

# E-commerce platforms.

Dr N.MESSAOUDI

<https://digital-business-trends.com/>



An **E-commerce** store is a store that sells its products online. In an e-commerce store, customers can search for products, add them to a virtual shopping cart, and pay for their purchases online.



# What is an E-commerce store?

- A store that sells its products online
- A website that allows people to barter and trade goods and services without any financial transactions
- A collection of links to other pages within a website
- A website designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use it







# What are the best options to start selling online?

- ❑ **An online marketplace** (Amazon, eBay, and Etsy.)
- ❑ **Hosted E-Commerce Platforms** (Shopify, BigCommerce, and Wix.)
- ❑ **Self-Hosted Websites** (WordPress and WooCommerce)
- ❑ **social media Selling** (Facebook Marketplace, Instagram Shopping, and Pinterest Shopping.)
- ❑ **Subscription Boxes**
- ❑ **Online Marketplaces for Services** (Upwork and Fiverr.)



that sell many different products and don't have their own website.

An **online marketplace** refers to a digital platform or website. It's often known as an **electronic marketplace** and all transactions are managed by the website owner. It serves as a bridge for people or businesses who want to market their goods or services to potential clients. These platforms are best for businesses that sell many different products and don't have their own website.



The eBay logo features a stylized orange 'e' with a black outline, followed by the word 'ebay' in lowercase letters. Each letter is a different color: 'e' is red, 'b' is blue, 'a' is yellow, and 'y' is green.The Alibaba.com logo consists of the text 'Alibaba.com' in orange and 'MARKETPLACES' in black, slanted upwards to the right.The Amazon.com logo features the text 'amazon.com' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The Etsy logo is in a brown, cursive font with a yellow arrow above it. The Rakuten logo features a red circle with a white 'R' inside, followed by the word 'Rakuten' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

## What are online marketplace benefits?

- It generates revenue.
- Reduces marketing costs.
- It helps firms expand internationally.
- It makes stock, availability, and prices transparent.
- Consumers may easily compare pricing.
- The business may operate 24/7.
- It builds brand-customer trust.
- Online marketplaces with several alternatives attract customers.



An **e-commerce platform**, also called **e-commerce software**, is an application that facilitates the buying and selling of products online. E-commerce platforms provide consumers with the following three features:

- A search capability that allows them to easily find products online
- A digital cart that allows them to manage their orders
- A payment system that allows them to make purchases

Many platforms also use **data analytics** to provide businesses with insights into their consumers' behavior.





## E-Commerce Platforms

Wix, Shopify, WordPress, BigCommerce, Squarespace, WooCommerce, and Magento are just a few of the most popular online shopping software options. Open-source versus SaaS (Software as a Service) software is often used as a defining characteristic of various platforms.



# Types of E-commerce Platforms



**Hosted vs Self-Hosted  
Ecommerce Platform:  
Which Is Fit For You?**



## Hosted

A hosted e-commerce platform is one where the e-commerce software is hosted and managed by a third-party company. For example: **Shopify**

## Self-Hosted

Build your own E-commerce commerce site using platforms like **WooCommerce** or **Magento**. Enjoy full customization and control over your store.

# Hosted platforms

## Advantages

- Better out-of-the-box security
- Good out of the box performance
- Less work
- Start selling ASAP
- Don't need to worry about maintenance

## Disadvantages

- ❖ Limited possibilities for optimization
- ❖ Less control
- ❖ Less customization
- ❖ Additional hosting and payment fees

# Self-hosted platforms

## Advantages

- More control
- More customization
- Extensive data analytics
- Handle your own customer service
- A lot of flexibility and possibilities in optimization

## Disadvantages

- ❖ More work
- ❖ More time until you're selling
- ❖ You will need to take care of security and performance
- ❖ You will need to pay someone to setup and maintain your site, or do it yourself





# Overview of E-commerce Platforms

Discover the diverse range of e-commerce platforms available and learn how they can help you build, manage, and grow your online store.

