

The Big Book of Selling Internationally

Reach your market online, wherever it may be



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Introduction

A World Without Barriers

Welcome to a new global marketplace where the restrictions that once limited international trade have fallen under massive new innovations in technology and communications. Wireless touch points, public policy, and logistics have all evolved to a point where geography is no longer a barrier to an e-commerce company and its markets, no matter what borders they may lie across. Instant customer service, same-day delivery, and international IPOs are the vocabulary of global expansion. In this new landscape, distant buyers are intimate neighbors who can access any digital storefront immediately; they can sing your praises or broadcast your shortcomings on social media seconds later. Welcome to the state of modern e-commerce.

These new avenues aren't exclusive to a limited number of online companies: they're open to any and everyone eager to sell to markets across borders and oceans. Take note, though: not only has the opportunity to sell to millions of new buyers grown, but so has the competition. The first quarter of 2014 alone boasted **\$63.4 billion** in e-commerce sales in the United States, a 23% year-over-year increase. Smart phones and tablets comprised \$7.3 billion of that offering, witnessing a new shift in the touch points consumers engage to not only buy, but also browse and inform. Globally, the United States isn't even the leader of e-commerce development. Chinese international marketplace Alibaba broke the equivalent of \$5.75 billion USD in one day during the Single's Day celebration, creating an exciting new financial benchmark for an entire industry. Total global e-commerce sales for 2013 are projected to breach \$1.3 trillion. If it sounds like there's more money on the table, that's a safe assumption to make: Amazon is actively pursuing IPOs in India, while Alibaba is going public on the New York Stock Exchange in the **biggest IPO** in history.

While the scale of these new entrants may seem intimidating, any online merchant can use the same tools, best practices, and approaches to understand their audience to localize, mobilize, and strategize. And we're here to help. Within this guide, you'll find the necessary steps and instructions to ensure that you can target any market with the right tools and confidence for immediate success. Read on. Sell more.

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Localization

What do you need to accomplish to successfully introduce your e-commerce venture to a new market that speaks a different language, trades in a different currency, follows different cultural values, and might even browse on different devices than what you're used to? Where do you even start? And, more importantly, how much effort should you pour into revamping your website for a new audience without overspending? There's no universal formula for localization, but there are definite guidelines to point you in the right direction. Aside from translating your site, captioning your content, and ensuring access to the local currency, there are also a host of technical steps to help your site thrive online in foreign countries (read the SEO chapters for the full story). However eager you are to expand, the following measures are absolutely essential to entering the international marketplace. Learning the following strategies will help you to better understand your customer, and in turn, maximize your sales for visitors who feel right at home on your site no matter where they actually live.





#1 Translate Your Site's Language Based on the User's IP Address

By customizing your content and its language based on the user's IP address, you can provide a much more comfortable experience for international buyers with little effort. So how can you start? After all, translating your language to a native tongue directly through software doesn't always produce the most detailed results — anyone who's hit the "Google Translate" button can tell you that much. However, if you're just starting, this is a better step than none at all. Why?

For one, taking this first step tells the buyer that your company has the customers' needs in mind. The best strategy to translate your site is to convert all text based on the user's internet protocol. Don't think this is as important as it sounds? After all, English is spoken in most countries, right? Not necessarily. In fact, according to recent Common Sense Advisory research, 30% of 3,000 international respondents in a report never bought within English-language sites, and another 29% rarely purchased. More importantly, 56% of those surveyed either spent more time on sites in their own language than they did in English, or they outright boycotted English-language URLs altogether.

This data means you're missing out on a global clientele because your code hasn't facilitated the right languages. While language targeting through IP may seem like a minor task, we're profiling it first because it's the most important on the list and takes marginal effort to utilize.

Action Steps

-  **Step #1** - Identify the key countries and languages that are important to your business.
-  **Step #2** - Consider this the first step into localization, not the last.
-  **Step #3** - Install plugins like [WP Geocode Filter](#) or [GeoIP Detection](#) so your webstore can identify the countries and languages of your visitors.
-  **Step #4** - Coordinate translated pages with each international IP you choose to target.

#2 Voice-Over or Caption Your Content

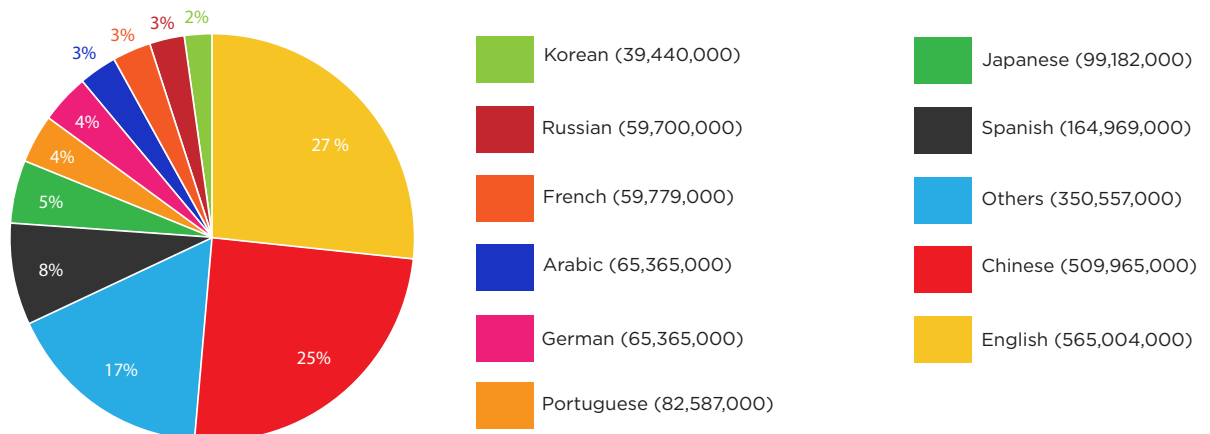
Based off the last chapter, you may think that solely translating text takes care of your localization needs, but what about that creative video or the captions on your slideshow? Those touch points are just as important, if not more, than any other criteria you'll alter on your site. After all, content helps build your brand, funnels in new customers, and retains the old ones.

Do you want to know why this step is so important? Another Common Sense Advisory Report from 2012 states that global brands need to offer content in 21 different languages to reach 90% of all visitors. While it may not be feasible to achieve that growth right away, identifying a few key languages — Chinese and Spanish are spoken most by internet users after English — and converting your content to make it local-specific are two great actionables to begin attracting an international clientele that not only shows interest, but also kicks off the path to purchase.

Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Focus on how your core content can be re-purposed and altered to make sense for localization.
- ✓ **Step #2** - Brainstorm options for creating content specific to your target country.
- ✓ **Step #3** - Identify the top 3 – 5 languages where your current content would make the biggest splash if you added subtitles or voice-overs.

Estimates of the number of internet users by language



#3 Design for Mobile & Other Devices

A large percentage of the world's internet surfers access the Internet from mobile devices. In fact, according to State of Mobile research, global mobile traffic now accounts for 15 percent of all Internet traffic, and 50 percent of all global online visitors now use mobile as either their primary (or exclusive) means of hopping on the net. But what does this really mean? For starters, State of Mobile also reports that 80 percent of global consumers plan to make a purchase using mobile in the next year. They also say that mobile devices top the list for the greatest impact on purchasing decisions.

In the broadest terms, mobile is everywhere, and its usage is growing at astonishing speeds. If you're only focusing on desktops for your localization strategy and efforts, it's time to branch out. Why is there such a big swell toward mobile devices?

1. Cell phones are often cheaper than PCs.
2. Personal phones can be carried around, hence the work mobile.
3. Mobile phones power connections to the outside world in more ways than just e-commerce.

For mobile localization, be aware of whether your target country has made the jump to smartphones or if its users still operate on WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) sites. But what's the best way to design for multiple devices? Click forward to our User Experience section for those answers and more!

Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Plan mobile efforts in conjunction with web efforts — don't let one run away from the other. The content should be similar, if designed differently.
- ✓ **Step #2** - Don't underestimate the power of mobile around the globe.
- ✓ **Step #3** - Heed the same rules for creating and translating content across mobile discussed in previous chapters.

// User Experience

Plain and simple, good user experience is universal to any country: clean and clear design will help present your offerings in the most attractive digital environment and entice your visitors to buy more quickly. In addition, these best practices are essential to create a storefront accessible on a range of devices; an important fact as some groups don't necessarily use desktops or laptops. Populations that use older mobile phones will rely on responsive design, a way to guarantee your content is accessible from all touch points, to scroll through your products quickly and easily without excessive delay from large images. The more effort you put into making a site that can be enjoyed by more people, the less you'll exclude the future markets you never knew you had. Likewise, creating product pages that communicate value through copy, pictures, and videos will help convert interested visitors into returning buyers.

#4 Responsive User Experience

With the proliferation of mobile devices, e-commerce companies have adapted from desktops to roughly any device where their users may shop. Mobile e-commerce sites used to be a luxury for some e-commerce sites that targeted a specific consumer group; now they're mandatory for any company that wants to be successful online. Previously, companies would have to build multiple versions of their sites to work on mobile devices and another that would work on desktops — an expensive endeavor. Thankfully with the advances in modern web technologies, responsive website design has eased the rift between desktop and mobile websites.

Responsive design is a general term for front end development languages (like HTML and CSS) that allow webpage elements to be reused, resized, and repositioned across multiple devices to deliver a consumer experience that takes advantage of each individual device's design. Ultimately, building a responsive website provides enough ecommerce benefits compared to the few downsides that could develop. Using responsive design is important because many foreign markets still use mobile phones as main, if not primary, means to shop online, including many countries in Africa and the Middle East.

Consumers who use your e-commerce site on their desktop have the benefit of a mouse interface and easy-to-use keyboard, making navigating your site an incredibly easy experience. Mobile smartphone sites are often used with single fingers and a small digital keyboard that makes typing difficult, so considerations need to be made for this different user experience. The most important basic user experiences that need to be addressed in mobile interfaces are: (1) larger buttons and (2) provisions for vertical scrolling.

Larger buttons are necessary because fingers generally aren't accurate when selecting options in small areas, like mobile screens. Small buttons on mobile websites often result in missed clicks or the requirement to zoom in to make sure the right button is pressed. In general, buttons on mobile sites should be large enough to fit an average user's thumbprint.

