

Finding the Best Ecommerce Website Builder (and What to Consider)



These days, your [online store](#) is often the first — and most influential — touchpoint customers have with your brand. And with [nearly 93% of US consumers expected to shop online by 2027](#), choosing the right ecommerce website builder isn't just a growth decision — not just a tech decision.

An **ecommerce website builder** is a platform that gives you the tools to design, manage, and scale an online store without needing a development team. The right one helps you build a beautiful, fast, reliable site that converts shoppers into customers and supports your business as it expands.

In this guide, we'll compare leading platforms, including:

- BigCommerce
- Shopify

- WooCommerce
- Squarespace
- Wix
- Volusion
- PrestaShop
- Weebly

From scalability to support to essential integrations, we'll walk through what truly matters when choosing the best ecommerce website builder for your business.

What types of businesses benefit from an online store builder?

Whether you're selling physical products or digital products, an ecommerce store is essential for increasing sales and establishing your online presence. Thankfully, there's a store builder designed for almost every type of entrepreneur.

1. New businesses.

If you're just starting out, using an **online store builder** is a way to launch without compromising on quality or performance.

These platforms make the process seamless, providing essential tools like [mobile optimisation](#), a robust search engine, and [great SEO capabilities](#) so customers can easily find and use your ecommerce site. It's a smart way for new small business owners to get started.

2. Growing startups.

As a [startup](#), you can't afford to waste time or money on solutions that don't immediately help you scale.

The ideal ecommerce store builder acts as a partner, providing both a platform to grow with and the advanced functionality needed to showcase your products, such as cross-channel commerce and custom checkout options.

The goal is a successful website that makes your work simpler and smarter through countless compatible [app integrations](#).

3. Hobbyist sites.

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Think of your hobby as a serious online business.

Many find that their side projects eventually form the bulk of their income. This doesn't mean your side business is unworthy of a professional, simplified shopping experience. The best site builders offer convenience and quality, allowing you to easily optimise and make adjustments whenever you see fit.

4. Dropshipping sites.

To successfully build and run a dropshipping business, you'll need to craft a store compatible with that business plan. Even if you're not a part of inventory management and working with a wholesaler to purchase products, you need a unique solution that can help you do just that.

[Dropshipping can be a complement to a traditional ecommerce business model](#) and, with a dedicated, built store, can elevate small businesses that cannot rely on their own supply/

Apps like [Inventory Source](#), [Printful](#), and [AliExpress Dropshipping](#) should be able to integrate with your store, making setting up and managing a dropshipping store easy. These apps will sync to your store and allow you to add and sell items with ease.

5. Established businesses.

For large or small business owners, one of the biggest challenges is scalability.

The right ecommerce website builder solves this, growing alongside your company and allowing you to effortlessly combine several different types of online income streams into a single ecommerce site. This elevation works whether you sell [physical products](#), services, or digital solutions.

6. Private-labelled products business.

Similar to dropshipping, the right ecommerce website presents an excellent opportunity to build a business to sell products and services from different vendors. By connecting with multiple vendors or wholesalers, companies can sell a number of products on their site.

[Private label products](#) are manufactured by one company for sale under another's brand. This involves purchasing products from different retailers and branding them prior to going on your site.

Through an ecommerce website, this process is simple and easy. With the right site builder, it becomes a breeze.

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Choosing the best ecommerce site builder

When you're ready to commit to a platform, a simple checklist can save you immense headaches down the road. Instead of just picking the flashiest name, you should treat this process like hiring a key employee: ask tough questions to find the one that fits your long-term goals.

Here are the critical questions to consider when evaluating your options:

Is it within your budget?

The sticker price for a subscription is just the beginning of your pricing equation.

You need to consider how the platform's monthly or annual structure works with your budget, especially if you anticipate high sales volumes. Platforms that offer different tiers and packages, like [BigCommerce](#), allow you to scale up as your business grows.

Critically, look for hidden fees. BigCommerce, for instance, provides transparent pricing without the hidden transaction fees that can quietly balloon your overall costs on other platforms. The platform's out-of-the-box functionality can also save merchants roughly \$5,800– \$30,000+ per year by reducing the need for countless paid app subscriptions.

