

As a guest writer for WooContent, I wrote the below article for Finance Equations.
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Start-up Business Tips For E-Commerce Businesses

If you've just started your own e-commerce venture or looking to launch, congratulations, you've already overcome the first step. Becoming an entrepreneur in this day and age is as easy as clicking a button, but becoming a successful one is a whole other ballgame. Let's look at a few business tips to keep in mind as an e-commerce start-up.

Get your finances in order from the beginning

Most e-commerce businesses have great products and services to sell, but don't know where to start when it comes to their finances. Here's where you ask for help, and don't be shy about it. It's better to get help right from the beginning, than to suffer financially later on. There are plenty of [online accounting services](#) to count on to help set you up. From opening up a business account to keeping your budget in check, from calculating your taxes to prioritizing your savings—a good accountant is the perfect investment to start your business with. Have a go-to system in place for your invoicing, inventory management, reporting and day-to-day accounting spreadsheets and you can spend your time focusing on the running of your business. With these services now being offered online, it makes it much easier for you to find, reach and work with them.

Don't launch in a hurry

A big mistake many ambitious e-commerce ventures do is launching their websites in a rush. You're launching a product with the ultimate goal of selling, so make sure you've got plenty to sell and plenty more for customers to come back for. You get one shot at a launch, so ensure that it's done effectively. Collate an extensive catalogue of products, make sure your website's SEO functions are enabled and optimized, ensure that each of your items are listed correctly and in as much detail as possible. There's nothing worse than insufficient information to turn your customer away. If a 'coming soon' page is completely unavoidable, ensure that there is a [call-to-action](#) to entice your user.

Look for passion when hiring

Hunt for talent the smart way by going for their passion and outlook on your business, not just their past experience. Academic achievements and work highlights are great, but to take your e-commerce business to new heights look for people who believe in and show enthusiasm to meet and exceed your goals. A passionate employee will lead to a happier and productive workforce who are determined and optimistic in your start-up. Even if you haven't managed to meet your goals yet, together you can make it happen in the long run.

Take social media seriously

Your business is digital, that means your online reach has to be on point. That's where social media plays an important role. Work closely with your social media team and get involved. Find out which platform is key to your target audience. Instagram is great for collating an aesthetic feed, getting quick engagement on stories and distributing shareable content. Twitter and Facebook provide you with a medium to post larger pieces of content, business updates and take care of customer service. Make sure your tone is authentic, you post what your customers want and don't leave anyone unanswered. On social media, all eyes are on you.

Device adaptability is key

A seamless shopping experience across all platforms and devices is key to any e-commerce business today. 43% of [UK shoppers](#) choose smartphones and 24% of them use tablets for shopping online, so you need to make sure your cross-platform functionality is adaptable and fast for on-the-go users. Your goal should be to convert anyone who lands on your platform, so keep CTAs to the point and make your payment gateway and checkout functions trustworthy and quick. Mobile shoppers are not going to wait more than 6 seconds for a page to load, so page speeds should be your priority across all devices.

Offer flexibility

As a start-up you need to [gain the trust](#) of your customers early and leave them coming back for more. Happy customers mean more business for you. A way to keep your patrons happy is by being flexible in your offering. This can be through offering multiple payment options, having a generous returns policy, guaranteeing a refund and offering a choice of shipping methods. Most online customers check a company's policies before making a purchase, so update your FAQ page with all the answers before you start selling.

Start selling

Establishing yourself in the highly competitive world of online selling is not easy, and it's only getting harder with each year. Customers are spoilt for choice when it comes to e-commerce, but if you keep these tips in mind you can stand out from the start. Continue evolving your business, set new goals for each quarter and keep up with industry trends. Customer's taste change and fashion evolve, it's up to you to stay one step ahead of them.