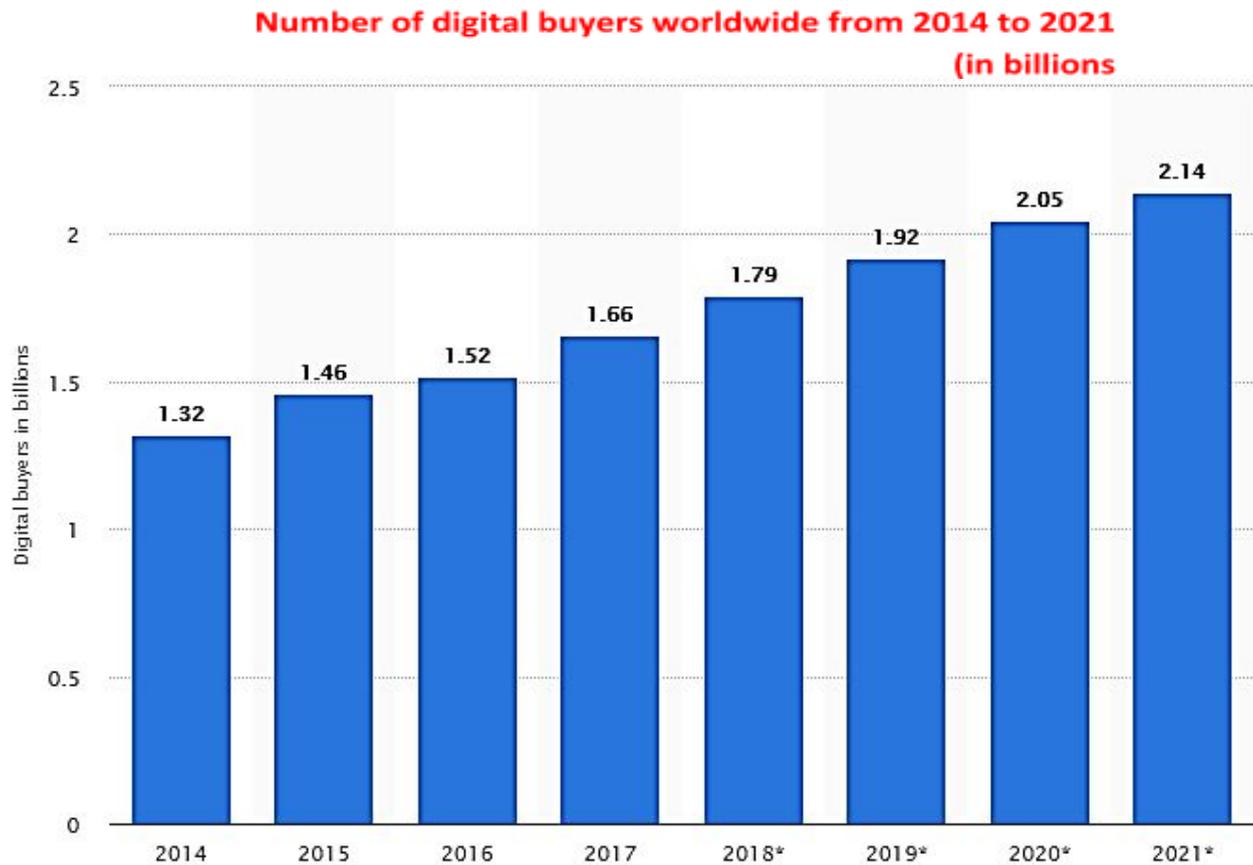




Checklist For E-Commerce Business

If you are thinking about starting up your e-commerce business, then there has never been a better time, for now you can bet that customers will be awaiting your services and products. According to research and statistics, the number of 1.66 billion global digital buyers in 2016 is going to rise up to over 2.14 billion people worldwide in 2021!



If anything, this proves what a promising market and platform online shopping is, and how this sort of market keeps blooming and generating more revenue by the day. This guide will walk you through the basic checklist to starting your e-commerce business and it will highlight the main points that you need to take into consideration when starting on your new venture.

1. Identify Your Business

- **What's your product/service**

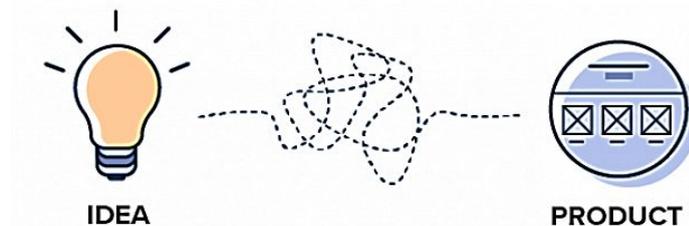
The first step to starting your e-commerce business is to answer these questions.

What is your business about?

What are the products that you will be selling or the services that you are offering?

What is your target customer and niche?

You might be starting off with the idea of e-commerce with an idea of a great product that you already have in mind, if that's the case then you are done with this step and you can move forward.



If you still are not sure what your product or service is going to be, you have many options to consider

- Develop and improve a pre-existing product.
- Import a product from international markets to your country.
- Follow the trend. Is it health care products, is it food and cuisine, see "what's in" and research the customer's needs and work on meeting those needs through your business.
- Follow your personal passion or professional experience.

