



2022 ecommerce trends

Your guide to maximising sales,
cutting costs and improving efficiency

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01

Introduction

The world of ecommerce is changing rapidly. As consumers continue to drift away from the high street into the outstretched arms of ecommerce marketers, brands are upping their game.

Why show a picture of a pair of sunglasses when, with the help of AR technology, you can show the customer how they're going to look wearing them?

Why limit your reach to one country when, with a few tweaks to your website, you can target millions of additional customers abroad?

Why send a simple order confirmation email when, with the right incentives, you can turn your customers into global brand champions?

On the other side of the coin, businesses are grappling with the question of how they can fulfill their duty of care when it comes to sustainability and social responsibility. Today's customer does not simply want to buy stuff, they want to consume consciously, whilst upholding the values they subscribe to, and without needlessly increasing their carbon footprint.

As we move into 2022, ecommerce brands must leverage the latest digital trends whilst grappling with the bigger questions if they want to remain relevant to a fast-changing audience of online shoppers.





At Airwallex, we help ecommerce businesses expand into new markets by minimising the cost of foreign exchange, and providing digital solutions that make it cheaper and easier to trade across borders. We spoke to hundreds of business owners and consulted leading ecommerce experts to compile this guide.

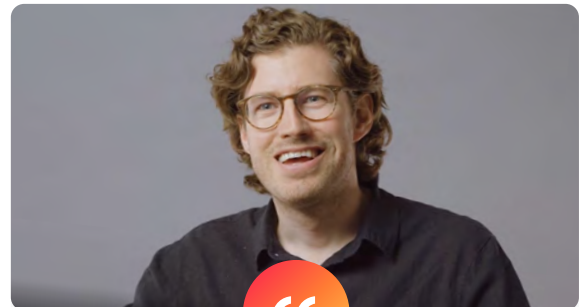
We hope you enjoy reading!

02 About Airwallex

Airwallex exists to help ecommerce businesses push into new markets domestically and internationally, by minimising the cost of FX fees, and helping companies manage their money across borders efficiently.

With a business account designed for forward-thinking ecommerce brands, you can access features and tools that not only improve your product margins, but help you take on the world.

-  **Global accounts:** receive, hold and send multiple currencies—including GBP, USD, Euro and Hong Kong Dollars—across borders with zero transaction fees. Funnel money from Amazon and PayPal into your global account to avoid paying excessive fees.
-  **Transfers:** pay just 0.5 - 1% + the interbank rate for currency exchange, 80% cheaper than high street banks.
-  **Online payments:** improve your ecommerce margins with a multi-currency payment gateway that integrates with your online store and charges less per transaction.
-  **Borderless cards:** pay for online ads and other international expenses with our borderless cards and eliminate hidden bank charges.



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“We used to pay Stripe between \$5,000 and \$10,000 a month in conversion fees because most of our customers pay in dollars. Now we funnel that money into our Airwallex US dollar account, we don’t have to pay commission. We’ve saved more than \$100,000 so far this year.”

Thomas Adams
Co-Founder and CEO

 **BRANDBASSADOR**



“Massively simplifies the challenge of doing business overseas”



“Enables businesses to manage cross-border payments easily and cheaply”



“Australia’s fastest growing \$1 billion dollar start up”



“Airwallex the highest ranked Australian firm at #32”
- Top Global 100 Fintech

03

Part 1: the biggest ecommerce marketing trends for 2022

Across the world, ecommerce sales have [risen by 27.6%](#) since 2020, and the global ecommerce market is now worth an eye watering \$4.89 trillion.

A big chunk of that uplift can be attributed to the pandemic, but that doesn't mean this trend is a flash in the pan. According to a survey by Reuters, 70% of British consumers now prefer buying online to shopping in-person. Indicating that, in the UK at least, the shift towards ecommerce is a permanent one.

Savvy brands are also looking for growth opportunities abroad, and with good reason. China represents the largest ecommerce market in the world, followed by the United States, and markets in India and Southeast Asia are growing at warp speed. Between 2021 and 2027, the cross-border ecommerce market is projected to grow at an [annual CAGR of 27%](#), reaching \$4,820 billion by 2026.

