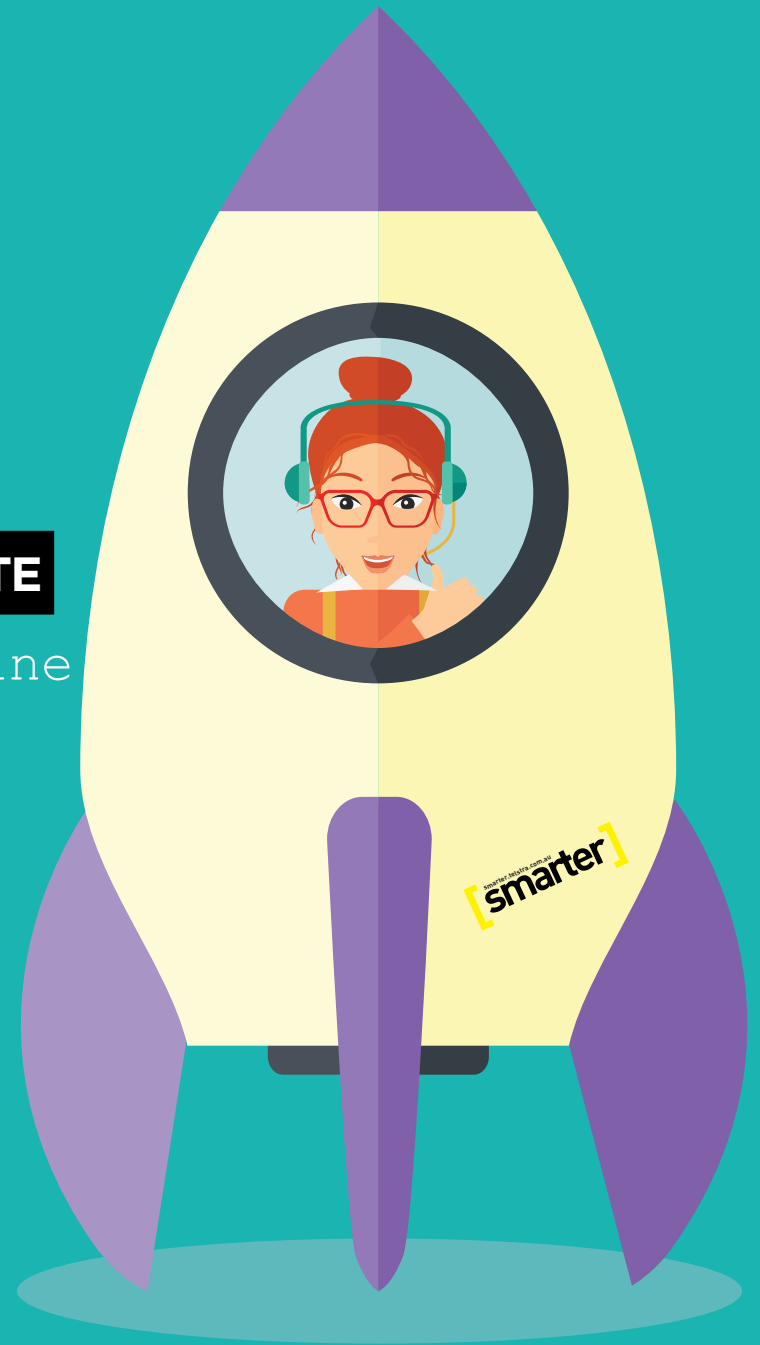


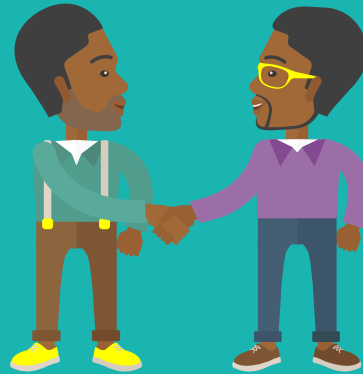
PART 2

SET UP SHOP

BUILD AND LAUNCH AN E-COMMERCE WEBSITE

Our definitive guide to selling online





INTRODUCTION

You've done your homework, ordered your stock, selected a shipping provider and chosen an e-commerce platform to power your new online business.

If you're ready to build your e-commerce website, this e-book is for you.

Our *Definitive Guide* is the second in a three-part series, mapping every stage of your e-commerce journey from idea to launch, and beyond.