The desktop version of the product page features a light blue header with navigation links: 'All Products', 'Why People ♥ Us', and 'Shipping Info'. A 'FREE Shipping!' banner is on the left, and a 'Cart' icon with '0 items' is on the right. The main content area includes the product name 'The Pocket Spotlight' with the tagline 'Bright, constant light in the palm of your hand'. A large image shows the spotlight attached to a smartphone. To the right, the price is '\$30.00', followed by a large yellow 'Add to Cart' button, 'In Stock!', and a countdown timer: 'Order in the next 18h 49m 12s and it Ships Tomorrow! (Shipping options ▼)'. Below this is a 'Free Shipping on orders over \$50' banner, a '30 Second Checkout' badge, and a list of payment methods: Amazon, PayPal, VISA, MasterCard, and Discover.

The desktop and mobile versions (top and right respectively) show the differences in size of the buttons and content.

Vertical scrolling is the main navigational method on most mobile sites. Whereas content and page elements can be arranged more horizontally on desktop sites, mobile responsive sites require that content be placed in the narrow confines of the screen, resulting in content chunks that stack on top of each other and allow the consumer to scroll through with their thumbs. There are some considerations that need to be made with vertical scrolling of a mobile responsive website, though. The largest consideration to take into account is that the more content you stack in a vertical space, the more the consumer will have to scroll through, and the more content they will probably skip. This usually isn't a problem, but on product pages, keep in mind that users shouldn't have to scroll extensively to find the add to cart button.

The mobile version of the product page has a blue header with the 'Photojojo!' logo. The product image is smaller and positioned at the top. Below it, the product name 'The Pocket Spotlight' is displayed in a large font, followed by the tagline 'Bright, constant light in the palm of your hand'. The price '\$30.00' is shown, followed by a yellow 'Add to Cart' button, 'IN STOCK!', and a countdown timer: 'Order in the next 18hr'.

#5 Product Category Pages

Unless you sell more than a handful of products, your international e-commerce site will require categories for easier product navigation by your consumers. Categories are the large sections within which your individual products are listed. Categories allow you to show your consumer the product they want as well as other similar products that they possibly didn't know that they wanted. But how you organize these categories is integral to how your consumers will find the products they want, and ultimately, make a purchase.

When planning your product categories, think about your consumer's journey. Is your consumer's shopping journey linear, where they just need to find one product? Or is it more indirect, where they have a general concept of what kind of product they want to buy but want to see options? Think about the consumer who is unfamiliar with the kinds of products you sell and how they would associate the categories with the products within.

How many categories you have is an important consideration as well — the more categories you have means more clicks and more reading for your consumers, which could tire them before they find the product that they want. Too few categories could also mean lots of scrolling and searching as the consumer wades through the possible hundreds of products that could be in one category. Looking to the previous chapter on responsive design, think of an audience that only uses mobile phones to shop. At what point will they stop scrolling? One way around this issue is to make sub-categories for your products. For instance, an apparel e-commerce site could have a broad product category of bottoms followed by sub-categories of pants, shorts, and skirts.

But how do you also physically lay out categories on your ecommerce site? Do you only have a handful of categories that can be easily laid out in your website's navigational bar? Should this navigational bar be placed at the top of the page or in a sidebar. Should the categories be placed in a drop-down list from a button in the navigational bar? Or should all the categories be organized in a completely separate category page ?

When placing the categories, think of a place where you think your consumer will look first and accommodates their consumer journey. Consumers will generally always look to the **top or to the side of the page**. If you decide to place the categories in a sidebar, always place them on the left side of the page, which will save the categories from disappearing as the consumer resizes the page. When placing the categories at the top, use a floating toolbar that will stay pinned to the top of the page, even if your consumer scrolls.

Photojojo organizes its products into a few user-specific categories. Amazon, on the other hand, organizes its products into functionally-relevant categories with sub-categories.

#6 Product Pages

Although pictures and beautiful imagery will help you sell your products, you still need to include some text to tell the product's story and fill in details that you can't see from the photos. How much you say and in what voice you say it in are all important considerations in the copy of your product descriptions. Are you a fun, casual company? Your product descriptions should be short and funny. Do you sell electronic products? Then a table with a list of technical information could be the best way to describe your products. If you are pursuing an international market and looking for software to translate your text, avoid culture-specific jokes or pop culture references, which international buyers won't understand no matter how well they're translated.

Furthermore, there are typographic (or font) considerations that should be taken into account in the display of your product descriptions. The text should be set in a font that is easy to read and of a large enough size that it can be read well on a monitor. Furthermore, the text should be short — the length of a few sentences or a short paragraph. Longer text gives your consumer the idea that they will have to invest a lot of time in reading to understand your product or service.

Description	Tech Specs
<p>You know that nauseous feeling you get while watching your family's shaky home videos? The one that you always blame on your parents' stunning fashion choices?</p> <p>The Camera Table Dolly is here to make sure your videos don't come with a side effect of nausea. While it won't teach your parents how to dress, it will give your videos a smooth, professional look.</p> <p>Just clamp down on your phone or twist your camera onto the dolly and you're ready to roll! Literally. The dolly's two sets of rotating wheels ensure the smoothest of panning -- and its industrial grade aluminum base can stand up to the heaviest of equipment.</p> <p>The Table Dolly's friction arm adjusts so you can shoot straight up, straight down, or anywhere in between! Just tighten the joints to lock your camera into place. Or, use the dolly without the arm and add</p>	<p>A smooth and sturdy dolly for pro-style video panning</p> <p>Smallest dolly system out there</p> <p>Set contains: friction arm, clamp for smart phones, and dolly</p> <p>Goes anywhere/ simple set-up</p> <p>Industrial grade aluminum base</p> <p>Arm adjusts to shoot at any angle</p> <p>Holds your camera phone/DSLR/point-</p>

Amazon product descriptions are rendered as succinct bullet points that showcase the most important attributes of the product in the easiest way possible. Amazon sells so many products that utility of information is of the utmost importance in its product descriptions.

Photojojo takes a hybrid approach to its product descriptions. Because Photojojo serves a couple different audiences, the company showcases both technical information as well as a more story-driven description. For the casual consumer, a relatively long, but funny, product description is given, along with bullet points for the consumer who just wants a general idea of the product. For the more serious consumer who needs technical information for how the product will perform in specific circumstances, there is a separate tech specs tab that is easily accessible.

Victorinox 40520 Fibrox 8-Inch Chef's Knife
 by Swiss Army
 ★★★★★ 1,732 customer reviews | 14 answered questions

List Price: \$46.60
 Price: **\$39.49 & FREE Shipping.** [Details](#)

In Stock.
 Sold by FSN and Fulfilled by Amazon. Gift-wrap available.

Want it Thursday, May 22? Order within **16 hrs 17 mins** and choose **One-Day Shipping** at checkout. [Details](#)

Product Packaging: **Standard Packaging**

Frustration-Free Packaging Standard Packaging

- 8-inch multipurpose chef's knife designed for chopping, mincing, slicing, and dicing

Product photos and videos are some of the most important tools you can use on your website to drive sales conversions. Product photos do several jobs for your consumers: they entice them to look at products, they provide detailed information about the product that the consumer doesn't have to read, they enhance your brand, and they also add legitimacy to your e-commerce store. In any case, your product photos and videos should be front and center for the consumer.

Great product photos can make or break your consumer shopping experience, and they take an even more important role on an international scale. Are your pictures and videos professional? Do you show all the important angles that a consumer would want to see? Are they targeted toward a specific market? Colors mean different things to different cultures. While white can be seen as a symbol of purity in some countries, it symbolizes death in others. Technically, one of the downfalls of great pictures is the better quality the photo is, the larger the image size is and the slower your webpage will load, which could turn off some consumers. One way to avoid this issue is to not load all large pictures at once, and instead show one large image with a gallery of thumbnails of alternate views that can be clicked on and viewed. If your product photos require showing a lot of detail, the addition of photo magnification can let your consumer have the option of taking a closer look at their potential purchase.

If you sell products where time or movement is an important attribute, then video could be a good alternative to pictures and descriptions. Length and quality of the video is important to consider as consumers don't have a long attention span, and the product videos should help the consumer rather than seem like a chore.

Photojojo's product pages feature bold original photography that echoes its photography brand's fun and quirky personality.

All of the product photos and videos are integrated into one easy to navigate thumbnail gallery that is consistent from product page to product page.

The screenshot shows the Photojojo product page for the 'Camera Table Dolly'. The main image is a black dolly with two large green wheels and a smartphone mounted on top. The price is \$90.00, and there is an 'Add to Cart' button. Below the price, it says 'Order in the next 1hr 2m 41s and it Ships Today! (Shipping options)'. There is also a 'Free Shipping on orders over \$90' badge and a '30 Second Checkout' badge. At the bottom, there is a gallery of thumbnails showing different views and videos of the product. The page also includes a navigation bar at the top with 'All Products' and 'Why People Use Us' links, and a shopping cart icon in the top right corner.

/// International SEO

If a tree falls in the woods and nobody is around to hear it, does it still make a sound? If a website launches globally but doesn't have the proper SEO tools installed, will people visit? One of these questions is debatable and one is not. Optimizing your website for SEO, or search engine optimization, can mean the difference between success and failure in a seller's home country, let alone on a global scale. This fact takes on greater importance for companies expanding to international countries and markets. Why? Not all countries use the same search engines, so preparing your website for the best page rankings requires a deeper understanding of your target's behavior and tools. Google may be the most popular browser in the world with over a trillion unique monthly visitors, but emergent e-commerce countries like Russian and China rely on different means to search the internet. Fortunately, any online business can take advantage of a few basic tools and strategies to boost their SEO presence. By choosing a country-specific domain, translating the language to a target market's, and correctly applying meta data, any e-commerce company will take the right steps to climb page rankings, appearing before buyers just waiting to discover their product.

#7 Site Structure

The first (and one of the most important) decisions you'll face in directing your SEO is choosing what your domain should be called and what structure you want your international expansion to take. To this point, we explore the ins and outs of different URL structures available.