Can the site be built within your time frame?

Time is money, especially in online business.

If you have a set launch date, you must ensure your chosen website builder can accommodate it. For complex custom build-outs, developer work can take weeks or even months.

Look for platforms that offer [dedicated support and resources](#), such as virtual training and [launch coaches](#), who can guide you through the setup process from start to finish. This approach helps you speed through the process and ensure you're prepared for your first sale.

Do you like the available templates?

Your storefront needs to look professional and reflect your brand's identity.

Explore the available templates for each ecommerce site builder you're considering. If you don't like the stock options, you might need a custom theme, which can be expensive and time-intensive.

Platforms like BigCommerce provide access to dozens of [curated, fully responsive templates](#) for every industry, ensuring your brand has a competitive edge. Whether you're working in fashion,

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or health and beauty, there's something for everyone. Choose from a wide selection of carefully curated, fully responsive designs to give your brand an edge over the competition.

How customisable is it?

The depth of customisation is key to differentiation.

Look for a builder that provides the tools and features to make your **ecommerce site** your own, especially if you plan to integrate third-party plugins, add-ons, or tools like chatbots.

Visual editors and no-code tools, such as [BigCommerce's Catalyst](#), let you change your site's look and feel without additional **coding**.

Does it integrate with the applications you need?

Integrations are what help you save time and simplify the complexities around running your online business, so make sure your **ecommerce website** connects effortlessly with all your core software:

- **Marketing:** Tools for email marketing (like [Klaviyo](#) or [Mailchimp](#)), lead capture, and loyalty programmes.
- **Operations and logistics:** Inventory control, shipping label generation (like [ShipStation](#)), and fulfilment.
- **Analytics:** Platforms like [Google Analytics](#), Kissmetrics, or [Glew](#) that provide deep customer and performance data.

Do they have support to help you build it?

Building an ecommerce store involves complexities, and there is nothing worse than being stuck without answers.

[Live, consistent tech support](#) is non-negotiable. Look for a builder with dedicated support staff and an extensive knowledge base. BigCommerce, for example, offers industry-leading, live support 24/7 via chat, email, and US-based phone support, giving you confidence every step of the way.

Can it do everything you need, without a developer?

If you're *not* looking to hire a developer to help you build out custom elements of your online store, you'll need to make sure your site builder lets you do everything you need it to — all on your own.

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Create a checklist of your must-have features, and be sure the options you select tick all the boxes. Look for [out-of-the-box, drag-and-drop functionality](#) that lets you customise your ecommerce site easily.

How do I evaluate scalability?

Scalability is a serious discussion — it means your platform can handle explosive growth without breaking, which is exactly what a great **ecommerce store** should do.

Ask these questions to determine a platform's true scalability:

- **Peak performance:** Can the platform handle massive traffic and orders during peak sales periods like [Black Friday](#)? The right builder grows alongside the company, expanding as needed.
- **Catalogue depth:** Will adding thousands of new products or complex product attributes slow down your site? Large catalogues and high-traffic needs are often where simpler builders can hit variant caps.

Can I integrate my website builder with offline (in-store) sales or point-of-sale systems?

Unifying your online and physical sales is key to an omnichannel strategy. A modern ecommerce platform should support point-of-sale [POS integrations](#) for:

- **Real-time syncing:** Managing both in-person and online stock levels instantly to prevent overselling.
- **Centralised data:** Combining customer purchase history from all sales channels.
- **Flexibility:** Supporting fulfilment options like "buy online, pick up in-store."

Top ecommerce website builders

Now that you have an idea of what makes an ecommerce store builder great, it's time to take a look at the top platforms to put together a shortlist of the options that make the most sense for you.

