

Getting started with the course

Understanding e-commerce and why it matters

Terms, tools, and strategies in e-commerce

Video: Get to know the basics of e-commerce
4 min

Reading: Learn more about the basics of e-commerce
20 min

Ungraded Plugin: Identify: Basic e-commerce terms
10 min

Video: Jaylin - The role of an entry-level e-commerce specialist at a big company and a small business
3 min

Reading: Essential e-commerce strategies
20 min

Getting started in e-commerce

Review: Introduction to make the sale: build, launch, and manage e-commerce stores

Learn more about the basics of e-commerce

Now that you know the basics of e-commerce, you are ready to learn more about this fast-growing field. This reading will help you become familiar with the terms, platforms, tools, and roles available in e-commerce.

Why e-commerce matters

Global e-commerce sales surged in 2020. E-commerce is taking more and more of brick-and-mortar's share of retail sales, growing up to almost five times faster in 2020 than it did before, due to changes in the global market.

The more e-commerce grows, the more businesses will miss out on attracting new customers and growing their business if they don't sell their products or services online. E-commerce is beneficial for any size business, whether it's a startup, a small business, or a major retailer.

Here are some benefits of e-commerce:

- Allows businesses to sell products to customers worldwide, since mostly anyone can visit the store online
- Reduces overhead expenses and lowers startup costs, since it doesn't require a storefront
- Makes it easy to sell a broad range of products, since it doesn't require physical display space
- Allows customers to research products available in store before visiting a brick-and-mortar location
- Stays open for business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so customers can shop whenever they want
- Allows businesses to personalize the customer's experience based on data or saved preferences so that they can provide better service and increase customer engagement online
- Provides data on customer behavior so that businesses can improve their e-commerce store

Basic e-commerce terms

Here are some basic terms that are helpful to know for getting started in e-commerce:

- **E-commerce (or e-comm):** The buying and selling of goods or services using the internet
- **E-commerce store:** A store that sells its products online
- **E-commerce platform:** A software application that allows you to sell products or services online
- **Responsive website:** A website that is designed to work on all types of devices, including computers, mobile phones, and tablets
- **Domain:** The core part of a website's URL, or internet address, such as google.com.
- **Landing page:** The first page a visitor encounters when they go to a website
- **Call-to-action:** The instruction provided to the customer that tells them what to do next
- **Conversion:** The completion of an activity that contributes to the success of a business
- **Digital shopping cart:** The virtual equivalent of a physical shopping cart
- **Payment service provider:** A secure way to process transactions online

E-commerce tools

There are many different tools used in e-commerce, including platforms, which are a specific type of e-commerce tool. The tools you use will depend on the company you work for and the specific responsibilities of your job. It may be helpful to explore some of these tools on your own. This will help you become familiar with how they work, and it can make it easier to learn other new tools on the job.

The tools mentioned in this reading are some of the more popular options; however, there are many other good options available besides the few mentioned in this reading. Plus, new platforms and tools launch on a regular basis as the field of e-commerce continues to change and grow rapidly. The list of most popular platforms and tools is constantly evolving.

Although it's not required, visiting the websites for the following e-commerce tools and platforms is a good opportunity to familiarize yourself with some of the different tools you might use on the job.

E-commerce platforms

As you learned in a video, an e-commerce store is typically built on an e-commerce platform, which is a software application that allows you to sell products or services online. Using a platform makes it easier to get started selling online, because you don't need to have any software development skills. E-commerce platforms often include built-in tools for marketing, analytics, inventory management, fulfillment, and other aspects of your business.

Here is a list of some of the most popular e-commerce platforms:

- [Shopify](#)
- [Wix](#)
- [BigCommerce](#)
- [Squarespace](#)
- [WooCommerce](#)
- [Magento Open Source](#)

Shopify, Wix, BigCommerce, and Squarespace are **Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platforms**, which feature web-based software available on a subscription basis. With a SaaS platform, you don't need to know HTML or have any web development skills. You can simply choose from the options available in the platform.

WooCommerce and Magento Open Source are two examples of **open-source platforms**, which feature software that allows the user to access and edit the original source code. This means you can customize the website in almost any way you want. Just keep in mind that making these types of changes in an open-source platform often requires web development skills—or the ability to hire someone to make these changes for you.

Other e-commerce tools

Besides working in an e-commerce platform, you will likely use other tools to do your job as well. These tools might be helpful for communicating and sharing information with your team, managing projects or marketing campaigns, reviewing analytics, tracking customer service issues, and more.

Here are a few types of e-commerce tools you might use, along with a few examples of each type:

Customer relationship management (CRM): These tools help businesses manage and monitor multiple aspects of their company, including sales, marketing, analytics, and customer service. Here are a few examples:

- [Salesforce](#)
- [Oracle](#)
- [HubSpot](#)

Team collaboration: These tools help teams stay organized and make it easier for them to communicate with each other. Features that might be included in these tools are email, video calls, cloud storage, messaging, file sharing, and more. Here are a few examples:

- [Google Workspace](#)
- [Microsoft Teams](#)
- [Slack](#)

Digital advertising and PPC: These tools help teams manage their online advertising campaigns:

- [Search Ads 360](#)
- [AdRoll](#)

Digital marketing: These tools make it easier to manage marketing campaigns for email, social media, or other channels:

- [HubSpot](#)
- [Hootsuite](#)
- [Sprout Social](#)

Search engine optimization (SEO): These tools assist with monitoring and improving a website's performance in search results:

- [Google Search Central](#)
- [Semrush](#)

Analytics: These tools help businesses analyze their website traffic, sales, and other data.

- [Google Analytics](#)
- [Adobe Analytics](#)
- [Tableau](#)

Entry-level e-commerce roles

As e-commerce continues to grow, so do the number of jobs available in this high-growth field. By completing this career certificate program, you will be better prepared to start applying for an entry-level role in e-commerce.

Here are some examples of entry-level e-commerce roles:

- E-commerce analyst
- E-commerce specialist
- E-commerce associate
- E-commerce coordinator
- E-commerce product manager

Here are some examples of entry-level digital marketing roles that you might find at an e-commerce company:

- Digital marketing specialist
- Digital marketing coordinator
- Search engine optimization specialist
- Search engine marketing specialist
- Social media manager
- Email marketing specialist

There are many different job titles and responsibilities in e-commerce. When you're looking for job openings online, it's a good idea to search for a number of different job titles to find the position you want. Although your job responsibilities may differ even within the same job title, you can read the job description to learn more about what the role will involve. You can also ask questions about the role when you get to the interview stage of the application process.

You can begin searching for these roles on LinkedIn, Indeed, or other job sites to get an idea of the responsibilities and requirements for each type of role. This can help you decide which type of role might interest you the most.

Other entry-level roles in e-commerce

There are many other roles available in e-commerce that may require training or experience outside of the information you'll receive in this course.

Here are a few examples of other entry-level e-commerce roles:

- Web developer
- IT support
- Logistics coordinator
- Digital operations coordinator
- Project manager
- Digital copywriter
- Digital graphic designer
- Financial analyst
- Data analyst
- Customer support specialist

Key takeaways

To get started working in e-commerce, it's helpful to know the basic terms, tools, and platforms commonly used in the industry to be able to communicate with potential employers, teammates, and stakeholders. It's also helpful to get an overview of the entry-level roles available in e-commerce, so that you can start to think about what type of roles might interest you the most.

