

E-Commerce How to for Small Businesses

- Whether you are making the transition from a brick-and-mortar store or simply looking for a way to diversify your business, these online platforms can help generate sales and enhance the customer experience.



amazon

Amazon's Seller Central
sellercentral.amazon.com

Amazon's Seller Central is a program that lets individuals and businesses sell their products and inventory on Amazon's online platform.

Pros: The opportunity to put your product in front of hundreds of millions of potential customers, plus the ability to start selling fast before you even set up a business website or physical store. Amazon also has the ability to act as the fulfillment center. This means they can store, pack, and ship your items.

Cons: New products without reviews are hard to sell.

What you need to know:

Customer reviews are everything! You have to decide which you value most -- time or money. If you let your items sell organically it won't cost anything but can take more time to sell. If you pay for advertising of your products, they will sell faster but cost more.

Money involved: Subscription fees of \$39.99 a month plus selling fees or a \$0.99 fee for each item sold depending on which of two plans you choose. Selling fees are charged per item sold.

Etsy

Etsy
etsy.com

Etsy is a unique marketplace. Buyers come here to purchase items they might not find anywhere else.

Pros: There is a great amount of learning material to help people sell on Etsy. The Etsy App simplifies the process of buying, selling and responding to customers.

Cons: Everything listed for sale on Etsy must be handmade, vintage, or a craft supply.

What you need to know:

Etsy offers a great deal of support for customers. The Seller Handbook teaches photography, getting found, branding, shipping, and much more.

Money involved: There are three basic selling fees: a listing fee, transaction fee, and payment processing fee. In addition, you may choose to pay for ads.



Facebook Marketplace - facebook.com/marketplace

Buy or sell new and used items easily on Facebook Marketplace, locally or from businesses. Customers often use Facebook Marketing to find deals on new items shipped from stores to their door.

Pros: If you have a Facebook account, you can easily setup an online store.

Cons: Cannot sell services or event tickets. Marketplace is quick and easy for individual to sell personal items, however, businesses have to sign up for an account with Facebook Commerce Manager.

What you need to know: When you sell something on Marketplace, you create a public listing that can be seen by anyone on Marketplace and in the News Feed, Search and other places on or off Facebook. It is best to use a PayPal account for transactions.

Money involved: Sellers pay fees for using on-platform checkout – 5% per transaction, and for transactions \$8 or less, a flat fee of \$0.40.



Live Commerce or shop streaming

(Live streaming + Ecommerce + Shop streaming)

This format combines live video, real-time customer interaction and online shopping. Shop streaming can be accomplished using Facebook or YouTube.

Pros: Can be used to launch new products or have clearance sales. Easy to get people to impulse buy.

Cons: Takes significant preparation before going live. This may include extra manpower, prior marketing efforts, and creativity.

What you need to know: There is software like Restream that allows you to live stream across multiple social media simultaneously. It is important to have someone watch the chat box for questions/ comments from the audience.

Money involved: Different social platforms will have different advertising fees. Most common platform to date is Facebook.



Pinterest pinterest.com

Pinterest is where people go to be inspired and learn about new ideas and products.

Pros: Easy to start a business account. Simply make a profile, claim your website and social media accounts, create pins and start running ads to reach more people. Can drive traffic to your website and help with rankings.

Cons: Pinterest is a long-term investment. Most sales take place 2.5 months after pinning.

What you need to know: Finding the right key words can take some thought as people are searching for unique ideas and gifts. Images and videos are everything so great photos are a must. The long-term success depends on consistent, quality pinning which will engage your followers.

Money involved: Signing up for a business account it free. With paid ads, you decide how much to spend and how long the ad runs.

For more information:
Oklahoma Main Street Center
(405) 815-6552
Toll Free: (800) 879-6552
MainStreet@okcommerce.gov



LEARN MORE AT: OKcommerce.gov/mainstreet