Start a Shopify(tm) Business With Absolutely No Experience

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Introduction

As an entrepreneur, I know how hard it is to begin your career. That is why I find solutions to your problems as you are starting out. Since we all need easier ways to start a business, I will talk about Shopify, as it is very powerful and easy to use. Investors and small business owners alike are attracted to the Shopify platform as it makes their lives a whole lot easier.

To get more people on board and engaged with Shopify, they hold a contest every year and give the winner a cash prize. Sometimes it can be about $100,000. Remember there are many ways to get your customers engaged, and holding a contest is one of them. So that is what Shopify does to up the excitement of starting a business and you can hold contests for your customers too.

Since the beginning of time when more than one household began using the Internet, there have been shopping platforms for business people to use to exchange goods for money. Shopify is one of the earliest known platforms beginning in 2004 and is a major solution in the market today. It is an easy way to build trust and get people to buy from you.

The main purpose behind it was to make setting up and running a store simpler and faster, so this became one of the earliest solutions, which helped business owners create their stores in a shorter amount of time. According to developer Tobias Lutke, "Shopify makes it possible to do in just 20 minutes, what it used to take months before the product was launched." So it became a seller's favorite.

Shopify Developers Differentiated the Company from others

Shopify is a store platform which comes with a monthly investment. You may or may not know anything about computer or website programming, but the platform they use is called Ruby on Rails instead of the common php language. Since it is a more unique language, there is a lot of support they give to their clients. This already makes it very different than other companies who may leave you trying to figure things out for yourself. They are very prompt when responding to issues people have, so it is an investment that is worth it. Sometimes paying for a service will be a better solution for you as you do not want to wait for responses and go back and forth for a long time until finally getting a solution. This causes you to waste your time and lose opportunities to sell.

Features offered by Shopify

There is literally a theme for everyone. Having customizable themes really encourages people to use it as everyone wants to differentiate their store from others. It is pretty easy to make the theme look the way you want it to, but if you are stuck experts will work with you and create the template design that will work best for you.

After your theme is ready and looks the way you want, whether doing it on your own or having someone do it for you, then the rest is up to you. All you really need to do from here on out is upload your product photos along with the relevant information about them. The system pretty much does most of the work on its own allowing you to take care of the least amount of work and still it will give you great results.

Other features included with your monthly plan are file storage (in which there are different sizes per plan you choose), customer support when you need it, responsive design so your store can be used on any mobile device, ability to give customers discounts, activate the out of stock notice, or change anything about the theme you have with HTML and CSS coding.

If you are new to Shopify, it is the perfect solution

Now that you understand ways in which you can customize your store, there is one problem or worry a lot of people face. That is how in the world do I market my business more efficiently? Shopify works with Mind Digital Group and they market with companies around the world. This helps to boost their online image as well as yours.

This company constantly aspires to be more in tune to marketing tactics, especially in the digital world. With their ability, they are able to share very valuable information pertaining to SEO and Social Media Marketing. If you do have concerns, your best bet is to stay calm because they have tons of experience in marketing.

Shopify makes your life easier

Many people when starting out online have very closed minds. They say things like "I am not truly great at running a store" or "I don't have any programming knowledge," "It will be too hard for me to do this." This is where you can take a closed mind and open it up to a world of possibilities. The Internet today is full of opportunities where the basic skills you need are to be able to run a computer.

That is all you need. You will not need to toggle between various sites either. Everything from managing your finances and keeping track of all your transactions is handled in one place. They use Quickbooks to do this, which I will talk more about in just a moment, and if you are familiar, or not familiar with it, the software is fairly easy to use.

Now that I have your attention, let's take a look at how a Quickbooks integrated Shopify takes out the frustration of doing business and makes things easier to manage. One big way to succeed with your online store is to make it as easy as possible for the seller, and Shopify has done this.

Using Quickbooks as a Solution to Frustration

One of the most tiring things to do is to transfer data from one place to another. Most of the time we think we have to do it manually which takes time and you can easily suffer from "burn out" meaning get tired of doing it really fast. You are more likely to make a bunch of errors doing it this way or give up and not want to have a store. So, the Quickbooks integration is designed to cut down on those problems.