Platform	Key features	Best for	Starting cost
<b>Square Online</b>	Unlimited products, offers fulfillment options, ability to sell on social platforms Facebook and Instagram	Best for integrating with Square point-of-sale and selling on social media	Free
<b>WooCommerce</b>	Multiple payment systems, mobile app, integrations to enhance store	WordPress site owners who want to sell products	\$3.95 / month
<b>Squarespace</b>	Multiple product types (physical, digital, and services), appointment scheduling, shipping and payment integrations	Building attractive websites for creative businesses that want to reach niche markets	\$16 / month
<b>GoDaddy</b>	Selling on Amazon, Etsy, social integration, discounted shipping, branding studio	Beginners who want to build an online store fast	\$16.99 / month
<b>Wix</b>	Unlimited products, social integration, abandoned cart recovery	Simple e-commerce website builder with scalability	\$27 / month
<b>Shopify</b>	Sell on multiple channels, track inventory, manage staff	Scaling a large business	\$29 / month
<b>BigCommerce</b>	Sell on Walmart, social platforms, and more; single page checkout, mobile app	Scaling an enterprise level business	\$29 / month
<b>Kajabi</b>	All-in-one platform for site building, sales, CRM, digital product storage	Coaching, thought leadership, course creation, and other digital products	\$119 / month

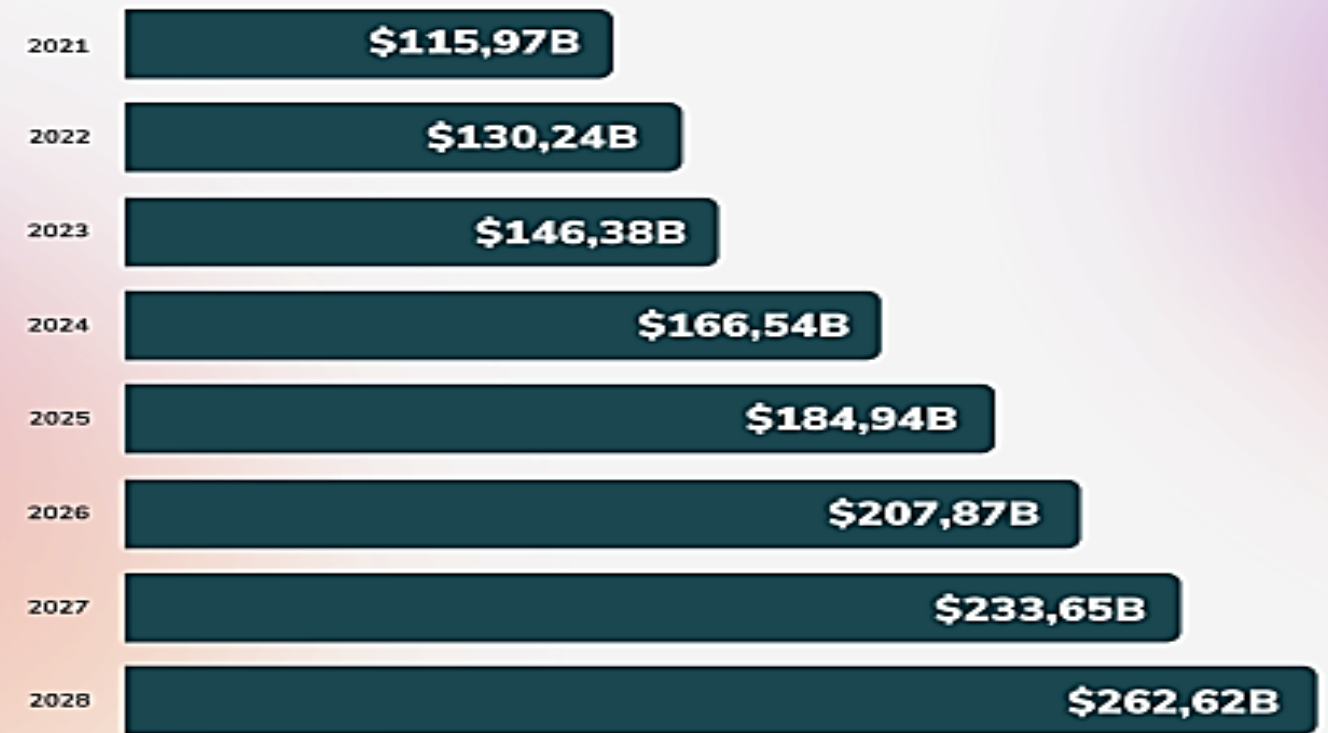


## Projected social commerce sales worldwide from 2022 to 2026



Sourced from Statista

## Projected social media advertising spending worldwide from 2021 to 2028



Sourced from Statista

**Social media Selling.** Many businesses sell directly through social platforms like Facebook Marketplace, Instagram Shopping, and Pinterest Shopping. It's a great way to tap into the existing followers and engage with potential customers.