In short, the opportunity here is two-fold. Brands can capitalise on the influx of domestic shoppers, whilst looking farther afield towards a growing international market. The challenge is to stand out from the crowd, and build an online shopping experience that holds some of the personality and care that customers are used to enjoying in physical stores.

In this chapter, we'll outline the ecommerce marketing trends that will help brands achieve that balance in 2022.



Ambassador marketing

Five years ago, influencer marketing presented a shiny new way to reach millennial audiences, but it had its drawbacks. Brands soon realised that celebrity endorsement doesn't always lead to sales, and consumers grew tired of inauthentic promotions.

Whilst influencers still have their place, some marketers are shifting towards a new trend called 'ambassador marketing'. The premise of ambassador marketing is to nurture your loyal customers into brand advocates who will then promote your products online. The result is a more authentic style of social media marketing that capitalises on real connections, rather than celebrity glamour.

“

“The opportunity is for brands to get more involved with their customers and their fans on Instagram and Facebook. If you open the door for people to be a part of your brand, they'll give it back to you ten times.”



Thomas Adams

CEO of Brandbassador



Augmented reality

Not only do AR adverts make customers feel like they're in Blade Runner, they can also help improve brand awareness by as much as 70%, according to research from marketing agency Poplar.

AR has been around for a while, but businesses are only just tapping into its potential. Some great examples of AR advertising include Ikea, whose Studio App allows users to virtually redesign their homes. And Khol, who teamed up with Snapchat during the pandemic to allow shoppers to browse clothes in a virtual closet.



Voice search

Voice commerce is a growing market, particularly in the US where **42.7%** of the population **use a voice assistant** such as Alexa, Google Assistant or Siri.

According to UnivDatos Market Insights, the global voice assistance commerce market is expected to grow by 77.7% between 2021 - 2027 to reach \$1.3 trillion.

People use voice search in a different way to browser search, so it's wise to approach voice search optimisation in a slightly different way to standard SEO.

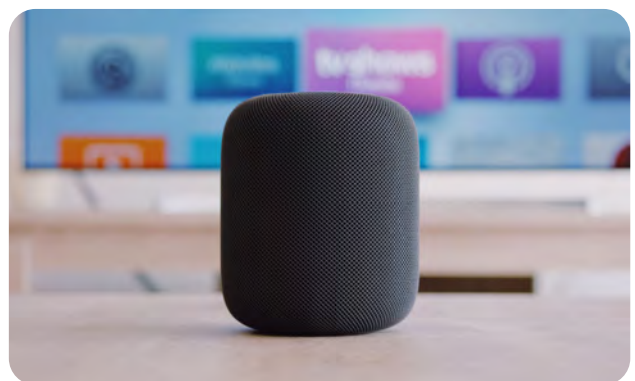
Focus on questions

Voice searches usually contain questions, so it's wise to hone in on why? what? where? keywords when writing content.

Use conversational language

Customers tend to speak to their voice assistants as they would to a person. Whilst a customer might type 'vegan makeup' into their browser, when speaking to their voice assistant they're more likely to say, 'where can I buy vegan makeup from?'

To optimise for voice search, keep filler words like 'from', 'buy', and 'can' in your headlines, and fill your content with long-tail keywords.



Optimise for Rich Answers

According to a SEMrush study, 70% of voice searches return a Rich Answer on Google. Rich Answers take the form of a featured snippet, which sits at the top of Google search results, or a knowledge panel, which sits to the right.

To increase your chances of being featured as a Rich Answer, structure your content so it concisely addresses particular questions. The length of your answers should be between 29 - 41 words with the main question being asked wrapped in an H2 heading. Including FAQs within your content is a good way to achieve this.

Cross-border marketing

Multinational ecommerce platforms like Amazon, Ebay and Etsy have opened the door for smaller businesses to build cross-border audiences with relative ease.

The growth opportunities are clear. **China** is currently the largest ecommerce market globally, with **\$2.78 trillion in online sales in 2021** according to Oberlo. The US is the second largest market, with Japan coming fourth after the UK.

An Airwallex survey found that 43% of UK businesses want to expand their overseas marketing activities in 2022. If you're one of them, here are some tips for building a successful campaign.