There are many solution providers similar to Quickbooks out there that are willing to help and make your life easier, but the relationship has already been built between the two. A nice ability of the Quickbooks integration is your data can be set to synchronize automatically from your store to your account and vice versa, which is another reason Shopify uses them.

Benefits to Integrate Quickbooks with Shopify

The most successful people running stores online have a complete package to be able to manage a business successfully. When you need your items in a specific order, Quickbooks will help you do it. One other thing that helps businesses to be successful is keeping their finances in order. Since Quickbooks is also a financial solution for people, you are off to a great start as soon as your store is ready.

As Quickbooks is integrated into Shopify, it gives you a better picture of how you are with inventory and other information you need to know along with your financial picture. It allows you to easily keep track of every item in your store and you get all this information very quickly.

It also allows you to invoice your customers and have a better idea of how many sales you have and which items are selling the best. Also, if you do not want to worry about calculating the taxes on particular items because it depends on the location it is being shipped to, then you will not need to worry about it. They take care of everything.

People love the thought of being able to take care of everything their business needs from one place, and I know you will too, so this is a definite advantage having the Quickbooks integration. Since you are paying your monthly fee to Shopify, you will not pay anything extra to have Quickbooks integrated which was a concern for many people.

Getting the most from your Shopify business experience

Using Shopify gives you more ideas to think outside the box. This is what entrepreneurs of all types have to do in order to make it in this business world today. Many processes people use to run their business needs to be backed by the latest technology today. In order to do this, one must research every technology out there and figure out which works best for them. Most people do not have time to do this.

Saving people time is a key selling point for many companies. Shopify obviously knows this and so they go above and beyond to help people save the most time and help you run your business efficiently. Competition can be fierce out there, and so staying on top of it and knowing what others are doing to make their business successful will help you tremendously.

Most people may think that if they have a brick and mortar store, when they use Shopify they will need to close it down. This is not true and there is a way to use both online and offline stores. Using two models will actually create a better company in the long run.

Cost of doing business with Shopify

How much do you need to invest for using the services of Shopify? The cost is relatively cheap at only forty dollars a month. That is only ten dollars a week so you can easily set that amount aside. It is still easy to work a Shopify store and a full or part time job. In fact, it is a good idea that you have a secondary job as a backup in case revenues will not fully support you.

Since they use a dropship company where you will only need to pay fees for items when you sell them, you can easily figure out how much in fees you will pay. You will not need to have the funds right up front and so this will make you feel better about everything.

Implementing the best Strategy for your Store

Sometimes you may not be the best at designing a store or website. It is really important to know that you can have someone design it for you. Shopify has designers available who have been in the industry for a very long time. The benefit to you is they will know which type of theme will go best with the products you are trying to sell.

It will help to distinguish you from your competition. An expert will even know what works the best and will be able to design a beautiful layout that you may never have imagined in your mind. Designers working on your store will also help you with SEO and you will have a better chance and getting higher site rankings.

Getting ranked higher increases your margins for success as it reduces cost on advertising. You chances of being found on the Internet are better without the extra marketing costs. It will help you keep your prices lower for your customers as well. Remember, you always want to have win-win situations.

A Free Trial is a great Shopify Benefit for your E-Commerce Store

Let's say you want to try things out first and see if Shopify will be the platform you have been dreaming of. There is a free trial version to take it for a test spin for fourteen days. That is plenty of time to look at the themes and how it is designed and how easy it is to use. It also gives you time to set everything up and get all your items you want to sell ready.

One strategy for getting the most out of your experience is to know what you want to do with it before you try it out. If you have a plan set in place and know where you will get your customers from, you may be able to make some sales before the trial period is up. Then you will have your first payment covered for you.

So why should you Pay a Monthly Fee?

It may seem like a downfall that it costs money to start with Shopify, but if you plan it correctly, it can be to your advantage. Since they take care of the grunt work for you, meaning all the things that can give you unwanted stress, such as making sure products are stocked, getting orders prepared and such, you really do not need to worry about anything but getting traffic to your store.