**Subscription Boxes.** refer to a business model where customers subscribe to receive a curated selection of products on a regular basis, typically monthly. Subscription boxes work well for niche products and provide a steady stream of income.



 **Toptal**  **freelancer**

 **peopleperhour**

 **Upwork™**

 **fiverr**

 **99 designs**



**Online  
Marketplaces for  
Services** (Upwork  
and Fiverr.) These  
are marketplaces for  
freelancers and  
professionals to  
connect with clients  
worldwide.



# How to choose the best platform for your e-commerce business needs ?

1. Identify necessary e-commerce platform features.
2. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis.
3. Test the user experience.
4. Examine SEO settings.



## Choose the best answer for each question.

**Q1. What is the main purpose of an online marketplace?**

- a) To sell products directly to consumers
- b) Provide a platform for multiple sellers to list and sell their products
- c) Host auctions for rare collectibles
- d) Provide digital marketing services to businesses

**Q2. Which of the following is an example of a hosted e-commerce platform?**

- a) Shopify
- b) WooCommerce
- c) Magento
- d) OpenCart

**Q3. True or False: A hosted e-commerce platform requires users to manage their own web hosting and server.**

**Q4. Which of the following is a not-hosted (self-hosted) e-commerce platform?**

- a) BigCommerce
- b) PrestaShop
- c) Wix
- d) Squarespace

**Q5. Which of these is a key advantage of using a hosted e-commerce platform?**

- a) Full control over the platform's code and customization
- b) Lower setup and maintenance costs
- c) Limited scalability options
- d) longer development time

**Q6. Which popular online marketplace allows individual sellers to create their own storefronts?**

- a) Amazon
- b) eBay
- c) Alibaba
- d) Walmart

**Q7. What is the term for a business model where third-party sellers list their products on an online marketplace and pay a commission on sales?**

- a) Drop shipping
- b) Affiliate marketing
- c) Marketplace facilitation
- d) Direct sales

**Q8. Which of the following platforms is known for its user-friendly drag-and-drop website builder for e-commerce?**

- a) Magento
- b) WooCommerce
- c) Wix
- d) PrestaShop

**Q9. Which e-commerce platform is open-source and highly customizable but requires more technical expertise to set up and maintain?**

- a) Shopify
- b) BigCommerce
- c) WooCommerce
- d) Magento

**Q10. True or False: Online marketplaces and e-commerce platforms serve the same purpose and can be used interchangeably.**

### Question 11

Fill in the blank: A store that sells its products online is called \_\_\_\_\_.

- ✓ a convenience store
- ✓ a consignment store
- ✓ an e-commerce store
- ✓ a franchise

### Question 12

Which of the following are e-commerce platforms? Select all that apply.

- ✓ Floricomous
- ✓ BigCommerce
- ✓ Wix
- ✓ Squarespace

### Question 13

An e-commerce business hired a web developer to edit original code and fully customize and create its e-commerce store.

What type of e-commerce platform are they likely using?

- ✓ Open-source e-commerce platform
- ✓ Content management e-commerce platform
- ✓ SaaS e-commerce platform
- ✓ Retail application e-commerce platform

### Question 14

Which of the following are disadvantages to Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)? Select all that apply.

- ✓ Customization may be limited
- ✓ Payment methods may be limited
- ✓ Integration may be limited
- ✓ Coding skills necessary



### Question 15

Fill in the blank: \_\_\_\_\_ allows businesses to do things like add and update products, manage customer orders, receive payments, handle shipping and fulfillment, and more—all in one place.

- A search engine platform
- An internet platform
- An on-demand platform
- An e-commerce platform

### Question 16

Which of the following are ways Shopify makes it easy for businesses to have an online store? Select all that apply.

- Shopify provides in-store interior design solutions and support for premium customers.
- Shopify's software is designed to be user-friendly, with no coding or developer knowledge necessary.
- Shopify offers an all-in-one solution for businesses of all sizes.
- Shopify provides multiple plans businesses can choose from based on their budget and other needs.

### Question 17

Which of the following are features that Shopify offers? Select all that apply.