The **first e-book** outlined the research and preparation needed to plan your e-commerce business. The journey continues here, turning your e-commerce business plan into an online reality. In the third part, you'll learn how to promote your new e-commerce website, to attract and keep more customers.

Time to start building!

[i] TECHNICAL TERMS EXPLAINED BY
THE TEAM AT NETO [\[DOWNLOAD NOW\]](#)

[i] STAY ON TRACK WITH
OUR HANDY CHECKLIST

1. WEBSITE DESIGN

Your website only has a few seconds to make the right impression before visitors click the back button. Thankfully, you don't have to be a design genius to have a great-looking site!

[] EXPLORE CURRENT TRENDS IN E-COMMERCE DESIGN

Make a note of your favourite online retailers. Why do you like them? What would you like to replicate?

The best e-commerce designs are uncluttered, with plenty of space to show off your products. Look at other online sites to see what works (and what doesn't!). The [Threadless](#) and [Roku](#) websites, for example, have simple layouts that focus on the product.

[] CHOOSE A DESIGN TEMPLATE

Many e-commerce platforms come with a large library of design templates. For a fee, some will help you to integrate a design template from elsewhere. This is extremely useful if you have an existing website and want to use the same design with your new online store.

Can't find a template or want a bespoke design? You may need to hire a designer experienced with your chosen platform.

Neto has [60 free website templates](#) to select from, as well as an in-house [custom design service](#). You can even try out Neto on a [free 14-day trial](#).

[] CUSTOMISE YOUR DESIGN

Make the design your own by adding your logo and images. Your template may also have settings to adjust the layout, colour scheme and more to suit your branding and preferences.

Most visitors will arrive on your homepage first. Make a bold statement with an eye-catching banner image and headline.



Good design = More sales
[Learn how the right website design can make a purchase the most logical conclusion for visitors.](#)



2. BRANDING

Before you start designing, think carefully about your brand. It must encapsulate the personality and values you want consumers to have top of mind when they hear your business name.

[] DEFINE YOUR BRAND

Write down what your business stands for and what you want it to achieve. This will inform the 'personality' of your brand.

- **What's your selling proposition?** Is it all-natural products, niche expertise or something else?
- **Who are your ideal customers?** Your brand needs to appeal to them and align with their values.
- **How will your brand differ from your competitors?** What will be the individual 'personality' of your brand?

Even if you already have a business, how well will your existing brand work online? Is this an opportunity for a rebrand?

[] DOCUMENT YOUR BRAND GUIDELINES

For a brand to be effective, its look and feel needs to be simple, recognisable and consistent.

Create a 'Brand Guidelines' document and include the colour palette (with details of the colour breakdown or specific Pantone colour), font, logo requirements, any specific design elements, as well as key messaging.

Your Brand Guidelines will make it easier to brief designers and others, reducing the risk of confusion or costly mistakes.

[] CUSTOMISE YOUR DESIGN TEMPLATE

Adjust the design template to represent your brand, including logos and images. Your template may also have settings to adjust the layout and colour scheme to suit your branding and preferences.

Most visitors will see your homepage first. Make a bold brand statement with an eye-catching banner image and headline.



All your design docs in one place

Neto has collated all of the documentation, templates and advice you or your designer will need.

[Follow tutorials, download templates and learn simple design tweaks.](#)



3. CREATE CONTENT: COPYWRITING

How hard can it be to add a few words to a website? Beware: Careless or rushed copy can undermine all your hard work. Don't leave it too late!



[] PRODUCT COPY

Great product copy is brief, simple and informative. It takes skill and time to say so much in so few words. You can write it yourself or pay a copywriter to do it. A web search for 'copywriter' will return a long list of possibilities. Choose one whose style matches your brand.

- Break up copy with descriptive headings and subheadings
- Use bullets to summarise important information
- Keep sentences short
- Always include a 'call to action' – a statement to motivate the reader to take the next step

TIP Avoid vague statements and hyperbole. Why is it “high quality”? Is this *really* the “sale of the year”?

[] BRAND PAGES

Customers like to know who they're buying from. A short 'About Us' page is where you can tell the

history of the business and explain your values.

Maybe there's a story about why you chose to only sell sustainable recycled products. Or perhaps your love of vintage troll dolls will prove to other collectors that you understand them and their needs.