If you are just starting out and want to test what sells well, you get up to 100 SKUs with your plan, so you can choose a variety of products. See which ones sell and then you can upgrade if you want to sell more of a certain type of product.

Shopify also takes only two percent of each transaction. If you want lower fees, you can easily upgrade to a different plan. Of course the only fee you need to worry about each month is the cost associated with your account. You will not need to worry about transaction fees until you sell something. The great thing is, you can add a bit of the transaction fees into the prices of your products to help offset that cost.

How many themes are there?

There are over fifty themes and template styles you can choose from. First, you want to think of your target market. Realize for a moment what they like the most as far as colors that attract them or more specifically what sells the best in that niche. Of course if the theme is not exactly set up or useable the way you will like it to be, then you can always change it without taking away the attractiveness of it.

There is No Contract to Deal with

The best thing is you are not obligated to stay with Shopify for any length of time. Since you pay month to month, there is no contract that will keep you locked in and working with the site if this is something that you simply cannot do. Other places will charge you a special per month fee if you pay for the whole year. So you are literally stuck with them until that year is up.

You will not need Computer Programming Knowledge

If you want a sophisticated website and storefront, one that stands out from the rest, you may be thinking that you need some heavy duty programming to make it work. It does make you worry sometimes because coding is a complex task. Most people, including myself do not have much knowledge about what codes work and what will make your store look better.

There are sites you can go to what will give you some insight and some codes you can use, but how do you tie it all together and use them? You can sit at your computer for hours to try and figure this out, but it will take way more time than necessary to do this. It is best in this situation to reach out to your experienced designers and have them add any feature Shopify offers.

How Shopify gets Payments Processed

There are many payment solutions Shopify uses, but the best thing is, they use Paypal which is well known. Paypal has been around for a long time and they have built trust with many people and businesses. When people see you accept payment through them, they are more likely to trust that it will be processed in the best fashion.

Better to use your own Domain Name

Another way Shopify lets you customize your shop is they allow you to use your own domain name. You will be able to brand yourself and get a catchy domain name. People are more adept to going to a store that has your own name as it differentiates you from Shopify.

You are also more likely to get backlinks from other websites. Having as many backlinks to your store as possible will give you more traffic potential. Search engines also love that you have backlinks and will love to give you a higher ranking.

Secure SSL Checkout

Security has an always will be important, but it was not as much of a worry in previous years as it is now. Most people will not go onto a website to put their personal information in it unless they know it is secure.

You can and your customers can be reassured how safe the site is to use. SSL encryption allows people to know the info is safe and Shopify offers 128bit SSL encryption. The number is the length of the security key, which 128 is pretty strong. I'll not go into details here, but you can find a lot of information about through a Google search if you are interested.

There have not been complaints about fraudulent activities with Shopify because of how intently secure the site is. People from all over the world will agree that this platform's safety and security is one of the best out there.

As much Bandwidth as you need

Traffic is something you need a lot of to give you a better chance at success. Did you ever stop and think that sometimes too much traffic can cause a headache for your hosting company? Visitors do take up bandwidth (or a range of frequencies to give off a signal), but do not worry because Shopify has allowed unlimited bandwidth, so if you begin to get heavy traffic flow, your store will not be shut down. Shopify can handle large amounts of traffic.

The more traffic, the more sales potential, so if Shopify wants more people to buy, then why wouldn't they want people to come? It would be odd if you walk into your local grocery store and the workers say, we do not have any more room for you here, you need to leave. I think you will be very shocked and feel like it did not matter you were there.

Keep a Customer's Interest with a Discount

It is always great to have a discount and coupon program. As you and everyone out there loves a deal, they will want to get the best discount possible. If you can offer that to them, it is a no brainer that a customer may choose your store over another, but do not lose sight on still giving great customer service.

Sometimes customers love that the service is great, so keep some things in mind such as a return policy, how to best streamline your service, and most importantly, make them feel as if they are the only one at your site. We all know when we shop somewhere, there are other customers, but we do not like when workers or managers make excuses as to why you could not fulfill something.

