

# Elevate - Ecommerce + Integrations

## 1. Pricing and Payment

The first thing you should consider when searching for an ecommerce platform is the price. Whether you're a small business just getting started or an already established brick & mortar business moving online, you need to know exactly what you'll be paying.

Almost all platforms will have a monthly fee. Depending on the type of platform you get (self-hosted vs. hosted) the costs may vary. You should also consider the processing fees that will be associated with the platform. Don't sacrifice the things you'll definitely need for a cheaper price. Try to weigh the pros and cons of each to get the best for your budget.

You should also consider how your customers will be paying. Some platforms don't offer the ability to pay via third party vendors (such as PayPal). This could end up being a huge inconvenience for your customers – a frustration which can lead to shopping cart abandonment. Don't take this risk; decide which forms of payment you'll accept first and remember this when you're looking at the different software.

## 2. Integrations

Another factor you should consider when looking at ecommerce platforms is their integrations and plugins. Most platforms, such as Shopify, will have plenty of tools for you to run your business. Your business needs will be a determining factor when deciding on the plugins that will work best for you. When looking at the different platforms, think of what tools you'll need or already use for your business. Here are some of the most popular types of plugins that you should look out for:

- Accounting plug ins – Xero - Quickbooks
- Email Marketing – Mailchimp – Klaviyo – Constant Contact
- Pops Ups / Email Capture – Just Uno – Optin Monster
- Loyalty programs
- Shipping – Sendle – Aus Post
- Payment options – Afterpay – Zip pay – Paypal – Credit Card services

## 3. SEO Friendliness

Ecommerce businesses are not exempt from working on their SEO. In fact, it can be highly beneficial to have your store rank high in search results. You want your customers to find you when they're searching for products like yours. Some of the most important factors when looking for an SEO friendly platform include:

- The ability to add a blog
- The ability to use your own domain name
- The ability for customers to leave reviews

## 4. Mobile Friendliness

Did you know nearly 60% of searches are done from mobile devices? Often those searches continue on to a purchase from a mobile device. This means its important to look for platforms that allow customers to easily access your website as well as make a purchase on their mobile device.

## **5. Customer Service**

A key aspect of any business is its customer service. As the experience provided by traditional brick-and-mortar businesses is based in a physical store, they typically have more control over how smoothly their business runs.

Ecommerce is a whole different ballgame; software outages and server downtimes are often out of your control, and will prevent any of your customers from accessing your business. Odds are that at one point your servers will crash at the worst possible moment. This can affect both your revenue and your brand image.

Having someone to call at any time to help you get things up and running again is a huge factor when you're looking at ecommerce platforms. Take a look at each platform's customer service—are they available 24/7? How are you able to reach them? How many levels of support are offered, and what does each cost? Think about these questions and make sure you ask them before you decide on your platform.

## **6. Security**

No one wants to enter their credit card information on a sketchy website, which is why security is becoming one of the biggest concerns among consumers. While most software today will have robust security as standard, always check to make sure your platform supports HTTPS/SSL for a safe and secure checkout for your customers.

## **7. Scalability**

All business owners hope their business will grow in the future, but you may not know to what extent. Nonetheless, it's important to look for a platform that will scale along with your business.

You don't want to pay for features and storage that you're not using when you first start out. You also want to keep up with higher demands as your business takes off. Choose a platform that you can scale to your business size and that won't charge you outrageous fees for doing so.