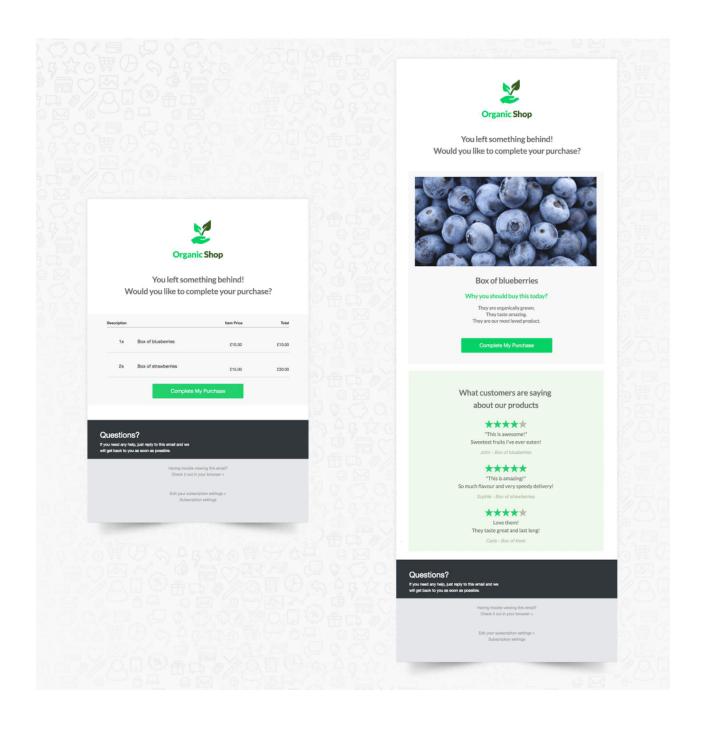
You can use these emails to bring back customers who clicked on the "Add to cart" button, but didn't go on to purchase the item.

A cart abandonment email should contain:

- A reminder of what exactly is inside their cart, preferably including a product photo of the item(s)
- An easy link to take them directly to the purchase page
- An added incentive to get them to buy now (optional, but effective)

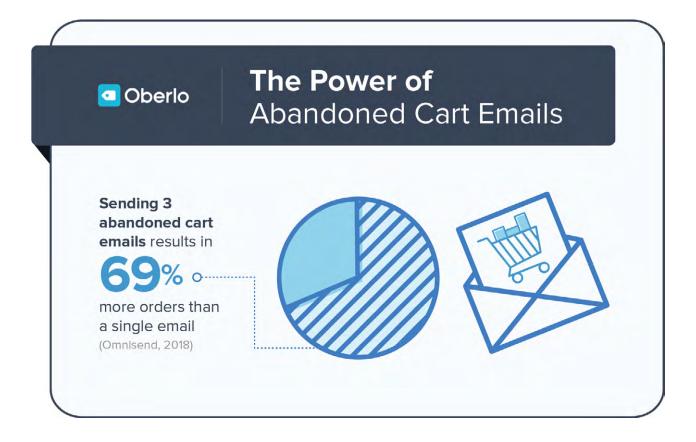
You can also add product ratings for an added boost – it uses the incredible power of <u>social proof</u> to attract and engage customers.

Below is an example of an awesome abandoned cart email:



Here's what makes it so good:

- It includes a beautiful, appetizing photo of the blueberries. Quality food photography really sells, folks.
- It uses three concise USPs (unique selling points) to remind the customer why this product is so darn good and why they need it in their life.
- It includes customer testimonials about related products to enforce the quality of the brand and its products.



Abandoned Cart Series Tips

Let's say you want to send a few emails to ensure that you successfully recover an abandoned cart. Here's a model for a three-email series:

- One1 hour after the cart is abandoned: Ask for feedback to figure
 out why they abandoned the cart. You can then use this feedback to
 improve their specific situation, as well as possibly make improvements
 to the whole shopping experience.
- One day: Include a discount or some other type of special incentive to draw them back in. Tell them this offer will expire in three days.
- Three days: Remind them of the discount you sent as email #2, and that the discount will expire today.

\P FROM THE PROS

Yuliya and Mike also use a welcome email series along with abandoned cart emails.