Be culturally sensitive

A quick Google search throws up some amusing examples of brands who failed to do their research before targeting overseas customers. Like the time Clairol tried to market their Mist Stick Curling Iron in Germany, without realising that 'mist' translates to 'manure' in German.

To avoid embarrassment, take some time to get to know the audience you're targeting. Take note of local holidays, online trends and slang, and where possible use local freelancers to build your content strategy.

Use local search engines and social media platforms

Whilst Google dominates the search engine market in Europe and the US, this is not the case for all countries. Baidu is the top search engine in China, accounting for over 76% of searches. In South Korea, Naver rules the roost, and in Russia it's Yandex.

WeChat and Qzone are the biggest social media platforms in China, whilst in Russia 83% of the country's social media users are on VKontakte (VK).

Advertising on local search engines and social media platforms will give your brand greater penetration within local markets.

Don't fall foul of local advertising laws

Some countries are stricter than others when it comes to advertising, so it pays to research the regulations thoroughly before writing your ads.

For example, if you're advertising in Dubai, you must ensure your adverts do not offend Islamic beliefs. Whilst in France, regulators are strict when it comes to hyperbole, and won't let you get away with phrases like 'the best', unless you can substantiate your claims.

Advertise in local currencies

Don't force your overseas customers to do FX calculations. Advertise to them in their local currencies for the best conversion results. Make sure you are upfront about additional shipping costs to avoid cart abandonment (more on this later).

Better yet, allow your overseas customers to pay in their home currency by integrating [Airwallex](#) into your online payment system. Collect local currencies into your global account without paying excessive fees.

Don't get caught out by FX fees

Payment gateways like PayPal, Shopify and Stripe tend to charge high currency exchange fees that can quickly eat into your profit margins. That's in addition to their standard transaction fees, which are higher for international cards.

You can avoid paying exchange fees by opening a global business bank account. Global accounts allow you to receive, hold and send money across borders in multiple currencies without charge.



Amazon optimisation

Amazon is the number one ecommerce platform globally, and serves as a fast route to gaining new customers at home and abroad. But to be successful, you need to crack Amazon's SEO algorithms.

Amazon's algorithm is different to Google's, so you should treat your Amazon product pages as separate entities.

Get reviews, and lots of them

Reviews play a significant role in search ranking and conversion on Amazon. Studies show that products with more Amazon reviews outperform products with fewer reviews, even when the products with fewer reviews have a higher average rating.

Amazon has some tricks to help you get more product reviews, including their Early Reviewer program, which incentivizes customers when they leave a review of your product.

You can also look at implementing a review automation tool to help drive your generation strategy, without the tedious task of manually requesting reviews on Seller Central.

Do your keyword research

You should include keywords in the title, subtitle, URL, description and meta-description of your product pages.

You can research keywords by typing your product name into the Amazon search bar, and seeing what Amazon suggests. You can also take inspiration from competitor product pages, as well as your Google keywords.

Use complementary products in your keywords

Using complementary product keywords will help you show up as a suggested item when customers search for relevant products.

For example, if you sell tennis balls, it's wise to include 'tennis racket', 'cricket bat' and 'dog toy' in your hidden keywords or bullet points.



Perfect your product description

Product descriptions should be detailed and long enough to include all relevant keywords. Focus on your USPs and use bullet points to communicate the benefits that your product provides to customers.