Country Specific Domain Structure

This set up is more traditional and widely-used, and some argue it's the better set up for country-by-country expansion. Country specific domain structure relies on having a separate domain targeted at each country in which you operate. Here's an example:

www.myawesomedomain.co.uk — for all UK sales and services

www.myawesomedomain.com — for all USA sales and services

www.myawesomedomain.com.hk — for all Hong Kong sales and services

This approach works if your company can buy the same domain across each country (other parties might hold your domain ransom in some places). There are also some instances where your company will need to own physical office space in a specific country to purchase a domain, which could cause issues if you don't plan to own or rent international real estate. Ultimately, this is a simple and effective expansion strategy that allows you to move at your own pace and expand one country at a time.

Country Sub Folder Structure

This newer structure relies on having one domain with subfolders targeted at each country and language variation you would like to operate in. Here are some examples:

www.myawesomedomain.com/en-uk — for all UK sales and services

www.myawesomedomain.com/en-us — for all USA sales and services

www.myawesomedomain.com/es-mx — for all Mexico sales and services

This approach allows you to accommodate for every country and language variation you would like to address, all under one domain roof. This strategy has plenty of benefits — one Content Management System (CMS), one site to design, one Webmaster Tools account, one Analytics account, and one site to link build to.

As Google has developed and evolved, it has become sophisticated enough to allow for multiple country and language sub folders, all targeted at different areas of the world, so you don't need to worry about Google penalizing your SEO efforts for duplicate content!

#8 Language Selection

After you perfect your geographic targeting, you also need to think about the languages people speak so you can communicate and connect with your customers properly. Though we briefly covered this section in the “Localization” section, a more sophisticated approach to this issue is to include a language code within your pages’ source code. This code informs the search engines what language(s) you are targeting. A full list of the language codes can be found in this [resource from Google](#).

Multiple languages in the same country

It is extremely important to differentiate languages when there is more than one recognized language used in one country. For example: in Canada, French and English are both widely spoken. You need to ensure that you cater to both parties. Luckily, there are a few ways you can accomplish this.

- Set up a domain for each language in Canada with the same content, but with each different language
- Use one domain for Canada with an option to select which language you want to view the site in
- Offer a sub folder for each language variation

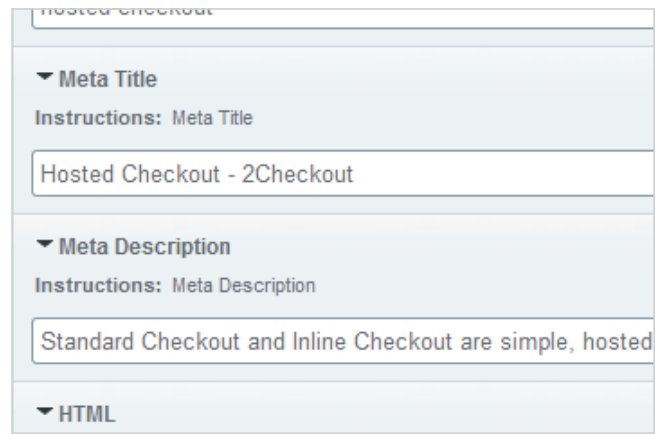
Language targeting is beyond important to engage the customers you’re targeting in each country and allows you to use your content over multiple domains or sub folders without the threat of duplication penalties from Google. This process can become complicated when you address multiple languages in the same country, but if you keep the process simple and always think, “Who am I trying to reach and why?” you can’t go wrong.

#9 META DATA

Metadata is one of the, if not the, strongest ranking factors that Google relies on to understand what your site and its pages are all about.

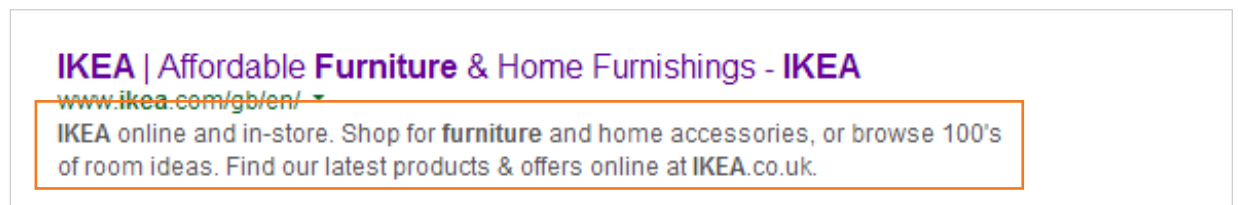
Every web page — yes, every page — should include a meta title. Each meta title should include the following:

- The most relevant keyword to the content. This should appear as close to the start of the title as possible.
- Your brand. This is usually placed at the end of the title.
- Titles should be kept to approximately 60 characters, or else they risk truncation in search results.
- Every title must be unique — you can be penalized for having large quantities of duplicate meta titles.



The image shows a screenshot of a meta data editor interface. It has three main sections, each with a dropdown arrow on the left and instructions on the right. The first section is for the Meta Title, with the instruction 'Instructions: Meta Title' and a text input field containing 'Hosted Checkout - 2Checkout'. The second section is for the Meta Description, with the instruction 'Instructions: Meta Description' and a text input field containing 'Standard Checkout and Inline Checkout are simple, hosted'. The third section is for HTML, with the instruction 'Instructions: HTML' and an empty text input field.

The most effective way to write a meta title is to write for the user, not the search engines. Meta titles are important whether you like to write them or not. You need them, Google needs them to understand what your pages are all about, and your users need them to know what they are clicking on in the search results.



IKEA's meta description in the search results.

If you keep up to date with the algorithmic shifts that Google continues to implement, then you'll know meta descriptions no longer contribute as a ranking factor in SEO. So why do you need them? Let's take a look.

- Meta descriptions appear in the search results. They populate the section under the meta title, shown in the above Ikea example.

- They give the user a description of the page to let him or her know if the page is of interest, therefore increasing click through rates from organic search traffic.

Each meta description should be around 150 characters and describe the page the user is visiting. Similarly to meta titles, each meta description must be unique to avoid penalties from search engines.

The meta description is not as important in terms of SEO as it was five years ago, but it is still vital in terms of usability and attracting organic visits. Usability and visitors should be the main focus in all of your on-site activity — if you're building a site simply for SEO perfection, then you're going to struggle if you don't keep the users' needs as the number one priority.



There are also a number of international search engines that do things slightly differently.

Google is the global market leader by far, holding just under 70% of the organic search domain at the end of 2013. Google is the leader in terms of algorithm advancement and understanding search terms. The rest of the world's leading search engines may all fall behind Google, but you would be playing a fool's game if you didn't consider them in your search strategy.

The safest and most efficient way to do this is to optimize everything I have mentioned above, fully and on every page. It may sound tedious and laborious, but it is the best strategy you can take. There is no point in being tempted by shady tactics like keyword stuffing or hidden content; those practices may get you some quick wins but will hurt you badly in the long run.

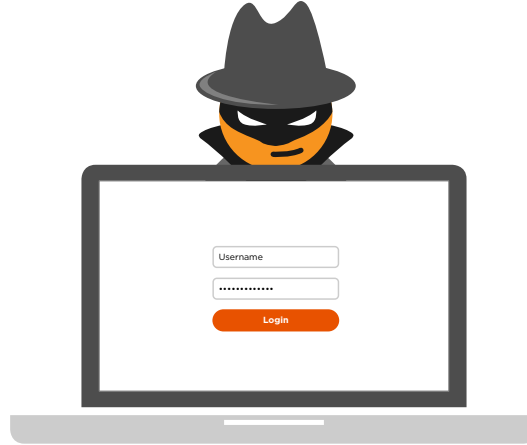
Security & Shipping

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1. Fraud

When a company provides top-notch fraud protection, it doesn't just protect a business from malicious software and fraudsters, but it also shows its customers that it cares about them, providing a safe, secure environment where a buyer can place his or her trust and credit card information without fear or anxiety. North American merchants and consumers lost a combined \$3.5 billion dollars last year to e-commerce fraud alone; unfortunately, fraud operates on a larger scale than it ever has before. As shown in the [2Checkout Fraud Index](#), cross-border transactions are 20% more risky than domestic transactions. This unfortunate reality means that large corporations that operate in multiple countries face increased peril when compared to smaller operations.

Not only can fraudulent transactions steal money and damage trust, but they can also result in customer chargebacks. Chargebacks occur whenever a customer requests that a bank refunds a transaction that was allegedly made in error. If a bank witnesses enough customer chargebacks, it can impose harsh fines or even stop working with an online merchant. If an online company has gone through all of the work within the previous steps of this guide, protecting a website from bad actors and fraud is completely necessary to guarantee that all of the effort remains protected. The following chapters review the three primary types of fraud and what you can do to keep them as far away from your business as possible. Secure sellers make happy customers.



#10 Account Takeover

Account takeover fraud, the unauthorized access and control of another user's personal information online, is the most prevalent type of fraud in the e-commerce domain. Last year, account takeover fraud (ATO) affected over 13 million buyers. ATO, also known as identity theft, occurs when one user obtains the credentials to another user's value-storing account. A value-storing account can be anything from a bank account to a gaming account to a Facebook profile. According to Javelin Strategy & Research, ATO takes place every three seconds in the United States. ATO is relatively easy to execute, especially for the professional hacker. All any one person requires to tap into another user's financial accounts is a name and password, either acquired by tedious guesswork, purchasing, or deploying more sophisticated malware (more on that later) attacks. Sometimes access can be as simple as answering a security question.

In order to give the customer more (multiple POS locations and access over multiple devices), companies also open up more doors for cyber criminals to infiltrate the system, to attack trusted members, and to steal personal information from customers. Although the customer comes first, and that relationship is most important, all businesses must acknowledge that the customer, trustworthy or not, can also be the company's weakest link. Whether by choice or lack of awareness, customers and users often don't take the proper security measures at their own volition.

Take the following ATO security measures (outside of the aforementioned requirements) to guarantee secure and closely-monitored membership accounts. Learn to verify, monitor patterns, and flag unusual activity. Whether users appreciate it or not, such actions are both for the protection of the company and its customers.