Here is a comparison of 11 of the [best ecommerce website](#) builders on the market:

Ecommerce
Website Builder

Pros

Cons

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BigCommerce	• Built for scalability and high-volume sales. • No transaction fees on any plan. • Robust built-in B2B and multi-channel selling tools, including native support for Amazon and Google Shopping. • Fully hosted Open SaaS solution with top-tier security. • User-friendly interface with fast setup.	• Slightly steeper learning curve than basic builders. • Advanced customisation may require developer support.
Shopify	• Extensive app marketplace for add-ons. • Excellent mobile optimisation and an official POS system with hardware. • Strong built-in growth tools and native AI features. • Free, open-source plugin for WordPress, offering maximum design flexibility and control.	• Transaction fees unless using Shopify Payments. • Many essential features rely on paid apps. • Strict product option and variant caps per product.
WooCommerce	• Excellent if you already have an existing WordPress site. • Clearer interface than many other open-source builders. Strong basic SEO tools.	• Scaling can become costly and time-consuming as additional features rely on paid extensions or plugins. • Requires separate hosting and security management.
Wix	• Intuitive drag-and-drop design tools and easy setup. • Affordable for small business owners and entrepreneurs. • Offers omnichannel selling features and abandoned cart recovery.	• Not ideal for large product catalogues or high-traffic sites due to limited scalability. • Fewer advanced ecommerce features compared to Shopify or BigCommerce.

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	• Used largely by the creative community, offering professional templates for art, video, or music products.	• Selling products requires the Business Basic plan. • Primarily a content management system; less powerful for pure ecommerce than competitors.
Squarespace	• Easy and intuitive theme customisation (often without needing to tweak code). • Great for beginner merchants and smaller businesses. • Simple onboarding process and affordable pricing plans for small businesses and beginners.	• Does not provide phone support. • POS requires a third-party integration (Square). • Not known for being user-friendly; HTML or CSS knowledge is often required for customisation.
Volusion	• Offers native SEO features to help increase your ranking. • Supports subscription products. • Exceptional visual design and animation freedom (ideal for bespoke, design-first sites).	• Lacks native blogging functionality. • Steeper learning curve compared to most pure website builder platforms.
Webflow	• No plugins required for core site functionality, leading to a more stable experience. • Strong built-in SEO capabilities.	• Ecommerce features are underpowered compared to Shopify or BigCommerce. • Limited advanced inventory or subscription features.
Divi (Theme/Builder)	• Highly customisable, user-friendly drag-and-drop editor for WordPress. • Affordable licence for the entire product portfolio. • Thousands of pre-made designs and layouts.	• Relies on shortcodes, which is inconvenient if you want to switch themes later. • The Builder can be slow or glitchy with very complex layouts.

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Elementor (Plugin)	• Supports seamless WooCommerce and email marketing integrations. • Easy-to-use visual drag-and-drop plugin. • Excellent integration with WooCommerce for customising product displays and checkout.	• Can increase page size and negatively impact page load speed compared to native WordPress pages.
	• Great value for the Pro version (which unlocks key ecommerce features like Theme Builder). • Free, open-source ecommerce platform.	• Many powerful ecommerce features are only available on the paid Pro version. • Requires separate hosting and security management.
PrestaShop	• Can pay for add-ons and plugins to make it work for your online business. • Supports 300,000 merchants globally. • For small business owners with limited web development experience, Weebly offers a user-friendly interface and easy setup.	• Can become complex and costly to scale with added plugins.
Weebly	• Provides several free design templates for those on a budget.	• May not be able to keep up with your business's growth due to its limited functionality. • Only offers simple photo-editing and blogging tools.

What makes the best site builder?

With so many ecommerce site builders available — from ultra-simple drag-and-drop tools to platforms built for developers — it's important to understand what truly sets a *great* builder apart.

No matter your experience level, the best platforms share a few core traits.

Ease of use.

Site management should be an easy process for any user, not one that makes you want to pull your hair out.

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A solution dependant on a vendor's support staff is not always the best option, especially since development teams are often a luxury that not all businesses can afford. Selecting a store builder that you can use on your own is therefore both important and necessary.

BigCommerce understands this and offers simple, native tools to manage your store. With out-of-the-box features designed to make your life easier, your business can spend less time stuck in the minutia of the site and more selling new products.

Features that actually help you grow.

Not all features are created equal. The best platforms give you tools that directly support sales, marketing, and operations — so you can focus on growth, not workarounds.