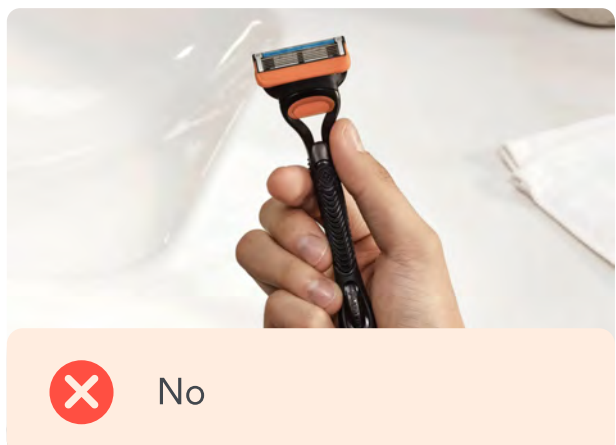
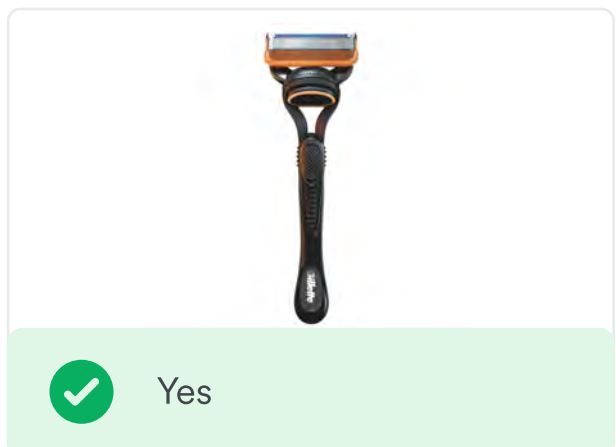
When selling on international Amazon marketplaces, make sure you use appropriate keywords for the region. These may differ even between English-speaking countries. In Australia, for example, flip-flops are called thongs!

To make sure you're getting your keywords right, look at the language your competitors use on international Amazon sites. You can also use Google trends to research the terms customers use when searching for your products around the world.

If you're selling in non-English-speaking countries, ask someone who is fluent in the local language to translate your product pages. Nothing breaks customer trust like a badly written product description, so don't rely on Google Translate!

Choose the right image

Amazon is strict about images, and will punish you with low rankings if you break the rules. Your main image should be of the core product only, displayed on a white background.



04

Part 2: website optimisation

Globally, average ecommerce conversion rates sit at 2.58%, but vary widely across industries, geographies and seasons. Wherever your website conversion rate stands, moving the dial by even a small amount can make a huge impact on your revenue.

There are plenty of digital solutions that can help you optimise your ecommerce site in 2022. When deciding which ones to use, think about your audience.

If your customers are used to high street shopping, what can you do to make their online experience more familiar?

If your audience cares about sustainability and social issues, how can you show them that you share their values?

If you're welcoming customers from international markets, how can you ensure your website caters to their needs?

Once you have the answers to these questions, you can turn your site into a place your customers will want to visit many times.

Improve your checkout

Customers who reach your checkout are your hottest leads, in many cases you've paid a lot of money to get them to this stage of their journey. And yet, according to data from the Baymard Institute, the **average cart abandonment rate** across industries is **69.57%**.

But don't despair, research suggests ecommerce brands can reduce cart abandonment by as much as 35.62% just by optimising their checkout.

Be upfront about your costs

Unexpected costs are the number one reason customers abandon their carts at checkout. Being transparent about your shipping and VAT costs throughout the customer journey will help you avoid a sudden drop off.

Allow customers to 'checkout as guest'

Being asked to create an account was flagged as the second most common reason for cart abandonment in the Baymard Institute's survey, with 24% of customers claiming they abandoned their carts for this reason.

Prompting loyal customers to create an account has its advantages, but there are plenty of casual shoppers who won't be bothered with the faff, so make sure you include a 'guest checkout' option.

Reduce your form fields

The general rule with checkout optimisation is: the less you ask the customer to do, the better. Cutting down form fields is an easy way to reduce friction.

Rather than having two separate fields for the customers' first and second name, combine them into one. Instead of having separate fields for house number and street name, combine them—you get the picture.

Remove unnecessary steps

According to data from Statista, 30% of customers will abandon their carts if they're asked to re-enter credit card details or shipping information.

You can tackle this problem by auto-populating form fields. Google Autocomplete integrates with platforms like Shopify and WooCommerce, and will auto-populate fields as your customer checks out.

Research suggests ecommerce brands can reduce cart abandonment by as much as 35.62% just by optimising their checkout.

Allow customers to pay the way they want

Make sure you provide your customers with payment options that suit their needs. 8% of shoppers cite a lack of payment options as the reason for cart abandonment.

The best checkouts have several payment options, including credit and debit card, PayPal, and Apple and Google Pay.

Research suggests that allowing international customers to pay in their local currency can cut cart abandonment rates amongst international shoppers by up to 50%. Integrate Airwallex's multi-currency payment gateway into your ecommerce site and start accepting local currencies cheaply and easily.