1. **Use a third-party verification system.** This is a must to protect credit card transactions. Install a 3D secure system (also known as Verified by Visa or MasterCard SecureCode). This is a third-party verification check that asks the customer to enter a passcode before any purchase.
2. **Practice Session Linking.** Large scale ATO can take place within minutes. Session Linking is the concept of tracking all users and all activity that takes place during a log-in session within a short period of time. When multiple users show a similar activity (the same link shared; the same product purchased) in this short window of time, it is cause for concern. Depending on the size of a business, session linking can last anywhere from five minutes to one hour. Generally, cyber criminals have to go to great lengths to get the tools to hack, therefore the chances of an ATO occurring on only one or two accounts is very slim.
 - **Look for signs of an impending ATO when multiple accounts are:**
 - accessed at the same time from the same network, IP address, or device
 - making the same purchase
 - requesting recovery information
 - changing shipping information
3. **Monitor account behavior.** A change in both concrete patterns and behavioral patterns can be an indicator of an ATO. *Concrete* patterns include changes in: location, IP address, shipping address, verification information or device. Those ‘*This email is to notify you that the password for the [Snapchat, PNC, Amazon Prime, Yoga Hive] account for [your user name] has been changed*’ really do merchants and buyers a favor. *Behavior patterns* refer to when a user exhibits changes in online engagement and activity — posting, purchasing, duration, hour, and type of engagement. The Twitter user who suddenly blows up everyone’s newsfeed with one URL at two o’clock in the morning is not typical behavior for a user who logs in, at most, three times a week.
4. **Communicate.** Contacting account holders to ask a few in-flow questions benefits everyone if an ATO is possible. These questions sort out the customers from the criminals through knowledge and response time. Purchase history, previous shipping addresses, and names of friends are all good topics. The more specific the questions, the more difficult it will be for the fraudster to recall correct answers in a timely fashion. Additionally, it is worthwhile to inform employees about the different types and dangers of e-commerce fraud. When people learn not to click on erroneous links, open spammy emails, and readily give out information — be it personal or professional — in great quantity and detail, the likelihood of suffering a data breach will be reduced.



#11 Credit Card

A stolen credit card can be acquired in various ways. **Card Not Present** (CNP) credit card fraud constitutes any illegitimate buying and selling transaction that takes place online with stolen credit information: it can involve sales, re-sales, or returns. Before cybercrime flourished, criminals stole credit cards by old-fashioned pickpocketing. Steal the wallet, grab the American Express (company cards are best), and high-tail it down the Jersey Turnpike buying \$5,000+ worth of sporting equipment, DVDs, and jeans. Complete the process by ditching the card and re-selling the goods. All the while, the AmEx's legal owner isn't even aware that he or she has a lighter wallet. That was how credit card fraud was executed ten years ago.

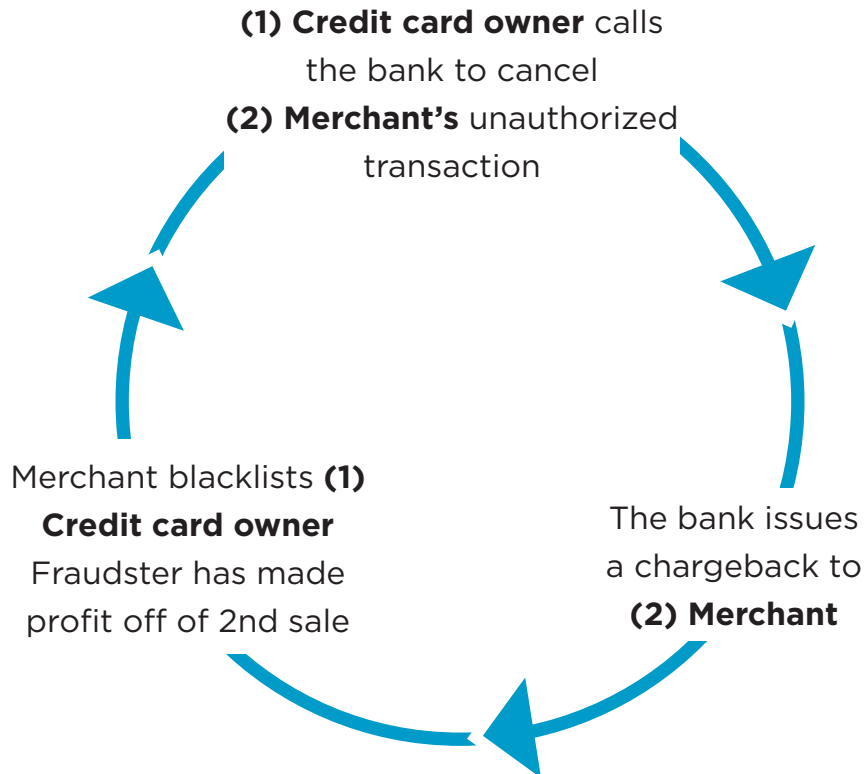
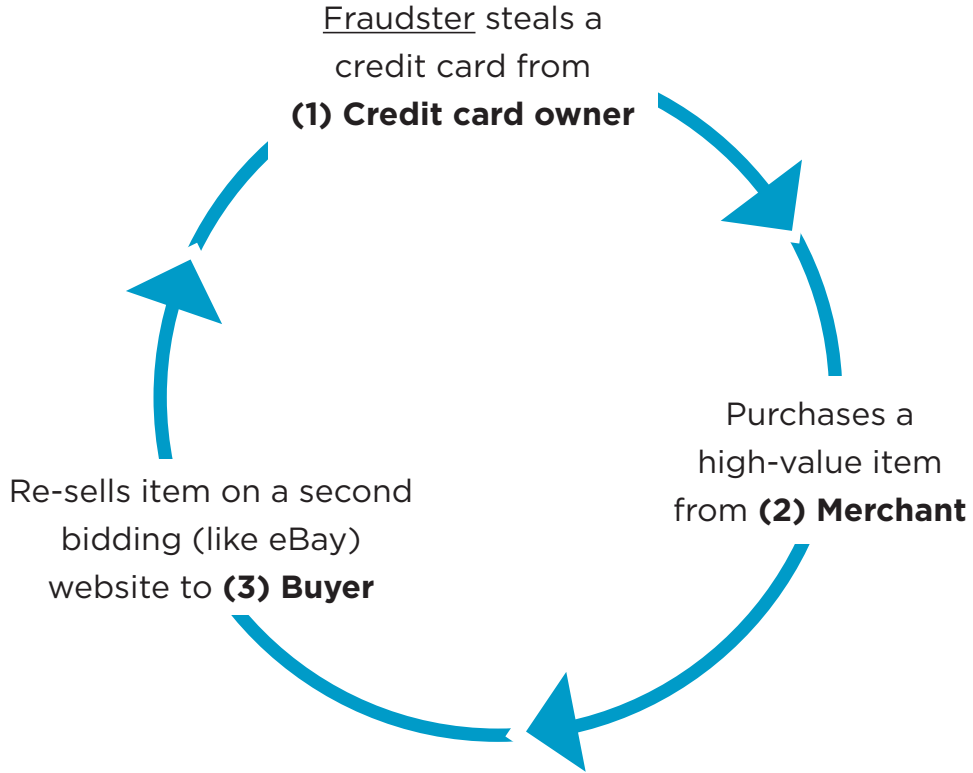
The process is far more sophisticated these days. Today, credit card information is swiped via malware (we're getting to that, promise) and various types of ATO. The transactions are considered Card Not Present transactions, and in all cases of CNP, it is the merchant (the seller, the company, the business owner) that loses big. Banks and credit card owners are not liable for the loss.

When credit cards are involved, there are less ex-post-facto measures an e-commerce business can take, as credit card fraud falls on the merchant. Fraudsters can prey off merchants and businesses that have a noticeable gap between the seller and the buyer; merchants with this liability will experience this type of fraud the most. This situation allows customers to circumvent the merchant or seller and go straight to a bank or credit card company. Going by the old adage, "the customer is always right," the customer — or fraudster in this case — plays the easy role of the victim, whether he or she was legitimately victimized.

To prevent this type of e-commerce fraudulence, businesses and e-tailers must maintain a tight and trustworthy relationship among the merchant, the buyer and, if need be, the third-party billing or payment provider. Here are a few steps that small and large e-commerce businesses can take to close the gap and discourage fraudsters from stealing merchandise, receiving illegal refunds, and making a dirty profit.

1. **Keep them close.** Encourage customers to contact the customer service team if they have any questions at all about shipping, delivery, purchasing, returns, or sales. Give customers and members no reason to contact a financial or lending institution in place of directly contacting the business or the merchant. If the merchant and customer can resolve an issue in-person, a chargeback won't be needed. In turn, make sure that the customer service team is informed, up-to-speed, and exhibits undisputable, excellent service.
2. **Keep Records.** Monitor all interactions — phone calls, emails, online chats — between customers and the customer service team. Be ready to reach out when the signs of an impending chargeback appear so that the customer knows that a refund can be properly issued without a financial third party.
3. **Require delivery receipts on any product that has shipped.** Have customers sign upon delivery. This action provides more proof, more tangible records that customers have received goods shipped; this information can counteract a chargeback in some instances if a customer signs for a product and later disputes that he or she never received it.
4. **Use a “soft descriptor.”** This type of copy is used to keep suppliers and credit card companies aware of the product purchased and to keep consumers accountable for what they've purchased. A soft descriptor looks something like this: *mybusiness 444-123-5678 NM \$57.00*, and will appear on bills and statements. This soft descriptor ensures transparency between the customer and merchant as it outlines exactly what and how much a product costs.

The Cycle of Triangulation Fraud: 3 Victims





#12 Malware

There are 111,111 unique strains of malware deployed each day, estimates [Aite Group](#). With malware, we're discussing that incredibly annoying desktop pop-up we've all seen: '*Malware Detected! Danger: Malware Ahead!*' that blinks repeatedly until you either choose to close the alert or run the suggested virus scan. Malware is malicious software that collects data or controls computer resources without the knowledge and consent of the user. It's not so much its own form of fraud, as a technology that helps elevate and enable it to a whole new level of harm. Just ask Target, as malware was the cyber criminal tactic used for their second security breach last December.

Malware puts both companies and their customers at risk for credit card fraud and account takeover fraud. Many traditional fraud prevention tools analyze the user's device to verify the user against previous or public information, assuming that the person operating the trusted device is the trusted user, and is therefore safe. Malware breaks this model. There are several red flags to identify a device plagued by malware. If a device is connecting from Africa, for example, when the customer resides in Maryland, then that's a red flag. If a device shows a change in IP address? Red flag. If a device shows an excessive amount of unusual outbound traffic (emails, posting, file transfers), that could also indicate that the device is infected with malware.

