



8 Essential ingredients every E-commerce website needs

Running an ecommerce website without these essential ingredients is like attempting to drive a car without wheels.

You grab your keys.

Jump in the car.

You're ready to go.

You press the accelerator, hear the engine rev and then...

the horrifying sound of grinding metal on the pavement.

When you're missing one of the essentials the whole system fails.

Here's what you can do ensure you're not running an ecommerce site without its wheels.

1. A Great CMS (Content Management System)

A house is only as strong as it's foundation.

Nothing will make your life suck more than building your ecommerce site on a poor Content Management System.

There are dozens of solutions out there so it's important to find the one that will be the right fit for your product. Here are a few of the most popular:

- **Subscription or Box Ecommerce:**
 - <http://www.subbly.co/>
- **Traditional Ecommerce:**

- <http://www.woothemes.com/woocommerce/>
- <http://www.shopify.ca/>
- <http://cart66.com/>
- **Single Items or Simple Ecommerce:**
 - <https://gumroad.com/>

2. Use high resolution Images

I'd make a \$10 dollar bet you're either viewing this article on a smartphone or you have one within 3 feet of you.

Guess what smartphones have? High definition cameras

There is no excuse for small or low quality photography of your products anymore. You know it. I know it. Your customers know it too.

Plus great photos boost conversions.



Before & After

Don't believe me?

Checkout these [conversion boosting case studies](#)

In one case a 100px increase in image size enticed 63% more visitors to convert.

3. Install a security certificate and visually highlight (HTTPS)



When you walk up to a bank machine you probably don't think twice about how secure the transmission is.

Unfortunately the internet is a little different and customers do think about that.

By installing a security certificate on your site you're telling your customers you actually give a shit about keeping their information safe.

And since you've paid for that certificate you might as well show it off.

And you guessed it, displaying your [security certificate badge increases conversion rates](#).

4. Have & Display your return policy

It's a beautiful Saturday afternoon and you're at the mall buying bright red snakeskin boots (and GummieBears™)

as you approach the cash you're thinking to yourself...

what if my wife/husband/life partner hates these boots.

Then you see it a

little sign perched next to the register.

"Return Policy - 30 days".

Feeling relieved you bag those serpent sneakers with peace of mind.

Give your customers the same peace of mind. I hear you, you're saying something like "but, what if everyone returns my product and I go out of business?"

Here's a true Story, when I paid \$70 for those [shoes with little wheels](#) my wife hated them (and probably me) she'd said "I'm never going anywhere with you if you have those shoes on"

I didn't return them did I? No I didn't.

they're still sitting in my closet.

I didn't return them because like most people I can't be bothered.

5. Provide Shopping Cart Drop Off Discounts

So this is actually a really kick as tool you can use as a last ditch effort to convert that customer you worked so hard to bring to your site.

Let's say the customer clicks around your online shop adds a bunch of stuff to their cart, gets all the way to the checkout page and then out of nowhere an icecream truck drives by outside, and they completely forget to complete their order.

A great tip to resurrect that that drop off from the dead is to send a follow up email

Take is a step further and toss in a discount code if they complete their order. They'll love you for it.

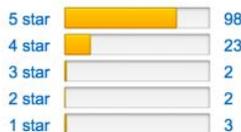
Shopify has an automated solution for [cart abandon reminders](#).

6. Display customer reviews

Customer Reviews

★★★★☆ 128

4.6 out of 5 stars



Share your thoughts with other customers

[Write a customer review >](#)

[See all 128 customer reviews >](#)

Most helpful customer reviews

Most recent customer reviews

★★★★★ **Five Stars**

Great lil thang buh I gotta lum ta reed first

Published 55 minutes ago by Juicy Jeff

★★★★★ **Five Stars**

Great back lighting. I had to upgrade from the original Kindle which did not provide enough light for me.

Published 1 hour ago by Jennie Hager

★★★★★ **Five Stars**

Love it!

Published 6 hours ago by Krisanne Gossard

Amazon, Walmart, Bestbuy. Every major online retailer has some form of customer review or feedback system in place.

I'm sure as a child your mother told you just as much as mine that you're special. In this instance you're not.

Plus, why wouldn't you want to know what your customers think of your products? If you're selling something that sucks, you're probably getting a lot of returns, so why not avoid all those returns in the first place. Use customer reviews to keep improving your products.

If the reviews and ratings are good then you'll actually leverage the power of social proof and improve your sales.

7. Mobile Responsive

If you're an online retailer and you haven't heard this term before please check it out.

I promise you're losing customers if your website isn't mobile responsive.

According to [ExactTarget](#) :

37% of consumers are more likely to purchase on a mobile-optimized site. -

(ExactTarget, 2014 Mobile Behavior Report)

That's huge...

Just by having your site is mobile response, you can dramatically improve your sales.

Most CMS's will have templates or themes that are mobile responsive and can be easily customized to suite your branding.

8. Display related products

If you're only selling a handful of items I wouldn't recommend spending too much time to make sure you've included this feature.

The more products you have the more it can improve conversion rates by cross selling related and relevant items to your customers.

For example an electronics company may recommend alternate versions of a product or accessories to improve the amount each customer orders.

Conclusion

It's not that hard to include these essentials when you build your E-commerce site on top of a great platform.

If you own a self hosted WordPress website then plugins like WooCommerce have many of the essentials right out of the box.

If you want to make your life really easy checkout Shopify.

You can launch an ecommerce site with all the essentials in minutes.