Minimise merchant fees

Optimising your website isn't just about improving conversion rate. By minimising the merchant fees associated with online sales, you can generate more revenue for your business.

Choose the right payment gateways

PayPal charges 2.9% + £0.30 for domestic transactions, and up to 4.9% + £0.30 for international transactions.

The **Airwallex Online Payments solution** is considerably cheaper, charging just **1.3% + £0.20 for European cards and 2.8% + £0.20 for international cards.**

Including PayPal in your payment options can aid conversion, so we're not suggesting you remove it from your checkout altogether. But it is wise to include a range of alternative payment options which are easier on your bottom line.

Airwallex integrates seamlessly with your online store, as well as with Apple Pay and Google Pay, helping you minimise fees on domestic and international transactions. What's more, Airwallex allows you to collect multiple currencies into your account, without the tedious task of opening multiple local bank accounts.

Use a global business account to avoid excessive FX fees

Payment gateways like PayPal, Shopify and Amazon Pay charge high exchange fees on foreign currencies. That's in addition to their standard transaction fees, which are higher for international cards.

You can avoid paying exchange fees by funneling your money into a global business bank account. Global business accounts, like Airwallex, allow you to receive, hold and send money across borders in multiple currencies without excessive fees.

This is helpful if you have international customers and suppliers. You can collect USD from your American customers, hold that money in your global account, and use it to pay American suppliers, all whilst paying zero exchange fees.

If you do wish to exchange currencies, choose an account provider that can offer you the best FX rate. Airwallex offers an exchange rate of 0.5 - 1% above the interbank rate, more than 50% cheaper than Stripe, Amazon, Shopify or PayPal.



Augmented reality (again)

AR gets a second mention here because it really is a game-changer.

Shopify reported that websites that allow users to view products in 3D using AR technology can increase conversion by as much as 250%. And when L’Oreal launched a feature that allowed customers to try on makeup using AR, they tripled their conversions.

AR bridges the gap between online and in-person shopping. Used correctly, it can provide customers with a memorable experience that gets them excited about your brand.



Customer service

Offering excellent customer service is the best way to get the edge over competitors, so it’s remarkable how many ecommerce businesses fall down in this area.

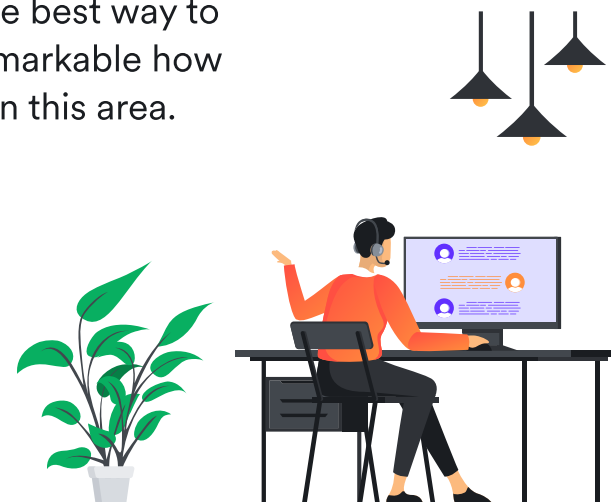
Here’s how you can improve your customer service in 2022.

Join up your communication channels

If a customer has a query, don’t make them repeat it. Manage all your customer communications across channels from a central hub using a social suite such as Khoros or Zendesk.

Use AI chatbots for FAQs

The benefit of using a chatbot is that it can answer questions 24/7. Chatbots are designed to recognise several forms of the same question, and should be used to answer simple FAQs.



Use live chat

Chatbots are great, but nothing can replace a human conversation. Escalate more complex customer queries to a live chat. If you don’t have the resource, you can use an outsourced solution to ensure customers are responded to instantaneously.

Site load speed

This old chestnut.

Improving site load time might not be the sexiest ecommerce trend, but it really is essential. Having a slow website negatively impacts everything from your search engine ranking to the cost of your PPC ads, and it can have a devastating effect on conversion.

According to marketing agency Portent, website conversion drops by an average of 4.42% with each additional second of load time.