"For the welcome series, we send people a series of messages three days in a row. With abandoned carts, we'll remind them that they have an item pending in their carts. We'll also include reviews so people can get social proof. People may not purchase because they don't trust you, so you can send them reviews.

We have the process pretty well optimized, and it helps us retain 10 percent of our abandoned carts, which we turn into purchases."

Post-Purchase Email Series

You can use this email series to get recurring sales for your business.

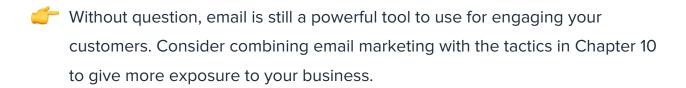


The post-purchase email series is a general marketing strategy that can apply to anyone who has made a purchase (though you'll still want to personalize certain details, like the item(s) you offer as an up-sell).

Here's an example of a post-purchase series that lasts four weeks and includes six emails:

- Immediately after purchase: Confirmation and purchase receipt. This is a standard transactional email to confirm their order. Adding a discount to the receipt email can be massively successful, so consider this too. Set the expiration of the discount anywhere up to two weeks.
- Three days after purchase: Get feedback. If they bought a physical product, be sure they've received it in this window so you can ask them about their purchase and delivery experience. Are they unhappy? Learn why and try to make them happy again. Are they happy? Use that data for a testimonial!
- 1–2 weeks: Product reviews. Send this one after they've had enough time to actually start using the product or service they bought. Direct them to a dedicated web page where they can review the product.
- One day before discount expiry (2=two weeks): Discount reminder. If you offered them a discount in their purchase receipt email, remind them that they've only got 24 hours left to use it.

- 2–3 weeks: Cross-sell. Send 1–3 personalized product recommendations based on their purchase.
- Four weeks: Another discount. If they've made another purchase, send a promotional email, like offering an added discount for referring a new customer.



10

Tips to Keep Growing Your Store and Making More Sales

Amanda here.

Like we've mentioned a few times, you can pretty much keep improving your store forever and not run out of ideas.

There's always some new data to look at, new platform updates to learn about, and new strategies to look at and work into your plan.

That's entrepreneurship: you never stop learning, growing, and improving.

Up until now, we've covered the basics for getting your first store up and running. But now, we'd like to give you some next steps.

Once you've been at it for a little while, you'll have the opportunity to evaluate your progress and see how you can do things even better.

From less abandoned carts to a sharper, more trustworthy store, let's look at some ways you can stay on the grind and keep boosting your revenue.

Reduce Those Dreaded Abandoned Carts

There's nothing worse than knowing someone put something into their cart, only to leave your website and disappear forever.

In Chapter 9, we talked a bit about using email marketing to win back abandoned cart customers. Those can be super effective, so give it a try if you're using email.

But those aren't the only things you can do. Let's check out some tips that don't involve email.

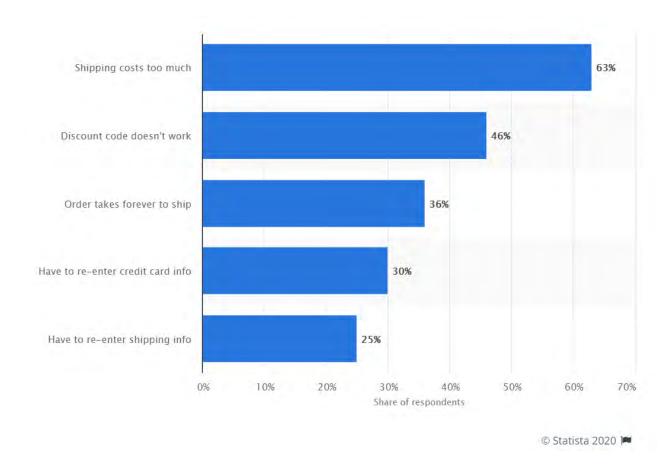
1. Understand Why Shoppers Abandon Their Carts

There's an infinite amount of reasons that people don't finish buying something. The first step to fixing the problem on your website is trying to pinpoint why.

According to a survey on Statista, the top reason is that shipping costs too much.

Are you charging for shipping? If you are, it might be a good idea to consider lowering your cost or offering free shipping.