Before addressing technical precautionary steps to prevent malware infections, please ensure personal and professional machines are protected with these three simple checks (this goes equally for Macs and PCs). (1) Install the latest security software from your system's designers; the same goes for Androids, iPhones, and other smartphones. (2) Install and update third-party anti-virus programs. (3) Set the program to update to the latest malware definitions. Make sure the program regularly performs all-system scans, which a good program will. Do any less than these three, and you leave your company open to a security breach.

1. **Keep it separate.** There are two methods to keep your digital assets segregated so malware can't infect your entire system: do both. (1) Create one separate administrator account *only* to be used when installing, updating, and deleting software. Do not search, browse, or hop online with this account. Don't even read emails. If this account is infected, you can delete it without touching the rest of your work partitioned elsewhere on your computer. (2) Do not grant users (customers) any type of administrative access, or allow them to make changes to the operating system.
2. **Use Firewall Security.** This is a barrier between a trusted, internal, and secure network (your business), and any other network (the Internet). A firewall won't allow certain types of information through. With a firewall, a company can set up specifications, *I.E. only one computer out of many is able to receive traffic from an FTP server.* Keep an additional firewall between the application server and the database server, which will significantly minimize the risk of malware infection from an online web server, advises Derek Hitch, of the blog Tweak Your Biz.
3. **Use strong passwords.** Yes, this also goes for members, users, and customers, but as previously noted, the customer is king (or queen), and nothing can be forced upon him or her. However, internally, all machines and employees need to have very, very strong passwords that should be changed quarterly.
 - Here are general shoulds and should nots for creating passwords:
 - Passwords should not contain a complete word
 - Passwords should be at least eight characters long
 - Passwords should not contain: your name, your username, your company's name
 - Passwords should be significantly different than previous passwords
 - Passwords should contain all four: an upper case letter, a lower case letter, a symbol and a number
4. **Don't forget mobile devices** Apple users: avoid any "jailbreaking" tactics and install regular iOS updates. Droid users: Install Mobile Security Software. And *never* install a system update that pops up on your screen. You can always check [Android Official Blog](#) to see what is new and upcoming.

// Shipping

Now to address one of the more technical areas of running an international e-commerce company: international shipping. At this point, any merchant is well aware that many options exist to help reach buyers thousands of miles away. The real question asks what options will help maximize revenue, save on costs, and deliver the services that resonate the most with new customers. In addition, tariffs, taxes, and unique country restrictions demand different approaches for different buyers. There are no easy answers here. Luckily, there are resources to help a merchant to easily, if not necessarily quickly, discover a system that best fits his or her needs. In the following chapter, any online business seeking the most efficient and logical shipping methods will find valuable information on the services and vendors that can help them spread their goods, which restrictions they should keep an eye out for, and why returns aren't always as simple as they might seem.

#13 Types of International Shipping

Just like domestic shipping, there are various shipping vendors, times, and dates to consider when choosing a partner for your international needs. And just as in domestic shipping cases, much of the decision-making often comes down to personal preference and how quickly you need to deliver the item to your buyer.

However, there is some baseline information on each of the most popular services, so let's take a look at a few different options:



USPS First Class International (FCI)

- Delivery can take up to 21 days.
- This option is great for packages that are 4 pounds or lighter.
- Packages must be no larger than 36" total when adding together the length, width, and height of the package.
- No tracking or delivery confirmation.
- A PS Form 2976 from customs is needed for all shipments — you'll know you have the right one if it's small and green.
- You'll need to go to the post office to print your shipping labels.
- This is the most affordable USPS shipping option.

USPS Global Express Guaranteed

- Fastest international USPS service, offers date-specific delivery in 1-3 business days.
- Maximum package weight is 70 pounds.
- Includes \$100 in insurance coverage and delivery tracking.
- Most expensive USPS shipping option.

USPS Priority Mail International Flat Rate (PMI)

- Delivery in 6-10 days.
- Tracking information is available, but there is no delivery confirmation.
- Faster arrival times than FCI, but at a higher cost and with less security.
- Maximum package weight is 70 pounds.
- You'll need the PS Form 2976 for small flat rate boxes and envelopes but the larger multi-page customs form PS Form 2976-A for all other shipments.
- Up to a 5% discount for online postage customers.

USPS Express Mail International

- Delivery in 3-5 days.
- More expensive than PMI or FCI.
- Maximum package weight is 70 pounds.
- Date-specific delivery and money-back guarantee for select countries.
- Up to an 8% discount for online postage customers.



FedEx Flat-Rate International

- Typically delivered within 1, 2, or 3 business days.
- For shipments up to 56 pounds.
- You'll need to pick up the boxes at FedEx.

FedEx International First

- Delivery as early as 9 AM in 2 business days or 10 AM in 3 business days in select countries.
- No third party carrier.
- Saturday pick-ups available.
- Ship up to 150 pounds.

FedEx International Priority

- Delivery in 1, 2, or 3 business days.
- Saturday pick-ups available.
- Ship up to 150 pounds.

FedEx Priority Alert

This is more like an additional layer of protection than an actual shipping type. FedEx Priority Alert pairs a global service analyst with your package. This person monitors your shipment around-the-clock and offers support every step of the way. He or she also ensures your package receives priority placement on aircrafts and priority clearance handling, when available. FedEx also offers special shipping solutions for the **aerospace**, **healthcare**, and **wine** sectors — an important factor considering that USPS refuses to ship any alcoholic beverages, as you'll see in the prohibited list later in this e-book. If you're looking to ship specialty items like wine, we'd recommend checking with either FedEx or another shipping carrier.

For FedEx, detailed information can be found on their website, but benefits of specialized shipping also include everything from obtaining the proper licenses and authorizations, to temperature controlled shipping to (near) real-time monitoring of your package.



UPS Express Critical

- Delivery on the best available flight 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Automated routing lets you choose the fastest delivery options.

UPS Worldwide Express Plus, UPS Worldwide Express, UPS Worldwide Saver

- Delivery in 1, 2, or 3 business days.
- Early morning or by end of day delivery.
- Saturday delivery.

UPS Worldwide Expedited, UPS Standard

- This option is ideal for less urgent shipments.
- UPS Standard only for shipments to Canada and Mexico.

#14 Shipping Taxes, Tariffs, and Duties

Shipping taxes vary from country to country, and different countries also require different declaration forms. For example, when shipping to any of the EU nations, you're required to fill out either a CN22 or CN23 shipping form. Both are forms of sender's declarations, which basically outline the goods included in the package. You're also subject to pay a customs duty, an Import VAT (value of goods + transport charges + duties), and possibly an excise duty (value of goods + transport charges).

The good news on the excise duty is that it's usually only charged on highly-taxed goods like alcohol and cigarettes. The bad news? If those seems like a lot of charges, that's because they are.

If the order value of your item is less than 22 euros in Europe, your buyer won't be charged any additional cost. If the value is between 22 euros and 150 euros, the import VAT applies. And if it's over 150 euros, the buyer needs to pay both VAT and the custom duties. Phew, it's enough to make your head spin, isn't it?

To make it even more confusing, the process isn't standardized around the globe. Australia has some of the most lax import laws: anything under \$1,000 AUD isn't subject to tax and duties. But in places like Japan, all packages are put through a rigorous customs clearance where duties and taxes are calculated at the time of arrival.

To find out more about different taxation and duty charges, check out the resource WorldTariff.com. While you'll have to pay a fee, the service puts you in touch with trade specialists and includes up-to-date information on taxes and tariffs everywhere, including any target markets you happen to eyeball.

"Wait..." you may be thinking after reading through that last section, "My buyer is paying for these charges?" Unfortunately, yes, unless you're savvy enough to have read this guide. Obviously, surprise charges that haven't been communicated to the customer could be detrimental to the long-term health and vitality of your company, so pay **close attention** to this next part.

You should be shipping everything you send with the title "**Delivery Duty Paid**" or "**Free Domicile**." This not only ensures a smooth pick-up for your buyer, but it also lets customs know that you're paying for all duties and taxes on your end, so they shouldn't charge your buyer anything additional.

Beware of services offering “**Pre-paid**” or “**Free on Board**” labeling. This simply means you’re agreeing to pay for the shipping, or for the fees, just until the package arrives in its destination country, not your buyer’s doorstep. How will you know if you’ve selected the right option? Check with your shipping provider, and ask about baking in an international shipping and handling fee to your long-term shipping plans.

At this stage, we have to offer up a warning. While you may have heard through the grapevine to simply label your packages as “gifts” in an effort to forgo the types of fees we’ve listed above, this is a very, very bad idea. Falsifying information like that could land you — and your business — in very serious hot water with the authorities, and it’s not worth the potential savings. Honesty is definitely the best policy when dealing with customs, even if it ends up costing you a bit more to get that precious item into the hands of its new owner.

#15 Returns

If you shipped with a carrier such as USPS or FedEx or found your own independent company like [BorderFree](#), many of those services support return handling built into their programs. The process looks vaguely similar to the one we outlined for getting your shipment TO a destination country, only this time you'll be dealing with your own country's customs, taxes, and duties.

Something to keep in mind in this stage is that, sometimes, it may not be worth the cost of shipping the item back to you. In that case, many of these services specialize in certified destruction or resale through secondary markets. We'd recommend calling your shipping company and talking through those options if that's of interest.

If you're shipping to Canada and Australia through the USPS, you can take advantage of a new program that they've just unrolled to solve this e-commerce dilemma. Here's how it works:

- You complete a Customized Mail Agreement
- Create return labels online or through a Web Tools API
- Print a customs form that identifies the package as a return

Easy enough, though this process does take some foresight, as it will need to be handled prior to shipping your product out initially. However, it saves your customer the headache of dealing with the postage and custom documentation and hopefully creates a positive and seamless experience that encourages them to buy from you again.

Marketing

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Advertising

Executing an advertising strategy is one of the last steps for an online company to take after designing a site, building the tools to accommodate international markets, and securing safe and stable security measures and shipping. Advertising is also one of the most exciting, rewarding phases of a marketing plan: you can now communicate your value to new buyers through fun, new channels. The Web offers multiple ways to accomplish this, but this guide focuses on three of the most essential: paid search (or search engine marketing), social media, and banner advertisements. Of note, social media stands at a significant crossroads in digital marketing; platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube helped businesses share their message organically only a few years ago, but now support similar paid promotion standards as search engines. Only through a combination of precise targeting, engaging content, and resourceful budgeting can an e-commerce company effectively break through the distractions of millions of competitors and communicate its true value. Here's how.