[] TERMS AND CONDITIONS

While often necessary, guarantees, legal disclaimers and other fine print content can be long, confusing and intimidating for customers.

Such important copy shouldn't be a chore to read, never mind understand. Summarise or highlight the most important points. Use plain English; avoid jargon, legalese or complex sentence structures. And get a lawyer to check it's correct.

TIP Terms and conditions are legally binding, so you should get a legal expert to check your copy.

4. CREATE CONTENT: IMAGES

The right picture can be worth a thousand words. Give every page of your website plenty of visual appeal with eye-catching and relevant images.

[] COLLECT APPROVED IMAGES

Your product suppliers will probably have a library of approved images for you to use. For instance, a book publisher will usually have cover images prepared for retailers. Also check if there are any guidelines or restrictions you need to observe.

If you need a few non-product images, buy credits from a stock image library, such as [istockphoto.com](https://www.istockphoto.com) or [123rf.com](https://www.123rf.com).

TIP Don't breach copyright by downloading product images from Google, other retailers or related websites.

[] TAKE YOUR OWN PRODUCT PHOTOS

If you sell handcrafted, bespoke or second-hand items, it may be time to get out the camera. Unless you have professional equipment, consider hiring an experienced photographer. While more expensive, a studio shoot ensures every image is consistent and every product looks its best.

TIP Make sure you retain all commercial rights in your photographs and images to avoid possible disputes later.

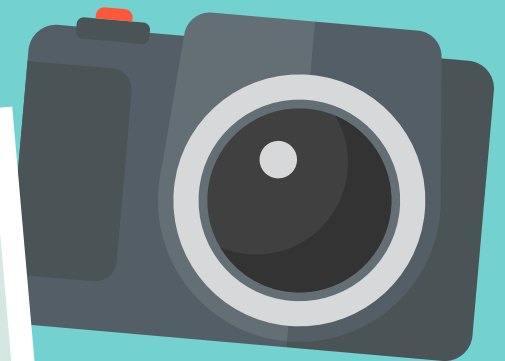
[] OPTIMISE YOUR IMAGES

Before uploading, crop each image to the correct display size and aspect ratio to avoid distortion. Large image files and formats take longer to download, slowing down your webpages. Optimise each image for the web to achieve the best quality at the lowest possible size.

[Learn more about image formats and how to optimise your images.](#)

[] UPLOAD IMAGES TO THE WEBSITE

Once uploaded to the platform, you can add more information to each image. A descriptive title helps search engines index your content. 'Alt text' describes the image for screen text readers used by the blind.



THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

[Learn how brands such as McDonald's and Airbnb achieve great images.](#)

5. THE PRODUCT CATALOGUE

Time to stock those shelves! Product pages will make up the bulk of your website, so it is vital that you plan your page structures and categories correctly.

[] CREATE PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Too many categories can become confusing. Keep the website simple with as few categories as possible. Give your categories a logical structure or hierarchy by grouping them under a few relevant parent categories. For example, a parent category of 'Menswear' might have subcategories of 'Shirts', 'Trousers', 'Shoes' and so on.

TIP Some products may appear in more than one category, giving customers multiple ways to find it.

[] MANAGING CATEGORIES IS SIMPLE WITH NETO

Learn more about setting up your category structure, including a few examples, [with Neto](#).

[] ADD PRODUCTS TO THE WEBSITE

Some e-commerce platforms have several methods for creating product pages on your website. Your choice will most likely depend on how many products you have to sell. You could:

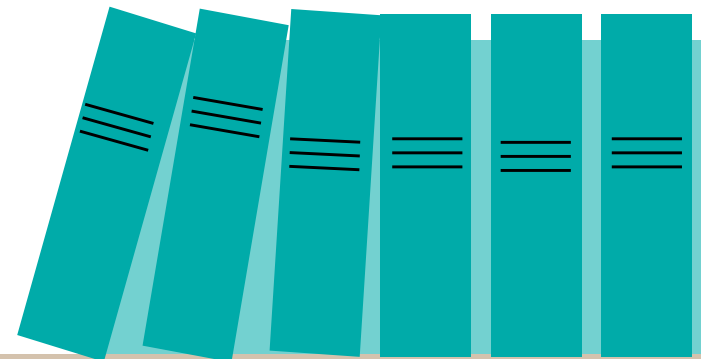
- Add each product page individually via the web interface
- Import products in bulk with a .csv spreadsheet
- Use the platform's API (Application Programming Interface) to import from another system (advanced)
- Integrate and import from a compatible inventory system
- Integrate and import from eBay ([see section 10](#))

Regularly adding large amounts of new products manually is not sustainable. The web interface is not intended for large stores.