And if you offer a great deal on shipping, be sure to promote it on other places on your site so that it's easy for visitors to see. For example, you can put it on your homepage and product pages.



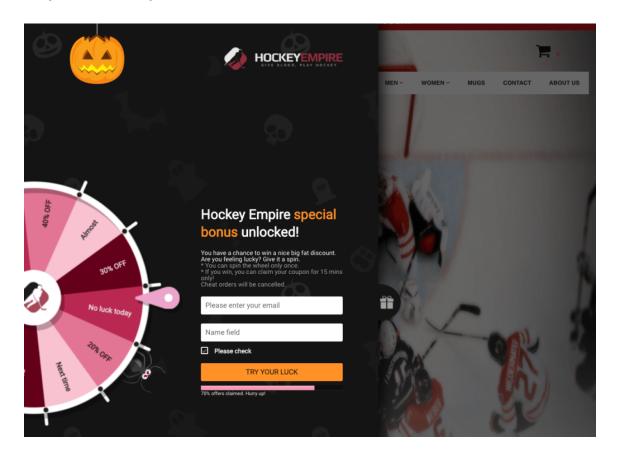
Let's look at the other top reasons and some possible solutions:

- Discount code doesn't work. If you're offering discount codes, test them out yourself to make sure they're working.
- Order takes forever to ship. Are you using ePacket delivery? If so, there's unfortunately not much more you can do about this, apart from looking at different suppliers who have warehouses closer to where the majority of your customers live.
- Have to re-enter credit card or shipping info. Run through the steps
 on your site. Then make whatever tweaks you can so that the checkout
 process is as fast and simple as possible. For instance, enabling
 Shopify Pay lets customers save their credit card, email, and other
 information so they can finish their transaction sooner the next time
 they buy something from your store.

2. Try an Exit Offer

Exit offers give store owners one last chance to convert a customer before they leave their website.

You may have already seen exit offers on ecommerce stores across the web like this:



But how does an exit offer work?

An exit popup will appear when it looks like a user is going to leave the website. You can use the popup to offer the shopper something valuable, like a discount code. This might encourage them to stick around and use it.

(L) TIP TIME

You can install an app from Shopify's App Store like <u>Wheelio</u>, used in the example above. It will integrate right into your store.

3. Create a Sense of Urgency

Make it more urgent for customers to make their purchase. You can do this in several ways.

One way is to host a flash sale, where products are on sale for a short amount of time. For example: "24-hour flash sale – get an additional 25% off!"

Women's clothing store <u>Loft</u> had a fun way to turn their flash sale into a game, sort of like the wheel in the last tip. Customers played a game to get their "Mystery Flash Sale" deal.

This is extra effective, because once people play the game, they're more likely to stick around to use their discount.



Keep Tweaking Your Facebook Ads

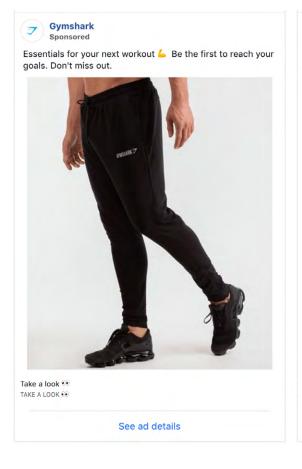
Now that you understand the key factors at play, let's look at how you can improve the results of your Facebook ad campaigns.

1. Split Test

Split testing is the process of running the same ad campaign twice with a small change to test performance.

In the example below, you can see the apparel store <u>Gymshark</u> running two ads with the same content but different images.

This means they're split-testing the image to see which one performs best.





Split-testing helps you to continually improve your ads so they perform better. This will reduce your Facebook advertising costs by improving your return on investment.

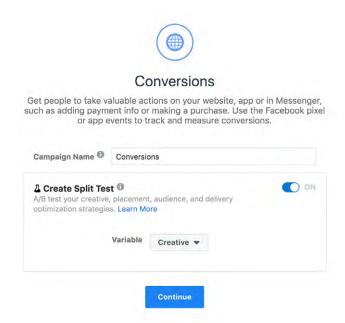
Far too many advertisers create a great Facebook ad campaign and move on.

Don't do this.