#16 Paid Search

Paid search is a complex, targeted method to acquire clicks from both domestic and international web visitors at the very moment they're ready to buy: when they search for a term you've paid to advertise on within a web browser. Paid search advertisements use a list of exact keywords and phrases that visitors may search for using Google, Baidu, or any number of other search engines just before converting.

Why is paid search a good idea? Consumers around the world turn to search engines to find what they need to buy from e-commerce companies. When presented with the paid ads on the top and right-hand side of organic search results, [7.11% of consumers](#) click on the first ad listed — after adding up the click-through rates for the other eight positions available for paid ads, the total percentage of consumers who click on paid search advertisements comes to 19.3%, or nearly a fifth of all consumers . When you consider the sheer volume of searches performed at every moment of the day (an average of nearly 6 million on just Google per day), it's clear how much that 19.3% is worth. So what do you need to know about paid search? The process of selecting keywords/phrases, optimizing ad copy, and managing the bidding process may sound daunting, but here are a few tips to get started:

Selecting a List of Keywords

The first step in coming up with an excellent paid search strategy is to create a list of keywords relevant to your business.

Tools Needed

A keyword research tool ([Google Keyword Planner](#))

Spreadsheet software ([Google Docs](#) or Microsoft Excel)

To begin selecting your list of keywords and phrases, list as many words and phrases related to your business as possible. Which queries do people use before they finally click on your website? What would you search for if you were looking for a company such as your own? Put each of these words and phrases in your spreadsheet for easy viewing.

After you've exhausted your list of possible words and phrases, take a look at your competitors' keywords. Go to their websites, right click on the text on their home page, and click "View Page Source." Once the page source information has appeared, press CTRL+F, type in "meta," and find where your competitors have entered a list of keywords. These are the terms that competitors assigns value to and define their product and/or service by; they're also the words they prioritize when performing search engine optimization. If any your competitors' terms apply to your own business, add those to your spreadsheet with the original list of terms. Be sure to separate your research by country – people may search for different things depending on their geographic location.

```

1 <!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Strict//EN" "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-strict
2 <html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
3 <head>
4 <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=utf-8" />
5
6
7 <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=edge,chrome=1">
8 <!--[if IE 8]>
9 <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=8">
10 <![endif]-->
11 <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width,initial-scale=1,maximum-scale=1,user-scalable=no" />
12 <meta name="format-detection" content="telephone=no">
13
14 <title>Accept Payments Online with 2Checkout's Online Payment Processing</title>
15
16 <meta name="description" content="Accept payments online. 2Checkout.com is an online payment processing service that helps you accept credit
17 cards, PayPal and debit cards.">
18 <link href="https://plus.google.com/+2checkout" rel="publisher" />
19
20
21 <meta name="google-site-verification" content="CBimNc_BKCoZ-3MR12z1R6KnLgq-fujoHT51Fpk8vMI" />
22 <meta name="msvalidate.01" content="F1A4E296BE44273DCAE4F5FFA46F7803" />
23

```

Your final step in gathering all possible keywords and terms is to utilize Google Keyword Planner. Copy and paste your keyword list into the tool, and select “search for new keywords.” Google will present you with a list of new keywords and phrases related to the ones you’ve entered for your review, along with competition levels, average monthly search volume, and a suggested bid. Select your favorites and add them (along with search volume, competition level, and suggested bid) to your keyword spreadsheet. (Helpful hint: Color code your terms by topic, then sort the terms alphabetically within each color group to avoid duplicating terms). You’ll likely have upwards of 200 keywords by this point. The goal is to cut your list down to a dozen words/phrases (or less) per country to begin.

The key to effective search optimization is to choose keywords that sound natural in conversation. Eliminate unnatural-sounding keywords from your list. After this step, begin eliminating extremely similar keywords by comparing search volumes and average suggested bids. For example: if “blue Nike sneakers” receives 40,000 searches per month, has a .7 competition level, and is \$16/click and “bright blue Nike sneakers” receives 10,000 searches per month, has a .7 competition level, and is \$14/click, eliminate the latter. While the former is more expensive, the latter has 30,000 less searches for \$2/click less. In other words, the “savings” are not worth the lack of traffic.

At this point, you’ll need to make judgment calls based on a balance between bid prices, competition levels, and average monthly searches. The key is to create mix of what’s called ‘long tail’ and ‘short tail’ keywords.

Long Tail Keywords

These keywords are often highly-specific words or phrases. They offer lower monthly searches, lower competition levels, and lower bid pricing. These keywords are good for quick wins, or if you anticipate the keyword’s searches to grow drastically in the near future.

Short Tail Keywords

These broader keywords are designed to appeal to a larger audience. They offer higher monthly

searches, possibly higher competition levels, and higher suggested bids. Short tail keywords draw more eyes to your content, but the viewer may not be as ready to purchase as someone who searches for and clicks on an advertisement using long tail keywords.

Managing Your Ad Budget

While setting up your paid search campaign, you'll need to determine your budget. You'll have the following options to choose from when deciding how you'd like to manage your spend:

Cost per click (CPC)

You're charged each time someone clicks on your advertisement

Cost per impression (CPM)




You will be charged each time your ad appears on a search engine. These are charged in groups of one thousand impressions in most cases.

Cost per acquisition (CPA)

You will be charged each time a user sees your advertisement, clicks on it, and fills out a specific form. This could be a resource download or an actual purchase — the form you choose as your conversion goal is up to you.

Once you've chosen how you'll be charged, the next step is to set up an average daily budget. Please be aware: some days could charge more than others, but no single day will go more than 20% over your daily allotted budget. At the end of the month, your total spend will be no more than 30.4 (the average number of days per month) multiplied by the daily ad budget you set. The page on which your ad is shown will be determined by a balance of your bid compared to others' bids and how well your copy is optimized for the topic at hand.

Action Steps

-  **Step #1** - Research keywords for each country you'll address using search volume, competition levels, and suggested bid price. Narrow your list to 12 words or phrases maximum per country with a mixture of both long tail and short tail keywords.
-  **Step #2** - Select cost per click, cost per [thousand] impression, or cost per acquisition methodology.
-  **Step #3** - Set up your daily average budget.

#17 Social Media

Social media is one of the two areas online merchants are most likely to spend their marketing dollars on (the other being search engine marketing, addressed last chapter). And why wouldn't they? Facebook has over 1 billion active users. Twitter has 560 million. YouTube is quickly becoming the most popular search engine, with 4 billion videos viewed per day. If you're trying to reach consumers where they spend their time online, social media is it.

The first decision any online merchant needs to make in this regard is to decide which platform to focus on. Depending on your target customer base, several different sites may be appropriate. For now, we're going to discuss 3 of the most popular advertising options on social media: Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.



Facebook

As the first social media site to offer advertising, retailers and other online businesses have been converting customers on Facebook since 2006. A few things to consider:

1. According to TechCrunch, only 21% of Facebook users access Facebook solely from a desktop, which means the majority of users access the platform via a mobile device at least some of the time. Make sure your site employs responsive design if you advertise on Facebook so that any mobile viewer will be able to experience your content and product pages in a convenient, optimized environment.
2. There is no right hand column on Facebook Mobile. In order to ensure that your advertisements are seen by desktop users and mobile users alike, you'll have to advertise in the News Feed. This can be done through Page Post ads, Page Like ads, or Sponsored Stories, which are all created from Facebook's Ad Manager.
3. Use Facebook's Custom Audiences feature to target existing leads and increase lead conversion. Custom Audiences allows you to synch your email list with Facebook advertising. This allows you to speak to a more specific audience and takes the guess work out of defining your target for the campaign. Additionally, these viewers have shown interest before, so they're more likely to convert.

4. Generally speaking, you'll want to bid on clicks, not impressions (for more information, see the previous chapter on search engine marketing). Facebook, like other social media sites, sells its advertising on a bidding basis. You determine what you're willing to spend on a click or 1,000 impressions, or how often your advertisement is displayed when a search term is entered. When advertising, you submit a spend limit for a day; when you hit your limit, your advertising is shut off until the next day. One thousand impressions can go really quickly depending on your target audience. Without assurance that those impressions will convert, bidding per click is generally a more effective way to get the most conversions for your money.



Twitter

In 2010, Twitter announced a new means to advertise on its site: Promoted Accounts. This feature allows you to recommend other users to follow your Twitter account. Once other users follow, you can tweet special deals, new product announcements, fun facts about your brand, and more to get the new follower engaged with your brand. There are a few things you need to know, however, about Promoted Accounts:

1. If your Twitter account isn't curated daily, Promoted Accounts won't be that beneficial. This means you need engaging content and regular interaction on your Twitter account. Driving users to your Twitter account creates an opportunity to engage new customers, win them over, and convert them, but, if you don't communicate and engage regularly on Twitter, you may turn visitors off, which is not the intention.

Before you start promoting your account or tweets, make sure you have established your account. Try tweeting at least twice a day for a month and responding to any retweets or comments you receive within 12 hours at the very latest. Follow anyone who is relevant to your brand or you personally. If you have relevant content posted, they'll likely follow you back.

Once you have developed what you to believe to be a respectable Twitter account, start promoting away!

2. Promoted Accounts appear on a separate tab on Twitter Mobile, whereas Promoted Tweets still show in the Twitter feed. This is important to understand considering that 75% of Twitter users access the service via a mobile device at least some of the time, according to TechCrunch. If a user is a mobile user, they will be less likely to see your Promoted Account ad.

It's recommended that you do what you can to determine how much of your target customer base is mobile, and use this information when considering Promoted Accounts and Promoted Tweets.

3. Like Facebook, Twitter allows you to target your campaigns to certain demographics, geographies, devices, and keywords. Be as specific as you can with your campaigns for the most effective advertisements.



YouTube

YouTube is the second largest search engine on the Web after Google. With over 6 billion hours of video watched every month on YouTube, it has become a day-to-day part of most websurfers' lives. So how can you leverage this site to bring traffic to your website?

