

Don't start with:

WHAT PLATFORM SHOULD I USE?

Speaker notes

- True of most software you use
- While this is a question that ultimately needs answered, it can't be your starting point
- Wrong answers
- Opinions
- What worked for their business

START BY LOOKING AT YOUR BUSINESS

- Why am I implementing eCommerce?
- Is this a long-term pillar of my business model?
- Do I need a full shop, or just a couple things?

Speaker notes

- Why am I implementing eCommerce?
 - What do customers expect?
 - Am I filling a hole in my business?
- Is this a long-term pillar of my business?
 - Am I trying to grow eCommerce sales? Or is it just for a few weeks?
- Do I need a full shop, or just a couple things?

FULL-BLOWN REI?

SIMPLE PAYMENT?

Camping and Hiking

Hiking Backpacks (540 results)

Filter

Categories

- Backpacking Packs (163)
- Daypacks (144)
- + Hydration Packs (53)
- Waistpacks (20)
- Kids' Backpacks (16)
- + Camera Packs (13)
- + Baby Carrier Packs (12)
- + Pack Accessories (185)

Gender


- ☐ Men's (102)
- ☐ Women's (103)
- ☐ Unisex (117)
- ☐ Boys' (16)
- ☐ Girls' (16)
- ☐ Kids' (16)

Hiking backpacks for one and all.


Men's Women's Unisex Kids'

Sort by: Best Match


View: 30 60



REI Co-op
Flash 45 Pack - Men's
\$159.00
★★★★★ (12)
[Compare](#)



REI Co-op
Flash 45 Pack - Women's
\$159.00
★★★★★ (4)
[Compare](#)



6 colors available
REI Co-op
Flash 22 Pack
\$54.95
★★★★★ (60)
[Compare](#)

PAY YOUR TUITION

[Edit](#)

Ready to pay your tuition for the month? Take care of it conveniently online!

White belt students can choose between once- and twice-weekly hour-long classes. Color belts commit to two one-and-one-half-hour weekly classes, and brown and black belts commit to two two-hour weekly classes.

You'll be redirected to PayPal to complete payment.

Student Name *

First Last

1 Month Tuition *

White Belt (1 1-hour class/week)

Total

\$50.00

[Submit](#)

Speaker notes

- REI-level eCom?
- Turn-key signups and payments?
- Do I just need to sell gift cards that work in-store?
- Do I only sell a couple of products?
- Or tons of products that should have categories and searchable attributes

START BY LOOKING AT YOUR BUSINESS

- Why am I implementing eCommerce?
- Is this a long-term pillar of my business model?
- Do I need a full shop, or just a couple things?
- What options do I already have?

Speaker notes

- What options do I already have?
 - Does my point-of-sale come with eCommerce capabilities?
 - What's my existing website?

WHY ECOMMERCE?

COVID-19?

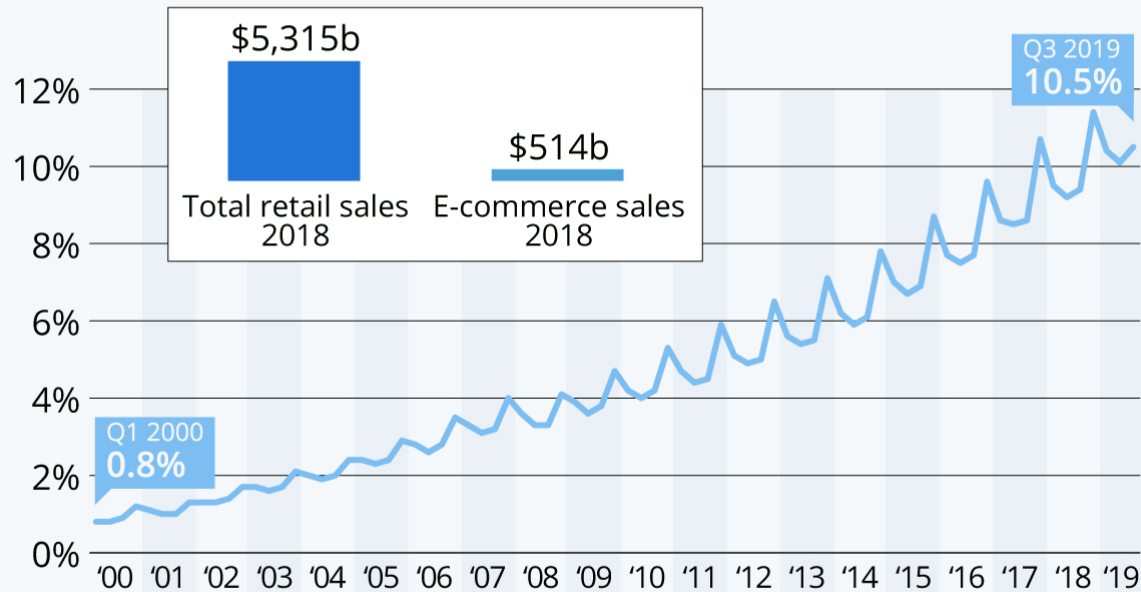
Speaker notes

A lot of people are going to say COVID-19. How many of you had eCommerce of some kind pre-COVID? Cool, leave your hands up. How many of you had given it serious thought pre-COVID? And how many of you have given it serious thought now?

