

Ecommerce Cost



Many businesses have made the decision to create an online storefront this year. In fact, shopping online is one of the most popular reasons people use the internet. [Statista](#) reports that in 2023, ecommerce sales brought in more than \$5.7 trillion globally. That number is expected to jump to more than \$8 trillion by 2027. Statistics like these make investing in ecommerce seem like a no-brainer.

But there are costs associated with going online. In this article, we'll take a look at what you should consider before making any decisions and how to calculate additional costs for your online store.

Pricing depends on your business needs

The right ecommerce platform is just like the foundation of a building. Just as a building's strength and functionality depend on its base, an ecommerce website's stability depends on the platform's alignment with your unique business needs.

A clear understanding of your target audience, product range, sales volume, budget, and long-term goals is paramount in making an informed decision. Without this fundamental knowledge, selecting a platform that truly empowers your business becomes a daunting challenge.

Unique functionality requirements.

Depending on your business and what product you're selling, you may require unique functionality requirements from your ecommerce platform. These can include:

Personalization features

You may offer a product with a variety of configurations or personalization options. From a development perspective, this could mean using a lot of resources on product pages and other areas of your online business. BigCommerce customer [Ventum Racing](#) created a unique bike builder on their site that allows customers to create their dream bike using real-time inventory information.

Advanced search and filtering options

If your business has hundreds of thousands of SKUs and product variations, your customers could benefit from advanced search and filtering options on your site. This could be especially useful for business-to-business (B2B) sellers whose customers need to ensure they're purchasing the right product when they need it, like [London Tile Company](#).

Advanced analytics and reporting

If your marketing and sales teams live and breathe data, you'll want to look for an ecommerce platform that works with some of the latest and greatest data gathering software. BigCommerce works directly with Google to integrate [BigQuery](#) with our backend, giving businesses easy-to-use, powerful data gathering solutions right at their fingertips.

Complex integrations.

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While your functionality requirements may need new, custom solutions, you may want to find an ecommerce solution that works with existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, product inventory management (PIM) tools, and customer resource management (CRM) solutions.

You've spent valuable time and money uploading product, sales, and customer data into your existing tech stack, so it may benefit your business to find something that integrates easily with the systems you've already invested so much in.

In-house costs vs agencies.

Developing an ecommerce website can be tackled in two primary ways: through an [external agency](#) or an internal development team. Agencies offer specialized expertise, scalability, and a fresh perspective, often accelerating development timelines.

However, the overall cost of agencies might be higher, and they may lack deep brand understanding that you get with an internal team. But any agency should work on a cost estimate to send to the business owners along with their proposal for your site.

In-house teams provide greater control, cost-efficiency, and long-term ownership, but might require significant upfront investment in talent and resources. The optimal choice depends on your business needs, like project complexity, budget, timeline, and internal capabilities.

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General ecommerce website costs

Websites can have a variety of costs associated with them, from initial startup costs to platform subscriptions and general maintenance and upkeep. Let's take a look at some of these general ecommerce website costs and see what they could mean for your business.

Ecommerce software costs.

Ecommerce solutions range in costs depending on their out-of-box features, the type of software they offer and their level of service. There are [several platforms to choose from](#), and choosing the right one is an important step in opening an ecommerce store.

Domain name costs.

Your domain name will be an annual cost unless you're able to pay for a few years upfront. [Purchasing a domain name typically costs between \\$2 and \\$20 per year, according to GoDaddy](#). The price depends on where you purchase it from and the extension you get, such as .com or .shop. Purchasing from a private seller or through an auction will usually be more expensive.

Ecommerce hosting costs.

Once you register a domain name, it's time to [find a web host](#). Solutions such as BigCommerce and [Shopify](#) are hosted on the cloud and offer web hosting as part of the subscription. That means you won't have to hunt for third-party hosting or deal with the challenges of managing it.

