

# DIY ecommerce guide

Build your ecommerce business

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**tamebay** 



1. Getting Started



2. Going mobile



3. Using marketplaces



4. Promote



5. Deliver



6. Convert



7. Retain & Expand



8. Legal

**PART 6:  
CONVERT**



## Turning browsers into buyers

# DIY ecommerce

guide

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### WHAT WE LEARN

- How to shift more units
- Creating sales through a sense of urgency
- Converting on mobile

No matter where you're planning to sell your wares, it's essential to establish that there's a genuine demand for what you're planning to sell

<http://esellernet/download/converting-blinks-buys-21st-century-customer-experience/>

<http://esellernet/25-ways-increase-websites-conversion-rate/>

<http://esellernet/optimising-mobile-site-performance-better-conversion/>

<http://esellernet/6-ways-convert-mobile/>

## PART 6: CONVERTING TO SALES

What are the top-selling ecommerce sites doing to achieve higher sales? There are simple things you can do to convert browsers into buyer customers online. To find out what they are, we've looked to some of the top ecommerce players for inspiration.

When it comes to websites that sell, it's hard to get away from the likes of Amazon and ebay, but taking a wider view on the ecommerce marketplace, there are several key elements that the front-runners

### How to build an e-commerce website: where to start

Stage 1: Start



have in common. Top names include the likes of Argos, Tesco, Apple, Marks and Spencer and Next. So what are they doing right?

## What to Google?

Better online conversion	
Tools to aid better conversion	
How top online retailers convert	
Converting browsers to buyers	

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## CONVERSION: HOW TO SHIFT MORE PRODUCT

Ecommerce has been motoring along getting more and more successful for nearly 20 years. In that time, how people are being converted from merely browsing to actually buying has become something of an art. So what are the top tips that leading retailers offer to their customers to make them convert and how can you apply them to your ecommerce business.

- **Great products, prices and service**

Sometimes, when people start to sell online, it's easy to forget the basics of a product offering that they would apply if investing in stocking a bricks-and-mortar shop. This is business suicide because in many ways working online needs an even more focused approach.

No matter where you're planning to sell your wares, it's essential to establish that there's a genuine demand for what you're planning to sell and that your product, price and promotion are spot on as well as your customer service.

- **Navigation**

One of the key elements that all the top sales sites have in common is ease of navigation. There's one sure-fire way of losing someone from your site and that's if you make them jump through hoops to find what they're looking for. Making sure that your navigation facilitates easy jumping back and forth between pages isn't only good sense; it's essential.

Insisting on sleek navigation that's well positioned on the page will enable you to pack a whole lot of information into one area without making your site seem cluttered. The aim is to make your navigation child's play.

A good idea is to work on the notion that if a 5 year old can track down what they're looking for, you've got it about right.

- **Comparisons and suggestions**

While many of your potential buyers will have very specific needs and wants, some might be open to persuasion to either buy more, or to buy something you're keener to sell. This is where comparisons and suggestions are worth their weight in gold.

By setting up your site to demonstrate that you have similar or related products available, you can truly maximise your opportunities of upselling and cross-selling as well as influencing buyers to select your preferred product over the product they had previously identified. This is a great way of showcasing special offers and clearing your shelves of stock that might have been hard to move.

- **Images**

While a picture paints a thousand words, it's a really tough call to replicate the physical touch and feel of a product, and for this reason; you should never under-estimate the importance of high quality images. The thing to bear in mind here is that high quality needn't mean heavy

## What to Google?

User friendly web design	
Web design to improve conversion rates	
What drives conversion rates	

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and slow to load; that would be a crazy route to go.

What you need is images that portray every angle of your product in its best light and are quick to load across the whole range of devices, including mobiles.

- **User-friendly design**

Design is a highly personal affair and what appeals to one person mightn't necessarily appeal to another, which is precisely why some degree of neutrality is best all round. Neutral needn't be boring, but the sure thing about neutral is that you won't offend anyone. Use your design to go a step further by allowing buyers to drill deeper to find out more or to use 'one click' to buy.

- **Great descriptions and punchy calls to action**

War and Peace has no place on an ecommerce website, but at the same time, you need to sell your product to the max by giving a factual list of its features and a brief, but compelling summary of its benefits. A great way of converting product features into benefits is to add the phrase "which means that" and then describe what the buyer stands to gain from buying the product.

When it comes to marketing copy, no marketing copywriter worth their salt would submit a piece of sales copy without adding a punchy call to action. A good call to action will

leave your site visitor in no doubt as to what they should do next. Things like "buy now", "try it now" or "add to basket", without any need to register, will have any wavering buyer clear in their mind about the next step.

- **Two or three clicks to buy**

Ideally, you should aim to have the fewest number of clicks possible to buy. Amazon is a great example of how easy buying online can be. Two or three clicks, plus no need for registration or jumping through hoops is best and should be your aim.

## HOW TO INCREASE YOUR CUSTOMER CONVERSION RATE

The whole reason you have set up your ecommerce business is to sell things. We have seen how to set up your site and how to market yourself and your products – but how can you get a healthy – and growing – number of visitors buying from your webstore? All sites receive more traffic than they do sales. But there are ways to convert visitors into customers – here are five tips to help get your conversion going.

- **Always display a summary of their basket**

Give your customers a reason to buy from you. This is about trust, but also about making them feel in control of their purchase. Display a summary of their basket at all times and display a progress indicator, so customers

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Images to aid conversion	
Top tips for increasing online conversion rates	
Tools for increasing conversion	

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know how many steps away they are from completing a purchase. And, if you can, make that basket summary work across different channels (mobile, online, tablet and app) so that they can shop wherever and whenever they want to.

- **Never force customers to register**

All internet entrepreneurs want to capture as much customer data as possible. But many prospective customers would prefer to leave your website instead of filling out a lengthy registration form. So allow your customers to buy from your ecommerce website without registering, through a “continue as guest” option.

And when that isn’t possible (because, for example, of the check-out app you use), keep the form as simple/short as possible. Only ask for information that you really need. (Another trick: make the form less intimidating by hiding the parts of the form that are not required at that point!)

- **Do not hide supplementary costs**

Packing, shipping, taxes – these are all supplementary costs that get added to a purchase. Don’t try to hide these supplementary costs from your customers. Be transparent and disclose the costs upfront. If you give them a nasty surprise at the end of their check-out process, they’ll be likely to abandon the shopping cart.

- **Offer a ‘checkout now’ button**

Some customers have already done all their research before buying from your ecommerce website. If a customer is ready to pay, don’t delay the process – offer them a “checkout now” option and make it easy for them to order and pay.

- **A basket of cookies**

Allow customers to recover an abandoned shopping cart. Some customers will leave your website, accidentally or not, before completing their purchase.

Store their shopping cart information in their cookies so that the next time they visit your ecommerce website, they can just pick up from where they were (likewise, offer them an easy option for clearing the cart too, in case they want a fresh start). This will help to encourage customers to complete the purchase and win you more sales.

- **Make purchases social**

You can persuade a customer to buy more products from you by encouraging them to follow you on social networks. Do this by setting up a Facebook “like” or Twitter “follow” button on your thank you page. Every time you appear in their Twitter or Facebook feed, you have a new selling opportunity.

Sharing information on social networks helps to spread the word about your ecommerce

## What to Google?

Advanced conversion online	
Payment options for better conversion	

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brand and helps to win more customers. Give customers the opportunity to update their Twitter or Facebook status with a pre-written message after they place their order (something along the lines of “I’ve just bought this great new product at XYZ. Check it out: [www.XYZ.com](http://www.XYZ.com)”).

- **Offer free shipping**

A study by KISSmetrics shows that 44% of visitors that leave their shopping cart do so because of shipping and handling fees. So why not give customers a reason to stay and spend on your ecommerce website by waiving their shipping fees. Of course, this could be a significant cost to your business, but test it out to see whether the additional sales may balance out the extra costs (you could also only offer free shipping on orders over a certain amount).

If you do decide to offer free shipping, make this obvious on your website with “free shipping!” banners that are always visible.

- **Related products**

This is an easy way to increase sales and conversions. By offering related and similar products, you can help customers choose the right product for them, rather than them having to leave your site to find alternatives elsewhere. It’s also an easy way to increase a customer’s order size (ie if a customer buys a flashlight, why not sell him batteries too?).

- **Multiple payment options**

Don’t freeze out certain customers by only accepting VISA or Mastercard. Some customers may not want to share their credit card details with plenty of websites, so why not offer them alternative payment options, such as PayPal? While PayPal isn’t always supplier-friendly, customers do love it. The customer’s credit card information, along with their shipping and billing address are already stored on PayPal, which means they don’t have to type it all in again on your website.

- **Tell customers what to expect next**

What happens after a customer places an order? How long do they have to wait before the order is processed? What is the estimated time before delivery? Make sure you tell your customers what they want to know. If you are going to send them an email to tell them when their order is shipped, say so on the check-out page. And be sure to thank them for their order too!

## What to Google?

Ecommerce payment options



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## INCREASE CONVERSIONS BY CREATING A SENSE OF URGENCY

Losing sucks, doesn't it? In fact, extensive research into cognitive bias has revealed that in humans, the pain of losing is far more acute than the pleasure of winning, and as a result we'll make seemingly illogical decisions to avoid loss. First demonstrated by Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman in the early 80s, the concept of 'loss aversion' is implicit in a great many areas of life, including... that's right, online purchasing!

### • Turn up the heat: choose it or lose it

Turn up the temperature by playing on your visitors' fear of missing out. Emphasising the prospect of something being in short supply can mean the difference between someone converting right there and then or saying 'I'll have a think about this and come back later' (and likely never returning). And when it comes to playing the 'FOMO' card, there are a number of clever tactics that you can employ on your website to make the most of this powerful cognitive bias.

### • Selling (out) fast

The psychology behind high-converting product pages is a fascinating field of study. There's a lot of research out there into the effect that image placement, button colour, call-to-action copy and multiple other design elements have on product page conversion rates.

One lesser-known tactic that employs the principle of loss aversion is to drop casual hints about stock levels on your product pages. A common way of achieving this is to visually alert visitors when a certain size or variation of an item is running low.

For example, when I'm buying a shirt on the Topman website, a dialogue box appears informing me about stock levels when I select my size. If it were to emerge that stock levels are low for my selection, I might think twice about nipping out to the kitchen to grab myself a cup of tea before I make my purchase!

### • Free shipping and deal sweeteners – if you buy now

Another effective strategy for creating a sense of urgency is to run a time- or number-limited offer on something that is likely to significantly sweeten the deal for a shopper visiting your site, such as free shipping.

For example, running a 'this weekend only' free postage and packing campaign that is advertised across your website and in your email contact with customers will act as a powerful incentive to buy. Setting a hard deadline can be a deal-clincher, particularly for shoppers who tend to drag out their buying decisions.

This tactic may prove particularly effective

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Tips for aiding conversion	
How to inspire rapid checkout	

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around major public holidays and events, where reminding customers of the last day that they can qualify for free shipping to get a gift sent on time is likely to result in a surge of orders.

Likewise, displaying a prominent live 'countdown' timer to show when free shipping ends will make customers feel like they're up against the clock and spur them on to take action.

- **'Back in stock' emails**

Taking the idea of loss aversion one step further, 'back in stock' emails that give customers and subscribers a second chance to get their hands on something that has gone out of stock before can be a good way of driving conversions.

The premise of these emails is to get across the message that this product has proven so popular that it has already gone out of stock once before (a message which also draws upon the principle of social validation – that this is an item that has proven irresistible to social peers).

And now that you've given them another chance to get their hands on it, it would be a crime for them to miss out a second time.

## What to Google?

How to avoid abandoned carts	
Tips for speeding up conversion	

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### WHAT WE LEARN

- How to convert mobile browsers to buyers
- Converting shoppers on apps
- Optimising mobile operation
- Optimising mobile checkout

Designing for mobile is an art: you only need to deliver to the phone what is actually needed, so make sure your mobile site design is simple, elegant and slick

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<http://eseller.net/6-ways-convert-mobile/>  
<http://eseller.net/5-ways-retailers-can-get-better-mobile/>

## CONVERTING ON MOBILE

With more shoppers than ever using their mobile devices to buy things – not to mention pretty much all of them using their mobile at some point in the purchase process – making sure you can convert those shoppers is becoming ever more pressing.

### Top ways to convert on mobile

So how can you do it when mobile is notoriously fiddly and fickle for most users? Here we offer an overview of what you can do to make mobile more sticky when it comes to conversion. Watch and learn...

#### • Only what's needed

As we have seen already, designing for mobile is an art: you only need to deliver to the phone what is actually needed, so make sure your mobile site design is simple, elegant and slick. This means only the most relevant content displayed in the simplest, scrollable way.

It also means keeping the button and anything that needs to be tapped on nice and big and clear.

Keep images big and clear, but low res – to aid download speeds – and make sure that navigation is clear.

## What to Google?

Better mobile conversion	
Tools to aid better mobile conversion	
How top mobile retailers convert	
Converting mobile browsers to buyers	

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- **No drop-downs or pop-ups**

They may work really well on your desktop site, but don't clutter the mobile user experience with drop down menus and pop up adverts: this will make your site hard to use and reduce the user experience – making the user less inclined to stick around and actually buy something.

- **Filters...**

Many websites – especially for etails with large inventories – are using user driven filters to help the user find what they are looking for: this also works well on mobile. You have to make sure that the filtering process is easy to do with fingers – so make the filter boxes that need ticking clear and nicely spaced, don't have too many options and don't make it interfere with anything else the user needs to do. Oh, and make it easy to clear.

- **... and search**

While you are letting users filter you also need to let them easily search. Searching your site is even more important on mobile than it is on desktop – and you typically only get one crack at it so make your search functionality easy to use and as powerful as you can afford.

- **Simple check out**

The check out process is where most people abandon their cart: often because they balk at paying the money, but often on mobile

because the process looks daunting – many data fields to fill and much clicking to be done all on a tiny keyboard and screen. We go into much more detail on it here, but essentially make your check process on mobile as simple as possible – even down to omitting it all together if you can!

- **Remember them**

Its always good to know who your best customers are, but with shoppers moving from mobile to desktop to tablet and back to desktop when shopping, you need to go out of your way to remember them across these devices. So, when designing your site, look to have them rudimentarily log in then you can track them – and keep their basket going – across all devices while they journey. This is especially important with mobile as it is often where they start their shopping research , so you have a better chance of converting them once they hit the check out anywhere else of converting them. Equally, now that increasing numbers of shoppers are also doing the actual purchase on mobile, making sure that anything they have put in their basket online can be bought – through a nice simple checkout – on mobile is also vital.

## What to Google?

Designing mobile websites	
Things to avoid when designing mobile websites	
Mobile conversion	
Better mobile checkout	
Top mobile checkout tools	

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## OPTIMISING MOBILE PERFORMANCE

One of the key drivers of mobile conversion is site speed. The early days of the web saw dial-up modems deliver proto-websites a line of pixels at a time. That is no longer acceptable in our superfast broadband era. And the same goes for mobile.

Slow mobile site load times make for a poor – and these days unacceptable – experience: and bad experience is the enemy of conversion. But, mobile networks – even with 3G, 4G and wifi – aren't as fast as the web. Processors in phones aren't quite as powerful as your desktop or laptop computer.

So to deliver a comparable experience on mobile to the web, you need to look at how to optimise your sites performance.

Here are a few things to consider to make your site faster and leaner and, hopefully, convert more visitors to sales.

- **Optimising design**

The main consideration for optimising mobile sites for performance is design: in fact all optimisation issues centre around design. The main thing to consider is how to keep the design looking good, looking coherent with your brand and other sites and yet be lean and fast. This is perhaps the trickiest part of the process. First of all consider what mobile

users are most likely to be doing on your mobile site and prioritise these functions. You probably don't need all the things your site can do on your mobile site. Stick to the main offers, main products and services that your mobile traffic data shows people use.

Also don't design above and below the fold: mobile users are used to scrolling so just let it all hang out as a long stream.

Keep buttons large and to a minimum and keep testing – it has to be intuitive to use. And watch the data and see how usage patterns change with each design tweak you make.

- **Optimising images**

Images are as vital on mobile as they are online, but make sure that they aren't massive files that will take ages to download and stall the user experience. You will need to use your best images still so you need to adapt them to be the right size and shape and resolution (how 'big' they are as files). To do this you will need some sort of image processing software such as Photoshop or Fireworks to adapt them. These are relatively easy to use, but it may be worth investing in a book on how to use them before cracking on with it.

Also where you can make images part of the process: so make them the click through buttons – even to the checkout!

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Optimising mobile site performance	
Optimising images for mobile	
Optimising mobile content	
Optimising mobile sites	

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### • Optimising fonts and icons

Fonts are an important part of your brand and site design as we have seen earlier on in our ebook, but they are not as essential as speedy load times so it may be worth looking at how to use font optimisation. This is a technique where the content will load on the device with the device's default font first of all then slowly fill in with your font. This way, the user gets the content first (and immediately) rather than having to wait so that your exact font appears.

Similarly, icons can slow load times as they are little image files that are frequently downloaded. These can be cached for regular users or you can use tools such as Fontello to choose a variety of icons, and generate a font file limited to your selection.

### • Optimising the code

This is where it gets a bit technical and it may be one for your developer, but in essence you need to make sure that your site is written in as efficient a way as possible with code that is precise and concise. Writing in JavaScript is usually the most effective way to write a website but even this can be compressed and optimised even further with tools such as Grunt or Gulp, or with front-end compiler apps like Prepos, Codekit or Hammer. These reduce HTTP requests and file size by performing a variety of tasks: concatenating files, compiling Sass, Less or CoffeeScript,

Uglify JS (compresses JavaScript), and minify/compressing files for production use.

## What to Google?

Optimising mobile commerce flow	
Optimising mobile code	
Tools to aid mobile optimisation	

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## MOBILE CHECKOUT: STREAMLINING FOR CONVERSION

With more people than ever shopping on mobile, working out how to convert them is a big challenge. Design, as we have seen, plays a big part, but so does checkout. If your mobile site is to work, your checkout must be optimised for conversions.

Checkouts are one of the most fiddly elements of an ecommerce site, even on a desktop so make sure you remove as much frustration as possible for your mobile shoppers and get the sales rolling in.

If you're designing a mobile site, or making sure your responsive site does what you want it to do – here are our design considerations for a mobile checkout.

- **Sign them in once**

By far the best way to make mobile conversion slick is to cut out the checkout process as much as possible. If you can get them to sign in online and then remember them across devices, they can in theory check out just by hitting check out. Failing that, get them to enter their card and delivery details etc... once and give them the chance for your site to remember them. This can also make the process really fast.

If you also combine it with Amzone one-click and/or Apple Pay you can in theory let them pay just by using their finger print ID on their device.

- **Cut down the fields as much as possible**

If you can't or don't want to make mobile uber-simple, then at the very least you need to cut down to the bone what you ask them to do at checkout. When you are serving your customers on a desktop computer, you can get away with asking them for their date of birth, how they heard about you and different phone numbers for home and mobile.

When it comes to mobile conversions you need to ask as few questions as possible. Cut all of the unnecessary additional questions out.

The more questions you are able to get rid of the more room you have to create big, entry fields that won't look difficult to manage on a small screen.

Show people where they are in the process

People like to know how far they are into the buying process – if they feel they have too many pages still to fill out they will probably abandon the purchase. Slim it down to as few steps as possible, three would be ideal, and create a clear progress bar so your shoppers know where they are.

- **Allow guest check-out**

Being faced with a register process can put people off at the best of times never mind when they are shopping on their smartphones.

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If someone hasn't registered with you before, give them the option to buy as a guest as well as register.

At this stage the sale is more important and if they have a good experience they will no doubt come back for a visit on your desktop site and go through the registering process then.

Use third parties such as Google Checkout, PayPal, Apple Pay and Amazon one-click

If you offer people the chance to check-out using their existing account with third-party applications such as Google Checkout, Apple, Pay, Amazon and PayPal – you are giving them the option to purchase in one easy step.

They won't have to fill in their card details, which is a real winner. There's also an added element of trust when people see the logos of payment companies they are familiar with.

- **Remove main navigation and other distractions**

When someone has entered the buying process, don't let them get distracted by other options. You need to streamline their journey as much as possible.

A good way to do this is to remove the top navigation which could pull them back into the browsing process or social media buttons which could lead them away completely.

Allow them to move back and forth of course but by removing excess buttons you keep their focus on the task at hand and it also creates a more simplified, un-busy look which works best on a mobile.

- **Make sure loading times are speedy**

You customers will not wait around if your checkout process is slow to load. Make sure you build the site as light as possible so that they can speedily move through the purchasing process.

There are a number of different ways you can optimise your loading times – shrinking image sizes is a big one. You can test the speed of your site using a number of different free tools such as Mobitest or Gtmetrix.

## What to Google?

Mobile payments tools	
Mobile checkout systems	
Who has the best mobile conversions	

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