Yeah, so it's definitely changed the conversation. But here's the thing - eCommerce is going to be valuable for you anyway. So answer "Why eCommerce" as you start exploring options, and I'm going to go ahead and answer "Should eCommerce be a long-term pillar of my business" for you.

The Rise of E-Commerce in the United States

E-Commerce sales as a percentage of total retail sales in the United States*



* not seasonally adjusted
Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Speaker notes

eCommerce already had a 10% share of retail sales, and we just jump-started that. eCommerce, in some way, shape, or form, is here for the long-run.

But you may be thinking, I'm a local business! I don't want to compete with big online brands! Let's look at the impact of eCommerce on local.

A NEW PLACE TO BUY

VS

A NEW WAY TO BUY

Speaker notes

First off, keep in mind that your customers aren't looking for a new place to buy. They like the stuff they buy now and the place they get it from.

But COVID has created a need for a new way to buy. That necessity will eventually turn into comfort with shopping online, so you need to meet people there today and in the future. It will impact local, and you can respond.

IMPACT ON LOCAL

- Does brick and mortar matter?
- Local must be part of your business model

Speaker notes

- Some people are probably wondering "does brick and mortar matter anymore?"
- We don't have a real answer, but there's a strong argument that specialty retail won't go anywhere, especially if local is part of your business model.
- Can't sniff a candle online, can't be fitted for shoes or clothes online.
- Your eCommerce presence may not expand that far. You may still be serving mostly local customers, but offering them a new way to purchase from you and spend money with you.

YOUR LOCAL ADVANTAGE

- Brand Loyalty
- High Engagement
- Same-Day Delivery

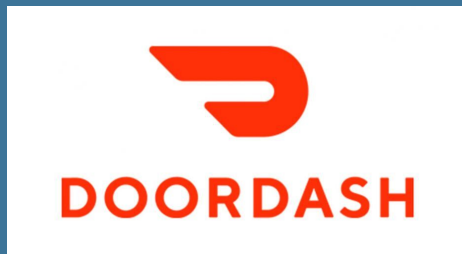
Speaker notes

People aren't buying online because they like online retailers better. They're buying online in a COVID-19 world because it's safe, and tomorrow they'll still be buying online because they like the convenience. For your local audience, you can actually be more convenient than the big brands.

Brand loyalty is very strong. Create a valuable in-person experience first, follow it up with high engagement on social media, and give customers all the convenience of buying online plus local delivery and high-touch product support. You'll find you're better equipped to fulfill than a Target, Dick's, or LuluLemon. You're better equipped than Amazon to deliver for your target customer.

People don't care if UPS delivers the package or who they paid to get it there. They just want it at their door as soon as possible.

NEW WAYS TO BUY



Speaker notes

You've got a ton of options for getting your product to your customer as soon as possible, so figure out which works best for you. These platforms aren't just for restaurants! Anyone selling a physical product should get in on this.

Depending on your business, there may be other distinct advantages you can create over big box by being local. You may have scheduled coffee deliveries to an office that people can join every day. Plan the purchase for them. You may explore the world of subscription boxes. Get creative. Because ultimately...

**ECOMMERCE ISN'T JUST
SHOPPING ONLINE.**

**IT'S LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY
TO BETTER MEET CUSTOMER
NEEDS.**

START BY LOOKING AT YOUR BUSINESS

- ~~Why am I implementing eCommerce?~~
- ~~Is this a long-term pillar of my business model?~~
- Do I need a full shop, or just a couple things?
- What options do I already have?

ALTERNATIVES TO A FULL SHOP

- PayPal link
- JotForm, WuFoo, other form builders
- Whatever your existing site supports!

Speaker notes

If the answer for you is no, you're probably a service provider of some kind, so I'd bet you're already collecting payments remotely, either via invoicing software or good old-fashioned checks in the mail. But if not, you've got some really easy solutions available to you!

You can simply link someone to your PayPal account from your website. You can use a third-party embeddable form service, generally a paid option, and there might even be something your existing site already supports. Plenty of WordPress plugins that will let you take payments,

START BY LOOKING AT YOUR BUSINESS

- ~~Why am I implementing eCommerce?~~
- ~~Is this a long-term pillar of my business model?~~
- ~~Do I need a full shop, or just a couple things?~~
- What options do I already have?