STOCK CONTROL

It can be extremely frustrating to buy a product online only to learn that it's out of stock. A good e-commerce platform allows you to set stock levels so customers always know if the product is available.



6. GOING MOBILE

While your design may look great on a desktop or laptop screen, more customers now use mobile devices to shop online.

[] CHECK DESIGN FOR SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS

A responsive design rearranges and resizes the various layout and design elements to fit the different screen sizes. This ensures the copy is still readable and images are presented as intended.

Choose a responsive design template or, if you're commissioning a designer, specify responsiveness in your design brief.

Use an online tool such as [ResponsiveDesignChecker.com](https://www.responsivedesignchecker.com) to preview your website on different devices and screen sizes.

[] GO UP THE GOOGLE RANKINGS

In 2015, Google began assessing mobile responsiveness when ranking websites in mobile search results. The search engine is **increasing the effect** of this 'mobile-friendly' ranking signal in May 2016.



Will they love your website too?

[] SIMPLIFY THE MOBILE EXPERIENCE

Looking good is only the beginning. The way customers use your website can still present challenges on a mobile device.

[] **Are forms easy to use on a smartphone?**

Include fewer fields. Use dropdowns to reduce touchscreen typing.

[] **Are important buttons in the right places?**

Is it easy to spot and hit that 'Submit' or 'Buy' button with a thumb?

[] **Have you eliminated unnecessary clicks?**

Pages load slower over a mobile connection. Make them count.

[] **Are videos short and optimised for mobile?**

Videos chew through mobile data. Avoid using them for essential information.

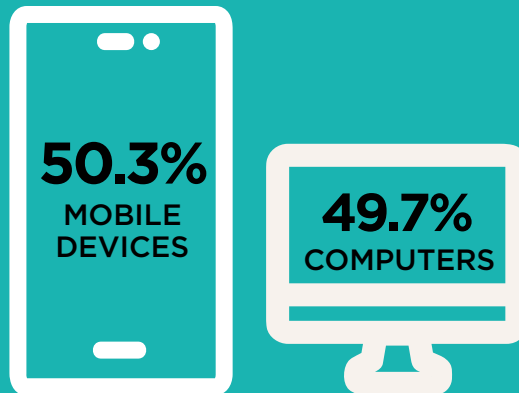
TIP Never require users to download large PDF files (for example, user manuals or terms) to complete a transaction or to find information.

TOP MOBILE E-COMMERCE TRENDS

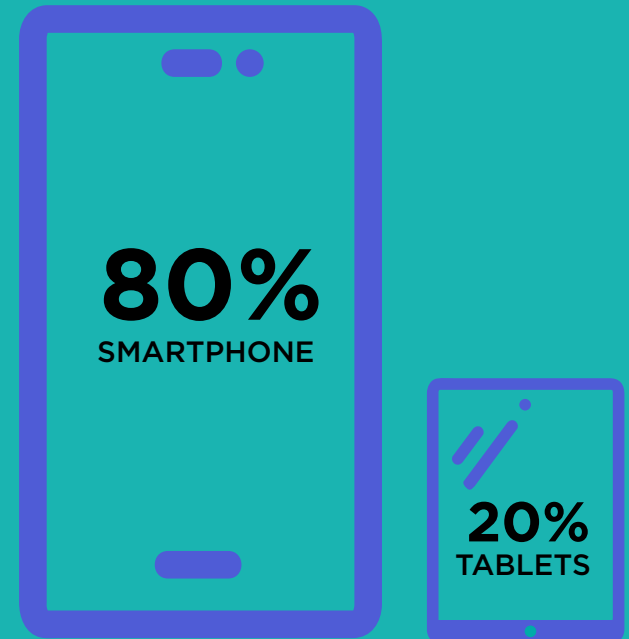
Predicted value of e-commerce mobile transactions in 2016



Mobile e-commerce traffic exceeds desktop e-commerce traffic



Smartphones account for most mobile e-commerce traffic



4 IN 10



Customers using multiple channels/devices are **20% more likely** to purchase on their mobile device

7. THE SHOPPING CART AND CHECKOUT

On average, 68.63 per cent of shopping carts are abandoned without completing the order*. That's a lot of lost sales! Improve your checkout process so that more customers make it through to the end.