These might include:

- Built-in SEO tools
- Abandoned cart recovery
- Multichannel selling (Amazon, Google Shopping, social platforms)
- Customisable checkout options

With BigCommerce, many of these essentials are built in rather than spread across dozens of paid apps — which also helps keep your tech stack clean.

Beautiful, flexible templates.

Just because you aren't an expert with HTML and CSS or don't have a development team doesn't mean you don't deserve a brilliant ecommerce website.

The best ecommerce website builders provide a plethora of [themes and templates](#) to choose from, often categorised by function or industry.

Example: A skincare brand might want a clean, airy layout with strong imagery, while a hardware retailer might prefer a bold, structured template with room for technical details. A strong builder gives you both options.

A price that fits your budget.

SaaS pricing can be tricky — monthly fees, app add-ons, transaction costs, payment processing fees. The right platform should give you clear, predictable pricing.

Consider:

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- Whether essential features require paid apps
- If transaction fees apply
- How pricing scales as your revenue grows

BigCommerce offers [multiple tiers with transparent pricing](#), so your costs stay aligned with your business stage.

Secure systems for payments.

Your customers need to feel that their information — from their credit card number to their mailing address — is secure while making a purchase.

Be sure to select a builder that not only offers safe payment options but offers customers multiple ways to pay. With BigCommerce's site builder, you can implement your choice of [payment providers](#), choosing from more than 65 pre-integrated online payment processors, including [Apple Pay](#), [Amazon Pay](#), [PayPal](#), and [Stripe](#).

Ecommerce site builders vs. custom build

Building a custom ecommerce website from scratch might sound like a way to save money or gain complete control, but for most small business owners, it's far more complex, costly, and time-consuming than it's worth. Proprietary builds require technical expertise, infrastructure, and ongoing maintenance — resources many entrepreneurs simply don't have.

For most businesses, an all-in-one ecommerce website builder is the smarter choice. Here's why:

Lower upfront costs.

The financial barrier to entry for a [custom-built ecommerce store](#) is high, often requiring significant investment in developers, hosting infrastructure, and specialised security certification.

By working with a reliable store builder, you limit your costs primarily to platform subscriptions and paid plans, avoiding the need for a dedicated, in-house development team.

Extensive support and community.

Unlike a custom site, builders offer robust support networks:

- 24/7 live customer support

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- [Knowledge bases](#) and step-by-step tutorials
- Community forums where other users share tips

This safety net ensures you're never stuck on your own, reducing costly downtime and frustrating trial-and-error learning.

Beginner-friendly.

Building a store on your own can provide you with ample learning opportunities to better understand the world of ecommerce, but it is a process with a steep learning curve. It takes time — time many companies can't afford.

Instead of investing in a custom site when you're just beginning, using a store builder is a great way to set up a fully functioning ecommerce store while skipping the inevitable learning curve. These platforms offer intuitive dashboard interfaces that make site management accessible to all business owners.

Tutorials, guides and help forums.

Like the community of users and customer support options, the best ecommerce site builders will have ample resources for you to learn from. Nothing is more frustrating than looking for tutorials or guides and not being able to find anything.

You are on your own with a custom site. If you have questions or there are guides you need, your options are limited to what you know or what you can find for free online.

With an ecommerce site builder like BigCommerce, you can find online resources that will guide you step by step through using features, setting up your store or troubleshooting issues.

Secure, fully integrated systems.

Security is non-negotiable. Builders offer:

- SSL encryption
- PCI-compliant payment gateways
- Pre-integrated payment options (Apple Pay, PayPal, Stripe)
- Reliable backups and hosting

With a custom site, these responsibilities fall entirely on you. A reputable builder ensures your business and your customers are protected.

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Tools to automate and optimise.

Modern ecommerce platforms provide essential marketing tools that go beyond basic features.

Look for platforms that include or support [AI tools](#) and AI-powered functionality to automate tasks like generating compelling [product descriptions](#), running targeted email campaigns, and calculating precise shipping options. These features help optimise your processes and connect your shop to social media and other sales channels.

Branding and custom domains.

A professional brand requires a professional presence.