Self hosting costs

If you want to self-host your ecommerce store, you're going to have a number of different costs associated. First, you'll have the costs associated with creating the solution, like servers and dedicated physical space. Then you'll have the costs associated with maintenance, security, and more. Add to that the complexity of the solution and the individuals you'll need to hire specifically to manage the solution, and you're looking at quite a steep startup cost.

SaaS platform hosting costs

On the other hand, businesses can partner with a hosting provider to host their ecommerce storefront, which can [range from \\$80-\\$730 per month](#). Depending on your CMS or ecommerce software, different companies offer a number of solutions to host a site, provide security, and even updates. The costs associated with these SaaS hosting solutions often depend on a variety of factors, like website traffic or sales per month.

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SSL certificate costs.

An SSL certificate ranges in price from [\\$20 - \\$70 per year](#). While this may be one of the least inexpensive parts of your online store, it provides the security over a network that you'll need for customers to visit and shop on your website. Sometimes, search engines use an SSL certificate as a ranking factor, too. Some hosting solutions offer this as part of their fee, so keep that in mind.

Data import costs.

This ensures all of the information stored on your site will be kept safe, no matter what. Without regular [data backups](#), you could lose money and even customers. Costs surrounding data backup usually depend on the [size of your site files](#).

Payment processor costs.

It's easy to overlook the costs associated with payment processing, but they can add up fast. Payment processing costs depend on the type of payments you want to offer during checkout — such as PayPal or various credit cards — the type of currency you'll accept, and regions where you'll be selling.

You'll pay fees to each payment gateway you want to offer. Here's an example of [how it breaks down](#):

- [PayPal Checkout](#): 3.49% + a fixed fee based on transaction location
- [Stripe Standard](#): 2.9% + \$0.30 per transaction.
- [Authorize.net](#) – 2.9% + \$0.30 per transaction + \$25 monthly fee.

This doesn't include any fees that might come from your bank. In reviewing the overall costs for [payment processing](#), WooCommerce and BigCommerce offer the lowest prices in general. They also provide some of the most flexible options for accepting payments.

Costs associated with building an ecommerce store

Once you have your basic foundation set up, it's time to create the site itself. Let's take a look at some of the costs associated with building an ecommerce store, like web development, design costs, and more.

Backend web development costs.

Backend web development handles the complex operations that occur behind the scenes of your site. It involves building the server-side logic, databases, and APIs that power the user interface. Costs for back-end development can vary widely based on a variety of factors, like project complexity, required technologies, developer expertise, and location.

Platforms with robust API integrations like BigCommerce may be able to alleviate some of these challenges, and platforms like WooCommerce may be able to help brands connect with other databases using add-ons like plugins. But fully-open-source platforms like Magento may require more custom development work.

Frontend web design costs.

All of the major ecommerce solutions have ecommerce website design themes you can choose from. Some themes may not cost anything extra than what you're already paying to use the platform, while other themes may range in price from [\\$60-\\$200 each](#). You could also hire a developer to create a custom design for your site, which could be quite a bit more costly.

Stores hosted on BigCommerce have access to a variety of [free and premium themes](#) to use. Cornerstone is BigCommerce's most popular theme, which is optimized for sales and discounts, large catalogs, multi-purpose, and mobile, tablet, and desktop. Businesses which use platforms like Magento or WordPress may have to create custom features and functionality with web developers, designers, or plugins.

UI/UX design costs.

User interface (UI) and user experience (UX) design is the science behind creating custom websites that are both visually appealing and user-friendly. UX focuses on the overall experience of interacting with a website, while UI concentrates on the visual elements and layout.

Investing in high-quality UX/UI design can significantly impact a website's success by increasing user engagement and conversions. The cost of UX/UI design varies based on project complexity, designer expertise, and the scope of work. While basic designs may be relatively affordable,

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complex projects with extensive user research and prototyping can require heavy up-front investment.

Agency costs.