1. YouTube recommends their TrueView In-Search and In-Display video advertisements for the highest conversions. They also recommend that your video be 2-3 minutes long, no less than 30 seconds, and no longer than 5 minutes. This will help ensure the viewer stays engaged and converts on your call-to-action. Whatever length or content you choose, make sure to use YouTube's Insight tool to test your video's performance and make adjustments as you see fit.
2. The screenshot you provide when setting up your campaigns will be the first frame of your video that the viewer sees — make sure it's engaging! More importantly, after you've sold the viewer on your video from the screenshot, make sure your video is engaging so viewers watch to the end and convert, whether that entails watching more videos, visiting your website, or submitting an email.

3. As with Twitter, make sure that your Channel Page looks good before you start advertising your brand. If your Channel Page isn't fleshed out and you start driving traffic to it, it may be money wasted, as those hard earned visitors will likely fail to convert. Spend a little time branding your Channel Page and adding appropriate content to it so that visitors can learn more about your brand and engage with it further. This will only help your reputation and ultimately help you gain customers.
4. We only touched on a few tips on a few of the most popular social media platforms out there, but there's always more to learn! Depending on where you're located, you may want to look into some other sites like Tencent QQ, QZone, Sina Weibo, Ren Ren or Orkut, for instance. And there's always more information on the Web to help you navigate these sites.

#18 Banner Ads

If the Internet were a highway, banner ads would be billboards — reminders of where you've been, where you could go, and the many options available to you at any time. Also similar to billboards, banner ads are designed to attract attention through a combination of proper placement, enticing offers, and clever design. At their most basic, banner ads are image links usually placed on the top of a website you pay to for space advertise your product or service. After posting, the banner ad drives new web traffic or recaptures visitors who left a website without converting (buying a product or visiting a website).

The first step in creating your banner ad strategy is to determine your audience. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What type(s) of people am I trying to reach specifically?
- What are the age range, income level, geographic location, job titles, and typical pain points of my audience?
- If I were to create my ideal buyer based on the answers to the above questions, what kind of interests would that buyer have?
- For which keywords will I optimize?
- Are there particular websites I'd like post my advertisements on?

After you've created your buyer personas, you'll have a much better idea of both where your banner ads should be placed and what content should be inside of them. You'll be able to streamline the process of placing your banners on other sites by utilizing a third-party display network like Google Display Network. The third party network tool will walk you through options like determining a campaign type (will you be retargeting existing, unconverted contacts, or seeking new website visitors?), the geographic location you'd like to target or exclude, the languages your customers speak, and your budget.

Managing your ad budget

Like paid search marketing, you'll need to choose how you want to be billed and then set an average daily maximum you'd like to pay for your banner ads. You can choose between:

- **Cost per click (CPC):** bills your account when someone clicks on your advertisement.
- **Cost per impression (CPM):** bills your account per thousand people who are shown your advertisement.
- **Cost per acquisition (CPA):** bills your account whenever a user clicks on your banner and submits a particular form of your choosing. This could be when someone makes a purchase or when someone downloads a piece of content – it's your choice.

After you’ve selected your campaign type, billing methodology, and qualifiers listed above, you can choose from a variety of options for the specific type of targeting you require. This includes gender, particular keywords, age, interests, and several other options depending upon the display network you’ve chosen.

Banner Ad Sizing Guidelines

The International Advertising Bureau has created an easy-to-use chart for determining the dimensions of banner ads. Use the chart (shown below) or visit the full [International Advertising Bureau guidelines](#) when selecting the size of your banner to avoid awkward fits with a hosting sites’ main content.

Abbreviations: px = pixel sec = seconds

Category	970x250 Billboard	300x600 Filmstrip	300x1050 Portrait	970x90 Pushdown	300x250 300x600 970x250 Sidekick	970x90* Slider
▶ Display Rising Stars						
▶ Universal Ad Package (UAP)	300x250 Medium Rectangle	180x150 Rectangle	160x600 Wide Skyscraper	728x90 Leaderboard		
▼ Other Ad Units	970x90 Super Leaderboard Provisional Unit ¹	300x600 Half Page	120x60 Button 2	88x31 Micro Bar		
Initial Dimensions: (WxH in pixels)	970x90 (optionally 970x66 is offered by some publishers) view sample of	view sample of	view sample of	view sample of		
Maximum Expanded Dimensions: (WxH in pixels)	Expansion not allowed for these units					
Max Initial File Load Size:	40 KB	40 KB	20 KB	10 KB		
Max Additional Initial File Load Size for OBA Self-Reg Compliance: ¹	5 KB	5 KB	5 KB	5 KB		
Subsequent Max Polite File Load Size:	Not allowed for these units					
Subsequent Max User Initiated File Load Size:	Not allowed for these units					
Subsequent Max User Initiated Additional Streaming File Size:	Not allowed for these units					
Max Video & Animation Frame Rate:	24 fps	24 fps	24 fps	24 fps		
Maximum Animation Length: (i.e. Flash™)	15-sec	15-sec	15-sec	15-sec		

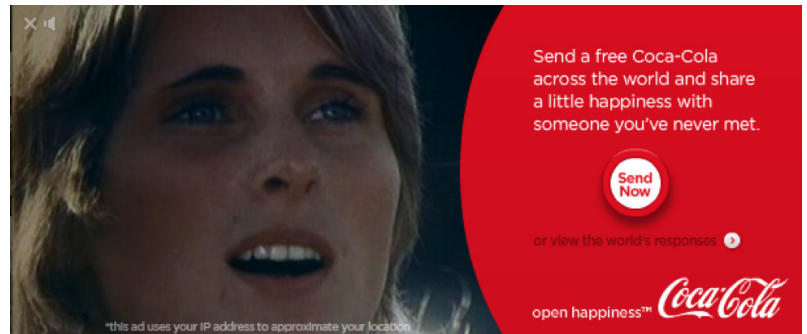
Banner Design Best Practices

The design of your banner is perhaps one of the most important elements to create an enticing advertisement; after all, you’re attempting to attract eyes away from the main content your audience intended to view. Here are a few design tips to get started:

- The goal of your banner ad is to encourage both clicks **and** conversions. Make sure your audience isn't confused when they click on your ad; create a cohesive design scheme between the banner and the landing page so your audience can easily find whatever product or content was presented in your banner ad.
- Your call to action should be the most prominent part of your banner. Make it stand out using a bold color that isn't used elsewhere in your ad.
- Make sure your banner ad stands out naturally with an outline, drop shadow, or other design element to create a separation effect from the rest of the host websites' content.
- Only use images when they are relevant and support the message you're trying to communicate. Images should never detract from your design.

Banner Copy Best Practices

The number one mistake most people make with banner ads is to try to include too much copy on one banner. Your audience doesn't need every product feature and testimonial when they initially view an ad. Instead, try to use as few words as possible to intrigue your viewers. Ask a question, say something bold — just don't make your copy too technical or wordy. There are several great examples of clean, interesting copy in the banner world. Here are a few listed by [Digital Synopsis](#) and [Digiday](#):



Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Determine the interests, locations, ages, genders, and other demographic/psychographic information for the audiences you'd like to reach.
- ✓ **Step #2** - Choose a third party display network to distribute your banners.
- ✓ **Step #3** - Choose cost per click, cost per [thousand] impression, or cost per acquisition and set an average daily budget.
- ✓ **Step #4** - Design your ad using the IAB's sizing guidelines, color research for each country, and copy best practices.
- ✓ **Step #5** - Split test your banners in each country to determine geographic best practices. After receiving a statistically significant number of clicks, analyze & adjust your banners as needed.

// Conversions

To end this guide, the last three chapters address the ways that help turn site visitors into buyers on a global scale. Lead nurturing is a relatively new approach in marketing, used by companies that sell to both consumers and other businesses. It establishes merchants as thought leaders by emailing out specialized streams of content that can be applied to each stage of the sales funnel. This tactic lets consumers know that the merchant not only understands its product on a detailed level, but also understands the buyers' needs and pain points. The second tactic, personalized pages, automatically adjusts the design and content of a website to match a company or individual's perceived tastes. This approach can not only lead to increased conversions, but also allows an online business to collect information about the consumers who visit its website — a very useful tool when addressing multiple international markets. Finally, the last chapter reviews the art and science of the Call to Action, arguably the most important step in any copy or design placement. All three of these methods present innovative and aggressive ways for online companies to maintain a steady steam of prospective buyers.