An ecommerce website builder makes it simple to register or [connect your chosen domain name](#) and establish a branded custom domain for your business name. You maintain full control over your look and feel while benefiting from the platform's reliable infrastructure.

The final word

Picking the right ecommerce website builder is one of the most important choices you'll make for your business. Your website is often a customer's first impression — and with [97% of customers saying websites influence their purchases](#), your platform needs to deliver.

The landscape can feel crowded, but the goal is simple: choose a solution that's reliable, scalable, and easy to build on. One that lets you launch quickly, grow confidently, and stay focused on serving your customers.

[BigCommerce](#) does exactly that. With powerful features, strong performance, and the support you need along the way, it takes the complexity out of building a high-performing online store.

If you're ready to take the next step, you'll find everything you need to grow (and keep growing) right here.

FAQs for ecommerce website builders

How much does it cost to build an ecommerce website?

The total cost to build an ecommerce store largely depends on several factors: the type of platform you want to build your store on, what features you want to have in your store, as well as additional costs to supplement like email marketing, third-party apps, plugins, and data

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migration. Ultimately, building an ecommerce store is an investment, but if you're using a store builder, you can keep costs down significantly.

Are there free ecommerce site builders?

Most ecommerce site builders offer a limited free trial, a basic free plan, or a free-to-build option. However, most require a paid subscription plan to access key ecommerce features and continue to sell products. Prices and plans vary widely from platform to platform.

Do I need to know how to code for a website builder?

One of the greatest benefits of using one of the best website builders is that business owners can create beautiful stores without extensive coding knowledge. Ecommerce store builders do the heavy lifting for you, simplifying the building process with drag-and-drop tools, easy uploading, and ready-made templates

How do I evaluate scalability when choosing an ecommerce website builder?

Scalability is about making sure your platform can grow as fast as your business does — without breaking, slowing down, or costing you a fortune to upgrade. When comparing options, look at how well each platform handles high traffic, large product catalogues, and peak sales periods. Check for features like unlimited bandwidth, flexible product options, robust APIs, and infrastructure built for spikes (think: Black Friday). A truly scalable platform should feel just as smooth at 100 orders a month as it does at 10,000. Key factors for evaluation include: Peak Capacity: Ask vendors about the peak number of visits and orders per day the site has successfully handled without incurring major infrastructure costs. Catalogue Complexity: Ensure the product catalogue schema can meet tomorrow's demands, supporting complex product attributes, categories, and a high number of SKUs (Stock-Keeping Units). Agility: A scalable solution supports greater flexibility, automation, and simplified maintenance, making it easier to focus on revenue-generating activities.

How should I assess the user-experience (UX) and checkout flow of a website builder?

Great UX should make your store effortless to navigate and your checkout process friction-free. Start by looking at the templates: are they modern, mobile-friendly, and intuitive? Then explore how customisable the layout is: can you easily adjust menus, product pages, and search filters? For checkout, look for a clean, distraction-free flow with minimal steps, guest checkout options, and multiple payment methods. If the demo store feels clunky or confusing, your customers will feel the same way.

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What key integrations should an ecommerce website builder support for marketing, operations & analytics?

Your platform should plug smoothly into the tools that run your business. At minimum, look for integrations in three core areas: Marketing: Email platforms (Klaviyo, Mailchimp), SMS tools, loyalty and referral apps, lead capture tools, and advertising integrations. Operations: Inventory management, shipping and label tools (e.g., ShipStation), fulfilment partners, warehousing tools, and returns platforms. Analytics: Google Analytics, BI tools, customer data platforms, and performance dashboards. A strong builder will offer these integrations natively or through a well-maintained app marketplace.

Can I integrate my website builder with offline (in-store) sales or point-of-sale systems?

Yes, and if you run both online and physical sales, this is essential. The best ecommerce platforms offer built-in or easy POS integrations that sync inventory, customer data, and order history in real time. This gives you a unified view of your business and allows features like “buy online, pick up in-store” or shared loyalty rewards. If an omnichannel experience matters to you, make sure your platform supports POS out of the box or partners with reputable systems like Square or Clover.

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