Store Backups Equal Peace of Mind

The worst feeling in the world is one day looking at your site and realizing everything was wiped clean. Your items, template, store setup; everything is gone. Well Shopify will take that worry away because they back everything up. You will not need to worry about losing all the hard work you put into creating the store.

Adding a Shopify e-Commerce Template to you site makes it easier for everyone

If you already have a website or blog you use on a regular basis, you can add an e-Commerce template to you site. Since people will already know your site or brand you will not need to worry about buying another domain name. You can use a subdomain and they cost nothing to setup.

People who already visit your site will be able to browse your store all in the same place. Remember, people love the convenience of staying in one place and getting everything they need there instead of going to multiple sites. It is also easier for them to keep track of what they got and where they got it from.

Super Customer and Technical Support

Whenever you are stuck, Shopify helps you become un-stuck. In the backend, you have access to a number of tutorials. If, even with the tutorials, there is something you are stuck on and just simply cannot get past, you can always ask customer service.

Shopify uses three Dropshipping Partners

Shopify has a major advantage than other e-Commerce store solutions. They partner with dropshipping companies to make your life easier. There are three that they work with and they are Amazon Fulfillment, Shipwire, and Webgistix. When you use a dropshipping company, it is great because the process from buying, to shipping, to making sure items are delivered are hands off for you. What I mean is, you never have to touch inventory.

You will also be able to know which items are in stock and which items are not as it is integrated with Quickbooks. When an item is out of stock, it will be updated on your site so you know and your customers both know.

Why is Dropshipping good for your Business?

The last thing you want to worry about is stocking items in your house or renting warehouse space. It is very costly, takes up room, and you need to constantly worry about making sure an item is picked and packed properly. Shopify makes it easier for you as they partnered with a dropship company so that your shipping processes can be easier to handle and be more streamlined.

Also, your cashflow is important, and so using a dropship company will help the flow of cash not be tied up in inventory. All you need to do is once a purchase is made, you will place the order with the third party company and they will handle the rest of the process.

Dropshipping is a seller's dream come true. It is less risky on your part as you do not need to invest a lot of money into inventory nor do you need to give yourself a headache to find out what is selling well. The company they use will know all this from experience and it will help you make informed decisions.

Another great thing about someone else taking care of the warehouse and shipping is you can literally work from anywhere. Whether you are in a café or at a library, or if you like to stay home, you can definitely enjoy your career and choose to work from any location.

How you should Organize yourself before you Start

It is very important to stay on top of things such as being organized from the start. Some items you want to consider having even before you make sales are spreadsheets that will create charts for you. You want to have an idea of how much you will need to spend so you know how much you can make.

There are places on the web that you can get free templates to use for Excel or other spreadsheet software you may use. Remember you want to make it as easy as just inputting the numbers so you can have an advantage from the start. The less amount of work you need to do the better.

There are some cons and drawbacks to Shopify

As with any website or program you join to sell items, there will always be drawbacks. For instance, Shopify has dropshipping companies they work with, but there is very few to choose from. As I mentioned earlier there are only three, but they may be complicated to set up, and you need to pay storage fees.

Also, you will need to upgrade to a $59 per month plan in order to offer coupon codes to your customers. Coupons and discounts are all things that people love when they are looking for products. No one likes the thought of paying full price for anything, and the cheaper they can get it, the more likely a sale will be made.

The non-drawback: Useable by People all over the Globe

This is good because your reach to customers is very extensive and feels like there are no limits to people you can sell to. Just know, it is always to your advantage to get into a niche that has a lot of competition. There will be many people trying but yet many people who give up because of how hard it may be to sell.

As Shopify reaches to all over the globe, your customer base can get really huge, and the potential to offer someone a product they are looking for is endless. When someone from a different country than yours wants to purchase something, the currencies and tax rates are automatically translated and there are no hidden fees for that.