- **Research the market**

Now that you have your product, you need to see where it stands in the market. Research other similar businesses and competition to see how you can excel with your own product. Find out the loopholes in other businesses and check out customers' feedback and develop your product or service accordingly. Aim at differentiating your business and making it desirable and sought after.

- **Formulate a business plan**

Never start on a venture just 'moving with the flow'. You need to plan ahead for every step. You need to predict obstacles and create plan A, B and C. Your business plan should ideally be divided into several other plans; sample business plan, the financial plan, the operations plan and the marketing plan. Your business plan is more like a roadmap that you will help you along your way. It's also the solid backup that would help you in case you needed financial assistance or looking into acquiring a partner, in which case you would illustrate your business plan along with your proposal.

2. Branding Your Business

- **Name, logo & slogan**

This is the most exciting and memorable stage in starting your e-commerce business. You already identified your business for yourself and associates, now you need to identify it for the customers and the public, and you do that through branding! Brainstorm names for your business and do try to get sample logos with those names to see how appealing it would look like.

Putting your name in a logo changes a lot how it is perceived, so make sure you test all your name ideas in the form of a design, which is easy with the many available logo generator apps and websites such as [Tailor Brands](#) and [Hatchful](#). Another option would be to assign a professional designer to create your logo. After having a name and a logo, brainstorm (or ask a professional) to come up with a catchy tagline and slogan. From McDonald's "I'm lovin it", to Nike's "Just do it", slogans stick to people's heads and it's what makes the brand memorable.

Visual Brand Assets



Logo

Main Logo & Variations

- memorable
- not trendy
- makes impression



Colors

Color scheme & Complements

- no more than 4 main colors
- consider color psychology
- complementary palettes



Fonts

Fonts & Typography

- don't be too trendy
- use a good font combination
- use at most 3 fonts



Visuals

Photography & Other Visuals

- stick to your brand colors
- outsource original material

- **Domain name & website**

You should opt for having your domain name be similar to your business name. However, sometimes it might not be available. In that case, go for the closest wording to your business name. [Shopify](#) offers a tool to help you see if your chosen domain name is available and for what price, it also gives you other close alternatives in case the initial name is not available.

The next step would be designing your e-commerce site. This is the 'virtual' store that your customers will be entering, so you need to make sure that is both visually appealing and highly functional. You would also want to test that your website works on all browsers and all the different electronic devices.

You can avoid the hassle of starting a website from scratch by using smart solutions offered by e-commerce site builders such as [Big Commerce](#) , [WIX](#) and [Shopify](#).

- **Make your business official**

Get your identification number which you will need to open a business account and to file your taxes. Every country is different and being legal to receive, exchange and sell things is the safest way to avoid problems in the future. It is something like your business social security number that gives your business an official identity which is needed to file important paperwork.

Apply for a business license and permits. Check with your country's business legal system to see what sort of license you will need and then work on getting it approved.

- **Building your online store**

First, you need to check your website and hosting name, remember that not only the branding is important but the way you create your community and present your products or services to them. Remember that every back end activity you are doing towards your business affects every part of it.

No matter if you are doing dropshipping, handmade jewelry or selling virtual material, your product is the most important thing in your business and everything is related to it. The failure or success of a brand is based on the quality of the product on the 90% of the cases so make sure to focus on the product first and to answer the 3 primordial questions on the top of this guide.

In order to make sure you have a strong base to keep the business structure make sure you have already check this milestones.

- Ecommerce Software
- Domain Name
- Web Hosting
- Email Hosting
- Payment Gateway
- Shipping Options
- Shipping Options
- Tax Rate
- Accounting
- Security
- Shipping Orders
- Customer Service
- Site Design
- Product Photography
- Product Description

To make your products stand out, you need to focus on two things:

- a) Shooting professionally beautiful pictures of your products.
- b) Writing captivating product descriptions.

Now that you have your amazing products shining out, you need to work on the little bits and pieces surrounding your products, below are examples of things that you should include:

- Your awesomely designed logo & slogan and a color theme derived from your logo.
- Promotional graphics and links.
- Calls to action.
- A search field with a filter to help customers find what they are looking for.
- Banners for promotions and special offers.
- Facilitate the shopping experience via the shopping cart and wish list.
- Facilitate the customer payment methods via providing several means of payment.
- Your website should preferably be available in more than one language.

3. Launching Your Business

- **Prelaunch: Spread the word**

Now that your e-commerce website and business is all set, it's time to spread the word out and launch your marketing campaign. Use all the social media channels to reach out to as much people as you can. Upload teasers and promos that would make people wonder what your business is about and would make them look forward for the time you reveal it. Use themes like "coming soon", "save the date" and create a countdown to make them follow your brand.

- **Post launch: Celebrate yet stay focused**

Before launching you had one main goal, reach out to people and start selling. But once you get your first customer, things will probably snowball from there. That's when you need to stay focused. While you are celebrating your initial successes, keep your eyes on your plans for managing your finances, stocking your inventory, business permits fees and all the 'essential extras' that needs your attention. Use organizers and calendars to help you stay on top with the organization process.

Starting your own e-commerce business is a thrilling journey; if you are well prepared then you will definitely enjoy it! It is a highly fulfilling experience that would be quite a learning experience for you along with giving you the feeling satisfaction and pride with the accomplishments that you will achieve. All it takes is determination and dedication to get you to your destination, but on this journey, always make sure to enjoy the ride and every step that you take along the way!