[] ENCOURAGE MULTIPLE SALES

When a customer adds a product to the cart, they might want to continue shopping. Don't immediately drive them into the checkout process, forcing them to navigate back to the product pages. Make it easy to keep browsing, only entering the checkout when they're ready to buy.

TIP Adding a product to the cart gives you an opportunity to suggest related items the customer may also be interested in.

[] ELIMINATE UNNECESSARY STEPS

You may want to promote your email newsletter or capture customer information for your marketing database. However, each extra question increases the risk of abandonment.

Only include steps necessary to complete the transaction, with the minimum number of clicks.

TIP Encourage customer registration, making it easier to check out next time by automatically populating account information.

[] AUTOMATE ABANDONED CART EMAILS

When a customer abandons your cart, automated emails give you a second chance to close the sale.

- Increase sales by reminding customers of what's in their cart
- Reach out to answer questions and solve issues

TIP Use abandoned cart emails as a gentle prompt, not a push. The wrong approach can lose a sale just as easily.

*SOURCE: [HTTP://BAYMARD.COM/LISTS/CART-ABANDONMENT-RATE](http://BAYMARD.COM/LISTS/CART-ABANDONMENT-RATE)



GET CHECKOUT RIGHT WITH A SHOPPING CART BUILDER

[Find out how to create the ideal checkout experience quickly and easily with a shopping cart builder.](#)

8. ONLINE PAYMENTS

At some point in a transaction, money has to change hands. Online payments aren't difficult to set up, but there are strict requirements to be followed.

[] SET UP PAYPAL

PayPal is such a popular and easy way to make online payments that it can be frustrating when the option isn't available, and PayPal users have to trudge downstairs for the credit card. However, customers don't need to be registered with PayPal, as it can handle those credit card transactions as well.

While PayPal's fees are higher per transaction, you can start selling instantly without setting up an online merchant facility.

[] APPLY FOR AN ONLINE MERCHANT FACILITY

An online merchant facility is different to the merchant facility you may already use for EFTPOS and in-store credit card transactions, and it allows you to process online payments securely into your bank account.

[Find out how to apply for an online merchant facility.](#)

[] ADD A PAYMENT GATEWAY

A payment gateway connects to your online merchant account to authorise credit card transactions and secure stored payment information. In Australia, recommended payment gateways include **eWAY** and **SecurePay**.

Some merchant facilities, such as NAB Transact and ANZ eGate, include their own payment gateways. Ask your bank.

[] PROTECT YOU AND YOUR CUSTOMERS FROM FRAUD

You are responsible for all payments through your website. If a payment is fraudulent, the bank can debit the money from your account and charge additional fees without warning.

Fraud prevention software such as **MaxMind minFraud can reduce your exposure to credit card fraud for just a few cents per transaction.**

Make card payments safe for you and your customers.



9. RETURNS AND DISPUTES

E-commerce isn't just about guiding the right people to the right products. Before anyone clicks your 'Buy Now' button, they have to trust the transaction won't disappoint!

[] DECIDE ON A RETURNS POLICY

Returns will happen. Faulty goods, incorrect sizing or damage in transit are just three reasons you may be asked to refund a sale.

A good returns policy, well communicated, can reduce potential disputes later.

- When should a product be exchanged?
- What scenarios will merit a full, partial or no refund?
- Who is responsible for return shipping?
- Is there a time limit for returns, within 30, 60 or 90 days of purchase?
- What about sale stock? Or intimate apparel?

Check your policy against [Australian consumer law](#). For example, a customer shouldn't incur extra costs to return a faulty item.

[] SET UP THE RESOLUTION CENTRE

Sometimes, things go wrong. How you resolve complaints and disputes will make a huge difference to whether customers come back or recommend your website to others.

Your website's resolution centre allows customers to raise a dispute against a transaction so you can resolve the issue quickly. Common disputes include:

- Item not received
- Item significantly different from described
- Item not working
- Incorrect item
- Unauthorised transaction
- Overcharge

[Find out how Neto helps to resolve disputes and process refunds.](#)



PAYPAL DISPUTES

Customers may also lodge disputes via PayPal's resolution centre, or be covered by PayPal's Buyer Protection program.

