



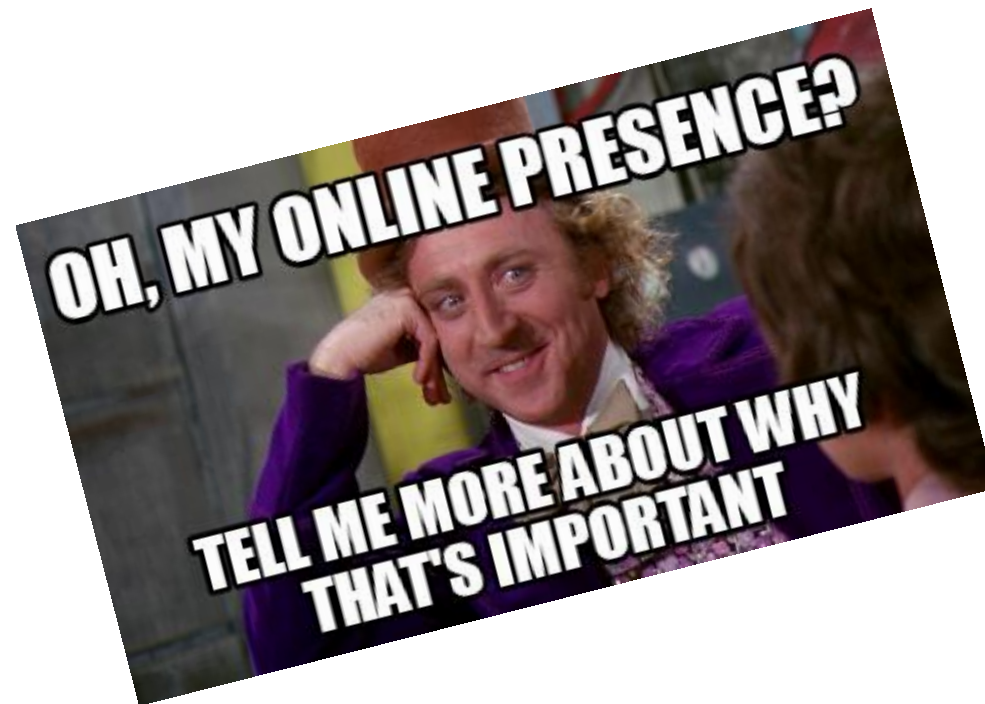
The Montana Small Business Development Center presents:

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

The Small Business Webinar Series:

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

...What You Should Know!!!



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Great Falls Development Authority

October 5, 2017





Jason Nitschke; MA, EDFP

Regional Director - Great Falls SBDC

Economic Development

- 2014-Current – Great Falls Development Authority/SBDC

Bureaucracy

- 2013-2014 – Analyst, State of Illinois

Journalist

- 1997-2013 – SLC, Denver, Honolulu, Idaho, Montana, Illinois

Entrepreneurship

- 1998-2000 -- JNitschke Photography; Denver, CO
- 2011-2012 -- Carondelet Estate Services, LLC; St. Louis, MO

Certifications

- 2015 -- Economic Development Finance Prof. (EDFP)
- 2015 -- Accredited Small Business Consultant (ASBC)
- 2015 -- Certified Business Advisor (GrowthWheel)

Education

- 1997 -- University of Montana – BA Journalism/Pol. Sci.
- 2002 -- Hawaii Pacific University – MA Communications





Start, Grow or Expand with no-cost consulting & advising, and no/low cost training

Business Planning

Marketing Assistance

Entrepreneurial Development

Financial Analysis

Training & Workshops

Loan Packaging Assistance



Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.



Growth, Diversification & High Wage Jobs

Public/Private partnership with 120 investors

Gap Financing (including SBA 504)

Technical Business Assistance (PTAC & SBDC)

How do we spend our time?

Existing Businesses (64%)

Startup Entrepreneurs (23%)

Attraction from Outside trade area (13%)



TODAY'S AGENDA

- Your Online Footprint
 - Websites
 - Types, Content & Optimization
 - Search Engines & Reputation Management
 - