**Technical Writing**

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**Topic & Motivation:**

For years now we have been exposed to the handiness of next day delivery, item comparison and promo codes as we shop online. Not only can we order and pay in for items online, but we can also get food, shopping or takeaways delivered to our door.

In a world where we are growing more accustomed to opening amazon and ordering items as opposed to checking if our local stores even sell these items, is it feasible for a small business to create a professional quality e-commerce website while managing a busy retail store?

During Covid most of us were of work, while sitting indoors, regardless of our technical know-how we moved our interest to online shopping as all non-essential shopping was forbidden. I was fortunate enough to have been offered a job to create an online e-commerce website for a local bicycle store. As we all do, I checked their current website to see what the expectations where. Well safe to say, the bar was low. With a tedious navigation bar, mismatched image ratios, missing item descriptions and out of stock items that I was still able to order, this site was obviously left to the side for quite some time.

Was this due to the fact that retail was booming before Covid and they had no time to manage it? This got me thinking, would it be possible for a store during the midst of Covid to setup a truly good e-commerce store. A store that held thousands of items, fully unique item descriptions with the manufacturers item data, not some manually typed version that was missing half the data that was deemed “unnecessary”. A real, top of line website.

As I got started to work on the website I was also in-store managing new stock and getting photos. It quickly became apparent how busy this store during Covid was. Bicycles were deemed essential for travel therefore the retail store was open. As I watched my manager do his day-to-day tasks, I thought about all the small stores that hadn’t the budget to bring a web developer in and create a website. How would they manage in setting up API’s if they were even lucky enough to work with brands that offered API access. The only other solution would be to web scrape data from the manufacturer and display that information.

Because of my above reasons, this is why I am interested in seeing if I believe it would be achievable for a business owner to produce their own professional website while managing a busy retail store.

**Topic:** E-Commerce

**Research Question:** Is it feasible for store owners to single handedly produce a professional e-commerce website to match the current standard people expect.

**Thesis:** I believe that due to the complexity and professional expectations of online shopping that a single business owner could not produce a suitable e-commerce website while managing a retail store.

1. Exponential growth.
2. Soft and hard skills required.
3. Competing against larger brands with qualified professionals.

**Resources:**

The primary resource that I have decided to use for my research question is The Full Stack Developer by Chris Northwood. The secondary and supporting resources are a variation of statistics gathered from various tech sites and online articles/blogs.

(‘20 Biggest Ecommerce Challenges In 2022 + Simple Solutions’ 2022)

(Ravishankar 2021)

(‘Retail sales, Great Britain: March 2020’ 2020)

(Northwood n.d.)

(2017)

(2021)

**Feedback Changes:**

Having received feedback on my initial submission I have went a head and added more research in to the topic of my choice. I have also found a reliable and trustworthy primary source to base what can be described as core skills and principles required to be a successful web developer in the current era of web development.

**Proving Thesis:**

In order to prove my thesis, I am going to lay out a list of essential soft and hard skills required to be a web developer and also the specific challenges that are faced when creating an ecommerce shop that is expected to meet the high standards set by the Covid-19 pandemic and large-scale brands. Listed below are examples of the standards that are to be meet when providing an online experience to a web user.

1. Users expect a personal, unique experience that has been thought out and tailor designed to suit their expectations. To achieve this standard of professionalism, a well thought out and planned website that accounts for multiple devices is required.  
     
   **Evidence:** “68% of consumers say they have higher expectations for businesses digital capabilities since Covid-19.” - Salesforce  
     
   “Design has a 75% influence on a websites credibility.” – Web FX  
     
   “92.4% of internet users prefer using their phones” – Data Reportal
2. A professional website must include custom content such as graphics and videos that have been designed to pull the user in and retain their focus for as long as necessary. Customers will judge a website upon its first appearance, so custom content it their to keep them interested in the website’s products.  
     
   **Evidence:** “Users spend on average of 0.05 seconds deciding whether to stay on your site or leave.”- SWEOR  
     
   “When you switch to a video background, there is a 138% improvement in conversion rate.” – Website Builder Expert, Sprout
3. To keep up with such demand for high quality content, a full stack web developer must possess hard skills such as being able to use Adobe XD for planning/prototyping, Adobe Illustrator for graphics, Adobe Photoshop, or GIMP for image processing (product images) and Adobe After Effects for motion videos.  
     
   **Evidence:** “78% of shoppers want ecommerce sites to include more images on their product pages” – Hootsuite  
     
   Indeed.com lists that the average completion for a computing science degree could set you back either 3 years if your full-time, or 5 years if your part time. Some of the skills acquired from these courses are languages such as HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and software skills such as Adobe creative suit.  
     
   From looking at other various universities around Ireland, it is clear that the time frame for the above completion time is similar no matter that location that the course is taken.

# Bibliography

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