[Learn more about how to resolve PayPal disputes.](#)



10. EBAY AND OTHER SALES TOOLS

Many online retailers start out on eBay. But you don't have to leave the world's largest online marketplace behind when you launch your own e-commerce store.



[] INTEGRATE WITH EBAY

Some e-commerce platforms, such as [Neto](#), allow you to integrate with your existing eBay store to better manage your listings. You can choose whether to also import your eBay listings as inventory for your website as well.

Even if a customer purchases the item on eBay, you can still manage the entire transaction from within your e-commerce website, so you have one simple workflow.

TIP Your system may allow you to automatically leave positive eBay feedback when an order is paid in full.

[] ADD INVENTORY FEED TO SHOPPING COMPARISON SITES

Comparison sites such as [Shopping.com](#) save consumers a lot of clicking around by displaying the products of hundreds of merchants side by side for easy comparison. This can potentially expose your products to thousands of potential customers, eager to compare offers.

Add the product feed URL from your system to each comparison site to keep them updated daily with your current inventory.

TIP Use comparison sites to see how your products and pricing compare. Do your offers look like a good value deal?

[] SET UP A GOOGLE MERCHANT ACCOUNT

Many customers use Google to search for products. While the regular search results merely rank webpages containing the product name, the Shopping tab displays matching product listings.

For your products to appear in Google Shopping results, you will need a Google merchant account. You can then add your website's inventory feed to your merchant account.

[Learn how to open a Google merchant account.](#)

11. THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

We're nearly there! But will the customer experience be impressive or frustrating? Before you launch, check how easy your website is to use.

TEST WEBSITE USABILITY

Ask a few friends to test your website with a fresh, unbiased eye. Use the checklist to identify any issues.

USABILITY CHECKLIST

1 Can popular products be found within three clicks?

Provide shortcuts to popular items.

2 Do any buttons or forms not function as expected?

What did the tester expect to happen on clicking the button?

3 Are all menu items/categories unambiguous?

Does the tester get lost? Use clear and familiar terminology.

4 Is the copy easy to read? Do images display correctly?

5 Are the copy and icons easy to understand correctly?

You know what they should mean, but do your testers agree?

6 Can visitors quickly find answers to questions?

What questions did the tester have? Do you need an FAQ page?

7 Is all pricing clear and transparent?

Was the total price at checkout what the tester expected?

8 Is the registration process simple?

Too many mandatory fields? Does login work as expected?

9 Is it easy to lodge an enquiry or complaint?

Does the tester know when to expect a response?

10 Is company contact and location information easy to find?

A lack of contact details can look untrustworthy.

Testing,
testing



12. PREPARE FOR LAUNCH

You may be itching to hit that 'launch' button, excited to welcome your first customers. Yet a little more planning can ensure your launch is smooth and successful.

[] SET A LAUNCH DATE

Instead of simply launching when the website is ready, schedule your launch day for maximum impact and minimum stress.

- Don't launch in a busy week. Any teething problems will need your full attention
- Plan and coordinate promotional activities such as social media and advertising campaigns
- Should you synchronise the launch with your existing admin/billing/ordering cycles (eg, 1st of the month)?

The unexpected will always happen. Planning your launch schedule reduces the risk of surprises and keeps you in control.

[] NOTIFY STAKEHOLDERS AND YOUR EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Do your suppliers know about your website? Smaller boutique suppliers, in particular, may want to publicise your online store to their customers. Spread the word about your website, launch date and URL to your existing networks, market stall regulars, eBay customers, even family and friends.

TIP Don't forget to add the website and the URL to your business cards, email signatures, social media profiles, etc.



ATTRACT AND WIN MORE E-COMMERCE CUSTOMERS

What will make my website easier to find?

Can I keep customers coming back again and again?

How do I measure what's working and what isn't?

Find the answers in the third e-book in this series: [Top Shop: Attract and win more e-commerce customers](#)

PREPARE FOR LAUNCH

(cont'd)

[] FINAL CHECKS

While making the last few hurried changes before launch, it is very easy for new mistakes to creep in. Before making your website public, put aside a little time and check each webpage one last time.

CHECKLIST

[] 1 Are there any broken or incorrect links?

Some last-minute changes may cause internal links to break.

[] 2 Do any pages still contain placeholder copy?

Ensure every line of placeholder copy is replaced with your own.

[] 3 Are there any typos or other copy mistakes?