Speaker notes

Alright last thing, what options do you already have? It's up to you to check in with your point-of-sale provider and see what they offer. I'll touch on a few of these in just a minute and some general pluses and minuses of going this direction.

THE HARD PARTS

SHIPPING AND FULFILLMENT

- Live rates or flat rate?
- Supplies
- Shared inventory?
- Dropshipping

CROSS-PLATFORM CUSTOMERS

- Loyalty programs
- Marketing efforts
- Gift cards

POPULAR PLATFORMS FOR FULL SHOPS

- Shopify
- WordPress
- WordPress + BigCommerce
- Wix/SquareSpace/Weebly
- Point-of-Sale Provider

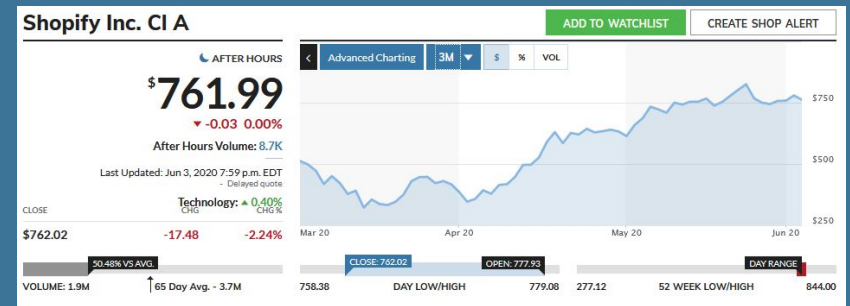
Speaker notes

Okay let's finally talk about some of the options out there. Everything I've chosen to highlight could be done by someone without any programming knowledge, potentially with the help of paid support. But I'll have more to say on that in my last slide.

SHOPIFY



shopify



Speaker notes

Shopify is a Canadian eCommerce company. It's stock is traded on wall street and is up 53% in the last three months. Shopify became to eCommerce what Zoom became to video conferencing. They just announced a new funding program. Really really big.

SHOPIFY

PROS

- Single platform in-store and online
- Hosted platform
- Built for eCommerce
- Lots of integrations

CONS

- Walled garden
- Nickel-and-dime
- Harder to retrofit

Speaker notes

- Great for businesses that start online, not so great if you didn't start there. They offer a point-of-sale system you can roll out from any iPad. - Hosted, so all updates taken care of - Features can be offered up piecemeal - Integrates easily with Facebook ads, Google ads, probably your mailing list provider, etc. Ask how many people use Shopify. Radar Toys.

WORDPRESS



WordPress



Speaker notes

Next up is WordPress, a platform that already powers 35% of the entire internet. For eCommerce, it's most often paired with the plugin WooCommerce, which builds your store directly into your existing WordPress site.

WORDPRESS

PROS

- Free to start (minus hosting)
- Lots of free extensions and integrations
- May play nice with your existing POS
- Easy to find a developer
- Belongs to you

CONS

- Integrations with your POS may be limited
- Software updates required
- Performance needs tuning

Speaker notes

- Lots of free to be had - Larger community of capable developers - Belongs to you! - Concerns like syncing inventory, gift cards, etc may or may not work - Software updates required, may break things. Dev recommended. - Some people complain about performance at scale. Once again, with a capable dev, you can mitigate that. How many of you already have WordPress sites? How many using WooCommerce?

WORDPRESS + BIGCOMMERCE

ECOMMERCE-AS-A-SERVICE



WordPress



Speaker notes

The idea here is that you have an eCommerce service that's designed to just be eCommerce. It might offer its own site builder, but really it's built to integrate with other platforms. For example, still on WordPress, you can tie it to a third-party eCommerce service like BigCommerce.

BIGCOMMERCE

PROS

- Separation of concerns
- Built for eCommerce

CONS

- Smaller developer pool
- Walled garden

Speaker notes

- With your WP site doing so much more than selling products, if you decide to change platforms, you don't have to throw away all your eCommerce work Anyone happen to be using BigCommerce?

SITE BUILDERS



Speaker notes

Then there are a bunch of subscription site builders with eCommerce tacked on. Generally, I don't care much for these. The commercials make them look easier to use than they are, and that's a big disservice to small business owners like yourselves. Anyone remember the Jeff Bridges sleep tapes commercials for Squarespace?

SITE BUILDERS

PROS

- Hosted platform
- Might work with point of sale?
- Limited stores

CONS

- Limited customization
- Walled garden

YOUR POINT-OF-SALE SYSTEM!



- Tight integration
- Available features?
- Bit of a crap shoot

CAUTION

- Avoid new-shiny-syndrome
- Don't let the perfect get in the way of the good
- You have important things to do
- Don't be afraid to get help

ETHAN CLEVENGER

Owner, Sterner Stuff

Owner, Porterhouse Clothing

ethan@sternerstuff.dev

<https://ecom.sternerstuff.dev>