- Delivery services
- Analytics and reporting
- 24/7 support
- Payment processing



## Websites vs. Platforms: What you need to Know

**Question 18:** What is a key characteristic of a website?

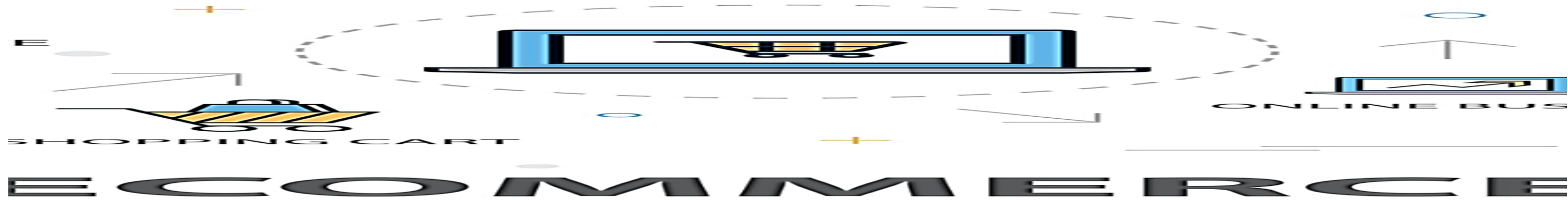
- a) Interconnected ecosystem
- b) Dynamic user profiles
- c) Single entity for showcasing content
- d) Social networking features

**Question 19:** Which of the following is more likely to have e-commerce, social networking, and user-generated content?

- a) Website
- b) Digital platform

**Question 20:** What best describes a website's role in the digital landscape?

- a) A static online brochure or storefront
- b) A dynamic and interconnected ecosystem
- c) An online community with user-generated content
- d) A platform for extensive social networking



## Case Study 1

For the past year, you've been working for an e-commerce company with several online shops. The company specializes in homeware. Recently, the company identified an opportunity in the market for eco-friendly bath products. It plans to launch a new e-commerce shop called Bath Eco Shop, selling sustainable bath products to customers around the world.

The company needs your help to set up this new e-commerce shop. As an e-commerce specialist, you've been asked to set up an e-commerce shop.

You have to choose between an online marketplace, a hosted digital platform, and a self-hosted digital platform.



**Case Study 2:** Healthy Bites is a small, family-owned health food store located in a local community. They have been serving the community for years, offering organic and natural products, supplements, and fresh produce. With the increasing demand for online shopping, Healthy Bites decided to expand their business by launching an e-commerce website.

### **Advantages:**

- **Expanded Market Reach:** by going online, Healthy Bites was able to reach a broader customer base beyond their local community, including customers from neighboring towns and even other states.
- **Convenience for Customers:** Online shopping provided customers with the convenience of ordering health foods and supplements from the comfort of their homes, saving them time and effort.
- **24/7 Accessibility:** The online store allowed Healthy Bites to remain accessible to customers 24/7, enabling sales during non-business hours and holidays.
- **Diversification of Revenue Streams:** The e-commerce platform provided an additional revenue stream for Healthy Bites, reducing their reliance on foot traffic in the physical store.

### **Challenges:**

- **E-commerce Infrastructure:** Healthy Bites had to invest in setting up and maintaining an e-commerce website, including website development, hosting, and payment processing, which incurred initial costs and ongoing expenses.
- **Competition:** In the online health food market, Healthy Bites faced stiff competition from both established e-commerce giants and other local health food stores that had also gone online.
- **Shipping and Logistics:** Shipping perishable and fragile products required careful packaging and coordination with shipping carriers, leading to shipping cost challenges and the risk of damaged goods.
- **Digital Marketing Expertise:** Healthy Bites had to develop digital marketing skills to effectively promote their online store through social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization (SEO).

### **Solutions:**

- **Infrastructure Investment:** Healthy Bites carefully budgeted for their e-commerce infrastructure and chose cost-effective hosting and website development options.
- **Competitive Strategy:** They differentiated themselves by emphasizing their commitment to local and organic products and offering personalized customer service.
- **Shipping Solutions:** Healthy Bites optimized their shipping processes by offering various shipping options, including same-day local delivery, and used eco-friendly packaging.
- **Digital Marketing Training:** The team enrolled in digital marketing courses and collaborated with local experts to improve their online visibility.