Shopify is very reliable and since they deal with many people from around the world, they have experience in dealing with many situations. This is why the reviews online are very high. They know the ins and outs of what it takes to be more secure, how to streamline their services, and give you and your customers the best service they can.

What are some Niches that work well with this platform?

Any niche is good, but there are some that may work better than others. You will benefit more if you are into fashion, selling shirts and other types of clothing. You can even have your own clothing line and get your company off the ground in a day or less.

Shopify offers very awesome plugins like Printify, Printful, and Merchify. These are linked to apparel printers and they handle the fulfillment processes for you. It makes it that much easier to design and ship your clothing to your customers wherever they are.

Tools you can use to make your life easier

Shopify has really made it simple for everyone. So you set up your store, or you still need some convincing that this webstore is a good idea, there are several plugins that will help you master your sales and take you to higher levels in income. Let me talk about these tools and talk a little about how each one helps you.

The first thing you want to think is lead generation or creating an email list. This is a very important concept whenever you are marketing online. Shopify offers a plugin that will give you an advantage with your email correspondence. Many times you will send an email and not know if it was ready or even delivered. With *Sidekick*, you will not have to worry about that.

It will give you notifications when a customer opens and clicks on your links. You can send friendly reminders about a sale or you can re-do your pitch or use the insights which *Sidekick* provides to help you make a decision on how you should follow up. You can also schedule a response to have it sent out later.

Next is *SimilarWeb*. With this tool, you have better SEO and you can check on your competitors to see what is most effective. Then you can model after that and have a competitive edge over others. You may even get to see if there is a partnership potential with someone that will help increase leads and sales for both of you.

When you can evaluate a website with numbers such as how much traffic is coming from one source or how many people came from a certain company, it will help you make better decisions and also you can research what people from different countries is interested in.

Crystal Knows is another tool that will really help you understand your customers or potential customers. One important thing to know about people is their personality and how they buy and what makes them like something. So this tool will scape all the public data on the web about a particular person and creates a personality profile about them.

If you want to know who is a mutual connection, *Discover.ly* is another tool that helps you know this. It will find connections on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. So why would you want to use this tool? What if you could reach out to your connection and ask how they can give you some insight on the mutual connection? That is what this tool helps you to do.

Next you will want to better your Customer Relationship Management or CRM. You always want to improve in this area because your customers will change their wants and needs from time to time. *Streak* is the name of the tool and what it does is turns your email into a CRM. It works with Gmail, so if you do not have an account, it is a good idea to have one.

What *Streak* does is creates pipelines for different purposes and it will track an opportunity as it goes through. First, you can send out a mass email and certain fields will be available to choose from. You will put information in those fields based on the contact information you have such as their name, company name and such before getting more specific and personalized.

Lastly, a good tool to use is *Datanyse Insider*. This tool help you to know what technology your competition uses to make their site better. You will use this on Chrome as it is an extension and it will show you the technology a website uses. Most likely, people use this tool if they are trying to find software, but if you know anything about technology, or even if you do not, discovering how a site is run can prompt you to research the technology.

From there, you will learn more about the technology other sites use and why they use it. Keep that in mind as you are doing your research. Will this help you and your business? Can I afford it and will I get a good return on investment for using it? Have some questions prepared and always ask why and how.

Conclusion

Shopify like other e-Commerce solutions was created to make your life easier. I cannot stress enough that all the work has been done for you and all you need to do is capitalize on it. No longer do you need to sit down and research how to do business or do it efficiently. This company, along with other successful ones has figured out all the hard work so that you do not have to.

All the marketing and suppliers and financial reports are done within the website. They truly have found a way to make things easier for people and especially beginners. You do have an advantage over others when you begin a store with Shopify.

More and more people who were starting out began with Shopify and have a great testimony of success. They are less stressed because of the high security measures and that takes a lot off the pressure of having a store. The less worry you have, the better your chances are to become very successful.

The sky is the limit with Shopify and I really do wish you the best when you finally make a decision to use them. You can always take it for a test drive and if you are not satisfied, which I find hard to believe, you can always cancel your membership. I hope this article gives you the insight you are looking for.