#19 Lead Nurturing

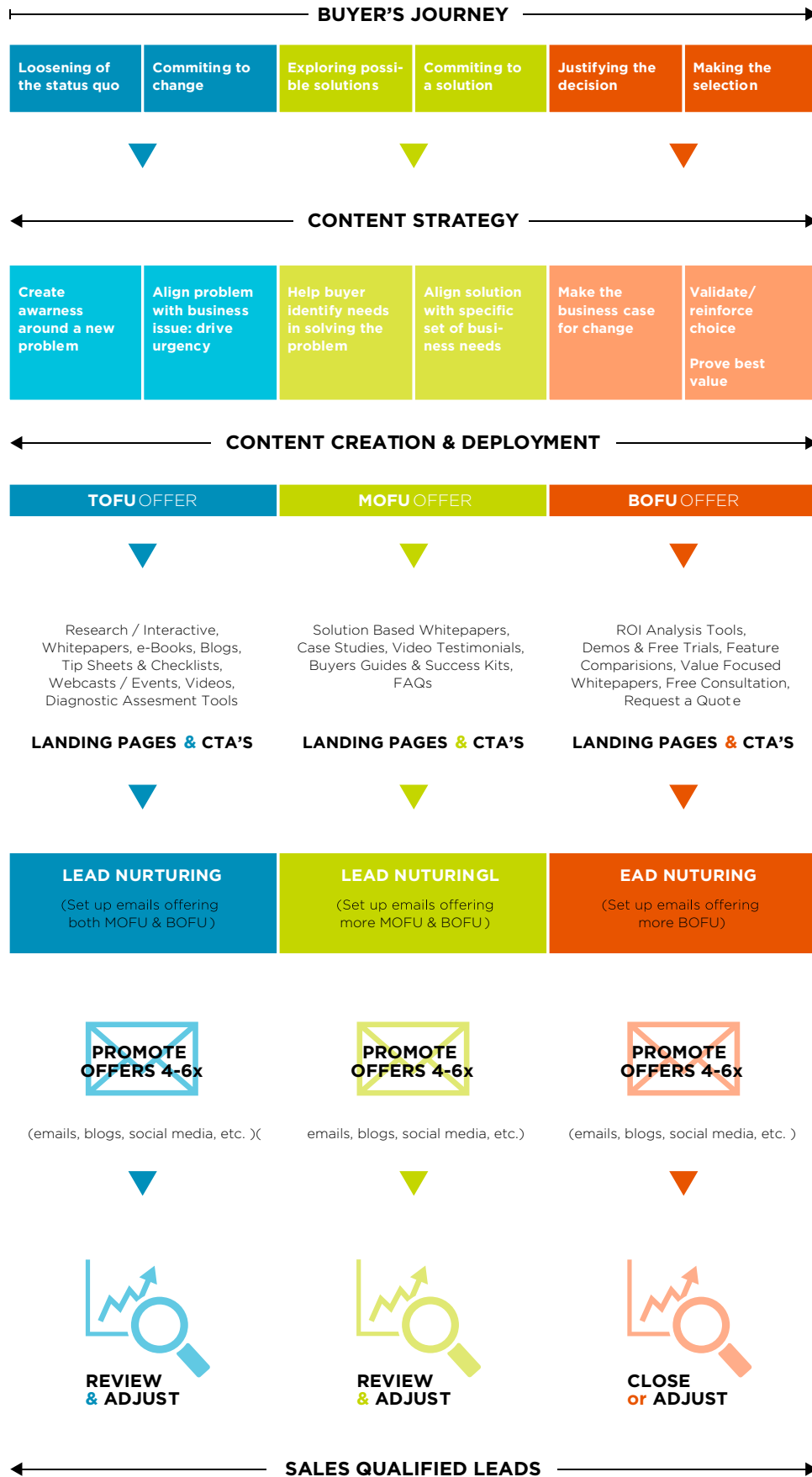
What It Is

Lead nurturing provides relevant content and support to a prospect over time in order to eventually convert that prospect into a buyer. When executed properly, lead nurturing can increase conversion rates and revenue significantly. According to Vocus, Gleanster found that “between 30 and 50 percent of the leads that enter a pipeline are better for future opportunities than for current use.” That means between one-third and one-half of all leads sent to sales teams aren’t ready to make a purchase but could be in the future. That’s a lot of cash to potentially ignore!

Lead nurturing typically takes place via email marketing campaigns, and can be automated in order to effectively move many prospects through the marketing funnel at their own unique paces. When combining lead nurturing programs with marketing automation software like Hubspot, Pardot, Eloqua, and InfusionSoft, organizations can expect up to a 50% increase in sales leads.

So what do you need to nurture your leads? Content, content, and more content! In the pre-Internet age, prospects had to seek out a salesperson to do any meaningful research about a company. That’s no longer the case, since search engines and Internet research have become commonplace. Today’s average prospect now performs massive amount of research before he or she reaches the point of conversion. Buyers devour content — online reviews, social media posts, white papers, e-books, blogs, infographics, videos, podcasts, and product brochures — before they narrow their choices and become ready for a salesperson to enter the picture.

Lead nurturing ensures that information reaches the right person at the right time by mapping particular pieces of content to the correct stage of the marketing funnel, and then delivering the appropriate content via email. Check out the chart below by Consilium Global Business Advisors to see how content plays into the buying journey.



Source: Consilium Global Business Advisors

Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Perform a content audit. What types of content do you currently have on hand? Does any of it need to be refreshed before beginning to send it out to prospects?
- ✓ **Step #2** - Talk to your sales team and customer advocates. What types of questions and concerns do leads have most often? Where do issues arise along the marketing funnel and sales pipeline?
- ✓ **Step #3** - Create content to address the points found in step two.
- ✓ **Step #4** - Map your existing and planned content to each stage of the customer journey – demand gen, lead gen, sales/evaluation support, conversion, and customer support.
- ✓ **Step #5** - Create an email campaign to send content to prospects periodically until their activity levels indicate a readiness to buy — or they reach out to ask for your sales team!

#20 Personalized Pages

Put simply, personalized pages are skins or themes that can be applied to any part of your website. They create a more customized, personalized experience for each web visitor, which in turn drives a deeper sense of connectivity and loyalty between the brand and individual consumer. It can be difficult and time-consuming to create a version of every single page optimized to each culture and geographic location to which you sell; personalized pages are an excellent way to allow users to make your pages work for them through an automated system. In addition to saving you precious time and user interface cycles, personalized pages provide an excellent source of data to determine exactly what your various segments prefer.

A personalization white paper published by OSF-Global found that 59% of consumers reported that it's "easier to find what they're looking for when retailers personalize," and 40% of consumers "indicate they buy more from retailers that personalize the shopping experience." Furthermore, one company mentioned in the white paper that it increased their conversions by 340% after personalizing their online shopping experience! Clearly, personalization is an up-and-coming major trend in e-commerce.

Many larger companies are taking personalized pages to the next level by providing new purchasing or upsell opportunities to users based on previous clicks, or through matching their information to a specific segment of the buying cycle. For instance, Amazon creates millions of dollars in new revenue by first allowing users to customize what's shown on their homepage, and then utilizing this data to show those users even more products [based on their selections](#) and browsing habits. Likewise, [Pinterest recently joined the personalization movement](#) by allowing users to choose what types of third-party advertising and content they'd like to receive.

Personalized pages are an excellent way to show your own users that you're interested in giving them exactly what they want while gaining an incredible amount of knowledge about potentially unfamiliar audiences. There are two methods you can use to begin personalizing your customers' experiences:

1. Explicitly ask your customers to set up their preferences. This is called "skinning" your website. This is an easier method of personalizing your website, but places the burden of action on your customers. Examples of step by step instructions can be found [here for XML/XSLT](#) or [here for CSS](#); there are many more tools and technical guides available online to suit your particular technology stack.
2. Collect data based on your customers' actions and input that data into algorithms designed to both determine what your customers prefer and then present it to them. This is a complex process and requires an immense amount of technical knowledge, but the results it yields are well worth the initial effort.

Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Utilize your customers' website journeys (from entry URL to exit URL) to begin making predictions on user behavior based on referral sources, bounce rates, and other data points.
- ✓ **Step #2** - Analyze which items customers seem to purchase together most often; when a customer buys one item from an identified "group," offer the others as an upsell at checkout.
- ✓ **Step #3** - Cross-analyze your customer demographics and purchase histories. Are there trends you could identify and utilize for future campaigns?
- ✓ **Step #4** - Offer a way for your customers to indicate their personal preferences and interests. This could be through a survey, social media poll, or a plethora of other avenues.

Check out the book [Designing Personalized User Experiences in Ecommerce](#) for an in depth guide to each aspect of personalization.

#21 Call to Action

Calls to action are the buttons, text, or inputs that drive your audience to submit forms, make purchases, subscribe to newsletters, or register on websites. In other words, these are the touchpoints that visitors use to engage with your company to guide them to the next step in their user experience. For instance, a homepage slider image could explain the virtues of software with a “Learn More” button underneath the copy; the button is the call to action and moves the user to his or her next step. Other calls to action could tell users to “buy now,” “contact us,” or “download today.”

Many businesses forget to include calls to action on their website or in their marketing campaigns — in fact, [Small Business Trends](#) found that up to 70% of small businesses fail to put a call to action on their homepage!



Viewers naturally look for indicators to tell them what to do and how to behave. There are two distinct factors that drive a call to action's success – design and copy. The design of the button attracts your users to the button as the next logical step on your website; the copy contained within the button tells users why they should take that next logical step.

Call to Action Design

Savvy marketers utilize color psychology when determining what color their calls to action should be; typically, they are the only web element using the chosen color in order to enhance their prominence and visibility. [KISSmetrics](#) found the following information regarding colors and purchases:



While these color associations can vary by country and culture, they're an excellent starting place for split tests. In addition to the color of your calls to action, the shape is also an important psychological aspect of each button's design. QuickSprout encourages marketers to utilize rounded edges on buttons rather than sharp edges due to a natural human aversion to sharpness.

Call to Action Copy

The copy you use within and near your buttons tells your users why they should interact with your brand. There are several ways to utilize psychology to encourage these interactions:

- **Use the word “you.”** Connecting online can be difficult as interactions tend to be impersonal and passive, with users hiding behind anonymous screen names. By using the word “you,” you’ll reach out directly to each user’s subconscious mind, establishing a direct relationship. Your prospects are much more likely to purchase from you once you’ve personalized the transaction with this language.
- **Use a testimonial.** Humans are social creatures. From the time we’re young, we imitate those around us to learn how to behave socially — and we don’t grow out of this tendency as we age. Tap into the “monkey see, monkey do” mentality by posting a testimonial from a satisfied customer next to your call to action button. Bonus points if you include an image of your customer gazing towards the call to action!
- **Be assertive.** Again, visitors often look to others for clues on how to behave. Use assertive language in your call to action button; you’ll likely see an increase in clicks.
- **Be aware of cultural implications.** Before deciding on your copy, be sure to research each country you’ll be addressing. Stay away from anything that could be considered offensive.

Call to Action Placement

Even if your call to action follows the above rules, not many conversions will occur if the button isn’t easily located. Place your call to action in a prominent location on your webpage or email; for many people that means above the fold (in the top half of the browser window).

Experiment with button positioning to find what works best for your audience. It could be at the conclusion of a blog, on the top right hand side of a landing page, or as an interstitial screen timed to appear after thirty seconds on a particular page. The key is to make clicking on your call to action as natural and fluid as possible.

Action Steps

- ✓ **Step #1** - Evaluate what you’d like your call to action to entail – a whitepaper download, a purchase, or a quote request.
- ✓ **Step #2** - Choose an appropriate color to convey your nonverbal message.
- ✓ **Step #3** - Design a button and insert copy to show users why they should click the button.
- ✓ **Step #4** - Test your button’s location, color, and copy to find the perfect storm of call to action elements.

About 2Checkout

Accept Payments, *Globally*

A worldwide leader in payment services, 2Checkout maximizes online sales conversions by giving global buyers localized payment options. Trusted by over 50,000 merchants, 2Checkout supports transactions in 196 countries through 8 payment methods, 26 currencies, and 15 languages, forming one of the leading processors of online transactions in the world. The service is simple to implement, including a pre-integrated payment gateway, a merchant account, PCI compliance, international fraud prevention, and plug-ins for 100 of the most popular carts.

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