Some businesses have managed to reduce their Facebook advertising costs <u>by 96</u> percent just by changing the copy! In other words, there's really no way to tell what works best until you try it.

Plus, the Facebook Ads Manager makes it easy to run a split test.

In the "Conversions" section, just use the "Create split test" toggle. Then, Facebook will divide your budget equally between your two ads and allow you to measure their performance.



2. Spend a Quarter of Your Budget on Retargeting

Retargeting is when a customer visits your website and leaves without making a purchase but is then shown an ad for that specific product they were viewing on your store.

Retargeting ads work really well at converting since customers are already familiar with your brand since they were previously on your website.

On average, you want to spend a quarter of your total ad budget on retargeting. If you sell expensive products you'll likely want to invest a bigger portion of your ad budget to retargeting.

Why?

Because customers likely need to see your product a few more times before they're ready to purchase.

A product under \$50 is usually affordable enough that a customer may be ready to buy the first or second time.

But a product that costs \$150 might require a few more ads to help a customer realize they're ready to purchase it.

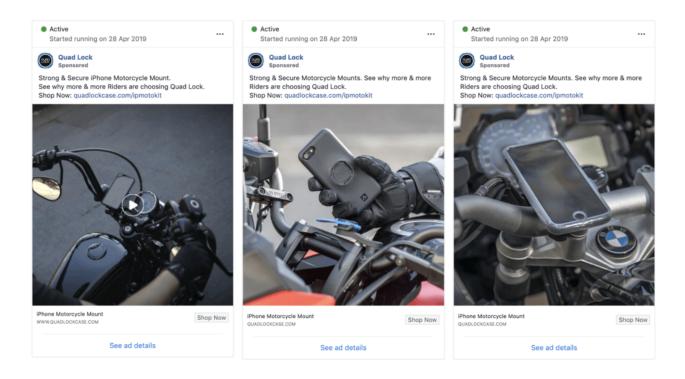
3. Keep Your Ads Fresh

It's a good idea to update your ads and create new ads regularly.

Aside from helping to maintain low-frequency scores, it's just good practice. No matter how great your ad campaign is, it's likely to lose its impact eventually.

Let's look at an example from the sports phone mount business Quad Lock.

In the ads below, they use the same copy and call-to-action but have switched up the visuals.



However, this doesn't mean you need to start from scratch each time.

You can keep the same audience, but change your offer, image, and copy. What's more, take the lessons you learned from split testing and apply them to your new advertising campaigns.

Handle Customer Complaints Smoothly

More now than ever, thanks to the internet and social media, your customers are becoming increasingly vocal about their experiences with businesses – whether it's good or bad.

Nobody likes to handle customer complaints, but these sometimes painful occurrences can be a chance for you and your business to shine. This is your opportunity to create a happy and loyal customer for life.

(L) TIP TIME

It costs waaaay more money to get a new customer than to keep an existing customer – some say it costs <u>seven times more</u>, while others might say it's <u>up to 25 times more</u>. That's why customer service is so darn important.

But no matter how good your customer service is, you'll always get at least a few complaints. That's why you need to be prepared before they happen. Here are some tips on how to handle them.

1. Listen Calmly and Acknowledge Them

Sometimes, your customer just needs to vent. Try not to get stressed about it.

Listen to all of their concerns, and don't talk over them or interrupt them (even if you don't think they're right). Truly listening is a huge part of solving the problem.

2. Acknowledge the Issue

After you've heard them out, acknowledge the problem and repeat it back to the customer. Paraphrasing what your customer has said and repeating it back to them lets them know that you listened and that you understand what the problem is.

3. Apologize and Thank Them

It may feel tough, but swallowing your pride and apologizing for your customer's poor experience will put you miles ahead of the game. As with acknowledgment, apologizing does not mean that you are agreeing with the customer, nor are you taking the blame.

4. Ask Questions

Start a genuine conversation with your customer by asking them questions they haven't already answered. By being kind, listening, acknowledging, and apologizing, you will begin to gain your customer's trust.

5. Make it Speedy

Solve the problem in a fast and flexible way. Never offer a solution that you can't follow through on, as that will only set you back. Perhaps offering a small gift card or a discount on future purchases will be enough to diffuse the situation. You might also consider replacing the item for free or upgrading their future purchase.