Here are the best ways to improve your website speed in 2022.

Use a Content Delivery Network (CDN)

Rather than relying on a centralised server to deliver website content to users, CDNs use a network of servers distributed across the globe. That means that wherever your customers are in the world, your website content will load quickly.

If you're pushing into international markets in 2022, a CDN is essential.

Upgrade your website host

As your company grows, so will your data needs. Make sure you have a web host that can keep up with your traffic. The last thing you want is a website crash during peak periods like Black Friday and January sales.

Minify your website code

You probably already know that high res images and videos increase page load times, and should be compressed. Unnecessary Javascript, CSS and HTML code has the same effect. To optimise website speed, you should remove redundant code from your site. This process is called [“minifying”](#).



Don't use redirects

Redirects increase site load time and should be used sparingly. Be sure to update internal links from articles and other areas of your site to the new destination URL whenever a page is updated.

Enable browser caching

When a user first visits your site, every component has to be downloaded by their browser. If you enable caching, these components will be stored in their hard drive, and won't need to be downloaded next time they visit. Enabling cache will speed up website load time for both new and returning visitors, because they put less strain on your servers.



Sustainability and social responsibility

Most marketing trends are about doing more. But sustainability and social responsibility is all about stepping back and, if not doing less, and least doing things consciously.

Today's consumers are looking to buy from brands that fit their values, and are quick to call out signs of greenwashing and inauthenticity.

Krissie Claire, the co-founder of MindfulCommerce says: "One of the most important things that a brand can focus on at the moment is their stance on sustainability. The rise in conscious consumerism is huge and it's so important for the planet. If you're using influencer marketing to reach new audiences, you can tap into sustainable influencers and talk more about your values as a brand to attract the conscious consumer."

Here are a few ways you can improve your relationship with conscious consumers in 2022, whilst genuinely doing your bit.

Try a low impact website

Ok, this one might not be for everyone, but for brands with sustainability at their core, low impact websites are an innovative way to reduce energy consumption, whilst starting a conversation with your audience.

Low impact websites load only the most crucial programming scripts and use images sparingly, reducing energy waste and lowering their carbon footprint. This example from [Organic Basics](#) reduced data transfer by 70% versus their normal website.



Give back

Give customers the opportunity to support a cause that matters to them when they shop with you.

Companies like ShoppingGives integrate with your website and allow customers to donate to a charity when they make a purchase. Brands who allow customers to give back often see an uplift in customer loyalty and transaction rates.

Body positivity and representation

If you want to appeal to a wide range of customers, make sure those customers are represented on your website!





A website that isn't diverse, inclusive and body positive will stick out like a sore thumb in 2022, so make sure you keep yours up to date.

05

What's next?

We hope this guide has given you the insight and inspiration you need to super-charge your ecommerce business in 2022.

As your business grows, Airwallex can help you spend less on merchant fees, and more on giving your customers the best experience possible.

-  **Global accounts:** receive, hold and send multiple currencies—including GBP, USD, Euros and Hong Kong Dollars—across borders with zero transaction fees. Funnel money from Amazon and PayPal into your global account to avoid paying excessive fees.
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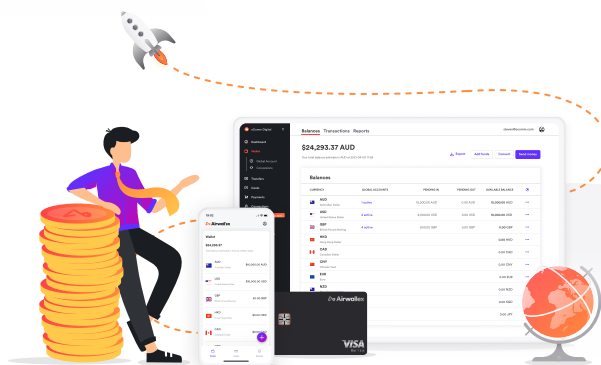


“Expanding into international markets such as the US has been our focus, and with Airwallex, we were able to use their local USD Global Account to collect from our PayPal US account, thereby allowing us to save 3% on each transaction”

Meera Patel
Finance Manager

ME+EM

Get started with zero monthly account fees



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