The cost of having a developer [build your ecommerce site](#) all depends on the features you need to run a successful ecommerce business. If you're looking for options that are not out-of-the-box, you might consider hiring a professional [ecommerce website development agency](#) to create a site for you.

Development agencies can do the following:

- Backend web development
- Frontend web design
- UI/UX design
- Ecommerce services
- Mobile app design
- Digital strategy
- Custom software development

Custom software development.

Custom software development for ecommerce websites allows businesses to create customized online functionality based on their specific needs. By creating bespoke software, businesses can gain a competitive edge through unique features, improved performance, and enhanced security.

However, this level of customization comes at a premium. Costs for custom development are typically higher than using off-the-shelf platforms due to the time, expertise, and resources required. The overall expense will depend on the software's complexity, the size of the development team, and ongoing maintenance requirements.

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Ongoing ecommerce costs to consider

Ongoing website maintenance and management is an often overlooked but critical aspect of ecommerce success. Costs for this encompass a range of expenses, including hosting fees, domain registration, domain name renewals, SSL certificates, security updates, content management, performance optimization, and technical support.

While some tasks can be handled in-house, complex issues or the need for specialized expertise may require outsourcing, which can significantly impact overall costs. Regular budgeting for maintenance is essential to ensure website uptime, security, and optimal performance.

Data backups.

Data backups ensure that all of the information stored on your site will be kept safe, no matter what. Without regular [data backups](#), you run the risk of losing valuable development hours, customer data, and even transactions. Costs surrounding data backup usually depend on the [size of your site files](#).

Inventory management.

An online store is going to have some sort of [inventory](#) associated with it, along with shipping costs, even if these are handled through a third party.

Security.

In addition to your SSL certificate, you'll want [security software](#) to protect your business and its information from outside threats. This is usually a monthly, subscription-based fee.

Marketing.

Regular communication with potential and current customers can help maintain your revenue stream. Some email marketing solutions may have free plans or a monthly cost, depending on the size of your email contacts list.

Other digital marketing efforts such as [SEO](#), pay-per-click (PPC) ads, and social media will require a budget of some sort. Product marketing will help increase your brand awareness to direct traffic to your online store.

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The final word

The costs associated with building an ecommerce website vary widely from business to business, store to store, and company to company. One online retailer may choose to develop their entire site with custom functionality, raising the total cost, while another small business may choose to use website builders to lower their total ecommerce website development cost. Truly, the cost of an ecommerce website comes down to your business and your specific need.

If you need help finding a solution that's right for you, [talk to one of our experts](#) to learn more about the variety of plans and services that BigCommerce offers.

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FAQs about ecommerce website pricing

What are average payment processing costs?

Average payment processing costs for online stores typically range from 2% to 3.5% of the transaction amount, plus a per-transaction fee. However, these costs can vary widely based on factors such as the payment processor, card type, transaction volume, and chosen pricing model (flat-rate, interchange-plus, or subscription). Plus, some payment processors charge monthly or annual fees. It's essential to compare different processors and pricing plans to find the most cost-effective option for your specific business.

What is the most costly part of having an ecommerce site?

The most costly part of having an ecommerce site really depends on the type of solution you choose, and what kind of business you run. For some, the most costly part might be routine upkeep and site maintenance. For others, the most costly aspect may be developing custom ecommerce functionality, and the internal or agency costs associated with it.

How much does it cost to design a website?

The cost to design an ecommerce website can vary widely depending on several factors:

- Platform** Using a pre-built platform like Shopify, Wix, or Squarespace can be more budget-friendly, while custom development is typically more expensive.
- Design complexity** A simple, template-based design will be less costly than a fully custom, high-end design.
- Features** The number and complexity of features, such as payment gateways, inventory management, and shipping calculations, will impact the overall cost.
- Developer or agency** Hiring a freelance designer or developer is generally less expensive than working with a full-service agency. But costs depend on an extremely wide number of factors. The truth is you could spend anywhere from a few hundred dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars on your site. It really just depends on your specific business need.

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