6. Follow Up a Week Later

Another tough one, but it shows them that you really care. During this follow-up, apologize again and make sure you've taken care of everything they needed. At this point, if the customer is happy, there's a good chance that they'll come back and that they'll tell their friends and family about how good your customer service is.

Build a Team as You Grow

Once you start growing, you're definitely going to need some help.

Dropshipping pros Andreas and Alexander have grown so much that they hired some virtual assistants to help run their customer service. As you can imagine, their lives are much easier now.

TROM THE PROS

"Customer support is very important, because if you scale and you have no customer support team, you will get hundreds of emails and will not be able to manage them.

Now we have around more than 200 tickets every day. We switched to a customer service ticket system, so we can handle a lot of tickets. At the moment we have three to four agents helping us with the tickets."



You might also want to consider someone to help with fulfilling your orders, as this can also get pretty tedious pretty fast.

Make Your Store More Trustworthy

Nobody is going to buy from you if your store looks shady. Here are some tips to make sure that never happens.

1. Sweat the Small Stuff

Ever heard the expression, "Take care of the little things and the big things will take care of themselves?"

Make sure to pay close attention to the little things that erode trust. Here are some common problems and how to fix them.

Common problems	How to fix them
Pages that load slowly	Use a Shopify app like <u>PageSpeed Guru</u> to increase the loading speed
Broken links and pages that don't work	Click through every page on your site to make sure they work the way you want
Spelling errors	Use an online tool like <u>Grammarly</u> to highlight any errors in your text.
A cluttered, messy design	Look to improve your store's design with an impressive Shopify theme.
Unprofessional, poor quality images and graphics	Try to find new photos online (always ask for permission) or take your own photos
Confusing shipping times or prices	Be more clear on your product pages and other pages like shipping or FAQ

These things may seem small, but they create a sense of unease, lose their trust, and ultimately, hurt your conversion rates.

2. Proudly Show Social Proof

Reviews and testimonials are the purest forms of **social proof**. You can add them to your product pages to show that other people like your products.

If you don't have any of your own reviews, try the Shopify app AliExpress Reviews Importer. It will pull reviews from AliExpress if your store has AliExpress products in it.

ECOMMERCE DICTIONARY

social proof: A term coined by Robert Cialdini in his book, Influence. It refers to the simple fact that people are influenced by other people's opinions and actions.

For more review tips, check out this video.



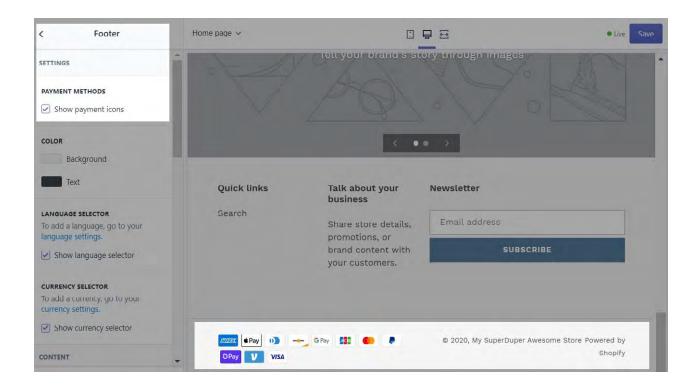
3. Prove That You're Serious About Security

Cybersecurity is a massive issue and nothing to take lightly. Information leaks and hacks can expose people's personal and financial details, which can lead to theft, fraud, or even stolen identities.

Before buyers purchase items from your store, they have to trust your website enough to feel okay about potentially exposing themselves to these risks.

Put them at ease by making sure you're using a payment system which is genuinely secure and that will be familiar to visitors, such as Stripe, PayPal, or Apple Pay. Then, be sure to highlight the use of these trusted brands.

It's simple to activate these logos in the Shopify backend. Inside your theme's "Customize" area, just click "Sections," then "Footer," then check the "Show payment icons" checkbox.



Next, use a Shopify app like <u>McAfee Secure</u> to automatically scan your site for malware, viruses, and other malicious activities. Then, you can display the McAfee Secure badge to show visitors your site is secure.

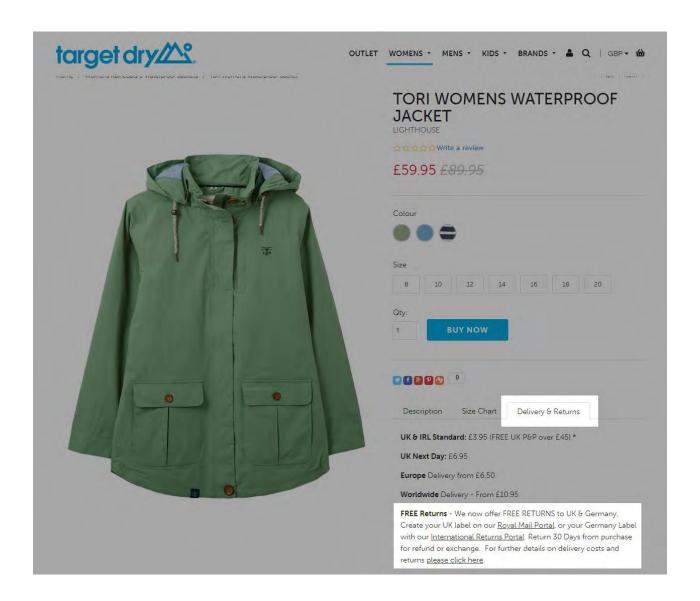
4. Show Your Return Policy

A great return policy takes out the risk that customers have when buying your products. If they don't like it? No big deal. If it breaks? No big deal.

Plus, generous and transparent return policies make people confident. They say, "We're so confident that you'll love our products that if you don't, you can return them at any time – we'll even pay for the return shipping."

So create a return policy to be proud of. Then, make sure it's easy to find on your website so that every visitor sees it.

For example, highlight your return policy on your product pages and checkout page. In the example below, <u>Target Dry</u> does a great job of this on their product pages:



5. Address Concerns with a Detailed FAQ Page

Your customers should never feel confused. Every stage of their purchase should be simple, clear and reassuring. This is where an FAQ page can help.

If you're struggling to include detailed shipping or return information on your product pages, make a page which answers frequently asked questions.

If you're just starting out, begin by covering basic questions, such as:

- How long does shipping take?
- Can I cancel my order?
- Can I change my order?
- What's the return policy?
- Can I track the delivery of my order?
- What happens if my order is lost in the post?

Over time, you can update it with questions that your customers ask you.

Clothing company <u>Rebel 8</u> has a fantastic FAQ page. It's easy to browse and clearly answers questions that shoppers commonly ask.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How long does shipping take?

Orders are processed Monday thru Friday, excluding major holidays, and are usually shipped within 2 business days. We will e-mail you a shipment notification once your order ships that has a tracking number and estimated delivery date.

I tried placing an order but it didn't go through and it's showing up on my credit card statement as being charged.

This is a temporary hold on your credit card placed by your bank/credit card company. We have already contacted them and they will remove the hold in 3-5 business days. Your order will not be captured, charged or processed.

Can I cancel my order?

Once your order is confirmed we immediately begin processing your order and cannot cancel your order. We do offer easy returns.

Can I add or remove items from my order?

Once your order is confirmed we immediately begin processing your order and cannot add or remove items from your order.

What if I need to change my address?

Once your order is confirmed we immediately begin processing your order and cannot change your address on the order.

And There You Have It!

Well, my friends. Our time together is over.

I hope that by now, you're feeling super hyped and energized to get out there and make a killing with your new dropshipping store.

And of course, I hope that you never lose the fire and passion that keeps you learning and growing. Sorry for being cheesy, but that's just how I feel.

There will be days where you just can't stand it anymore. Days where you want to throw everything in the trash and go back to the safety of your office job.

Don't. Give. Up.

With some patience, persistence, and practice, you can be another dropshipper who's making money while you sip margaritas on a beach in Mexico.

ONE LAST TIP TIME

Hungry to keep learning? Here's where you can go next:

- Sign up for the Dropshipping 101 course
- Listen to the <u>Start Yours podcast</u>, all about starting a business
- Watch videos on the Oberlo YouTube
- Read hundreds of dropshipping blog articles
- Download more awesome free ebooks