Read everything closely with a fresh eye.

[] 4 Do any pages still display default images?

Check all images and icons are displayed correctly.

[] 5 Have you checked how the website looks on different sized screens?

Thoroughly test the website on mobile devices.

[] 6 Do all social media buttons work as intended?

Test how your webpages display when shared to social media.

[] 7 Have you set up a 404 (error) page?

A good 404 page provides reassurance when an error occurs, such as an incorrect URL.

[] 8 Are prices and product details still correct?

Some time may have elapsed since starting your e-commerce journey. Check your prices, shipping quotes and other details are still accurate.



CASE STUDY: BICYCLES ONLINE

ADVICE ON SETTING UP AN ONLINE STORE FROM JONO ALLARA, CO-FOUNDER OF BICYCLES ONLINE

BICYCLESONLINE.COM.AU

Bicycles Online grew from a backstreet garage to a \$5 million a year business on the strength of great service and smart e-commerce strategies. Here Jono explains how it launched its own online store.



1 YOU'LL WANT YOUR OWN STORE AT SOME POINT

“We’d spent a lot of time making the eBay store look polished. But while eBay works quite well for acquiring customers, if you’re a small business you pay 7-10 per cent each time

in commission. So if you can get shoppers to organically buy through your own online store, it’s much more profitable.”

2 YOUR DOMAIN NAME MATTERS A LOT - IT'S PART OF YOUR BRAND

“The first thing was to get a domain name that was going to be powerful for search engine optimisation (SEO). We bought it from someone else and switched over our company registration to the new name: Bicycles Online. We knew the name was going to work well for building the brand.”

3 PAY-BY-THE-MONTH WEBSITE DESIGNS ARE A GOOD START

“We had a limited budget, so we used this software-as-a-service you can get to design our e-commerce website.

And it worked really well for a start-up business like us. We didn’t have to pay for all the coding and own any actual infrastructure. It allowed us to scale on a very low budget.”

4 IT'S WORTH INVESTING IN SMART E-COMMERCE TECHNOLOGIES

“[Neto](#) is a better all-in-one solution for e-commerce. Things like shipping, marketplace and sales channel management, accounting and inventory management at multiple warehouses are now a lot easier to do and much more efficient. Everything integrates well, from email marketing to SEO and marketplace connectors, and reporting is very strong. For an Australian business trying to expand, innovation is important because it keeps us relevant in the global marketplace.” ■



YOUR E-COMMERCE CHECKLIST

Tick it off! In part two you learned how to...



[] 1 Design your website Will you use a template or invest in bespoke design? Visit leading websites for ideas on current best practice.

[] 2 Define your brand Create an individual personality people will remember. Reflect your brand in the logo, colours, copy and more.

[] 3 Prepare your website copy Will you write the copy or hire a professional? Effective copy takes time, so plan early.

[] 4 Prepare your images Do you have authorised product shots from suppliers or will you need to take your own?

[] 5 Set up your product catalogue Plan your categories, product descriptions and page layouts to make each product easy to find.

[] 6 Check mobile responsiveness Many customers shop online with mobile devices. How will your website look and perform on a phone or tablet?

[] 7 Streamline checkout Prevent shopping cart abandonment. Make checkout simple, with as few steps/clicks as possible.

[] 8 Accept online payments Will you use PayPal, a payment gateway or both? Your website will also need to be secure.

[] 9 Develop policies for returns and guarantees How will you handle returns? Are you subject to safeguards such as PayPal Buyer Protection?

[] 10 Synchronise your product listings Do you list products and manage transactions on other sales platforms, such as eBay?

[] 11 Test the customer experience How quick and easy is it for new customers to use your website to find and buy the right product?

[] 12 Launch Check every page, image and line of copy for errors before pushing your new website live.

Whether you're just starting in e-commerce or looking for ways to improve your existing site, pick the e-book that's right for you.



OUR HANDY E-COMMERCE GUIDES WILL HELP YOU GET THERE

Find out how you can plan, build and promote your own online business with our *Definitive E-commerce Guides*, free to download courtesy of *Smarter* and *Neto*. Check out the other parts in the series ...

1 Talking Shop Plan your e-commerce business [\[link\]](#)

3 Top Shop Attract and win more e-commerce customers [\[link\]](#)

Checklist A full checklist to tick off for planning and launching a site [\[link\]](#)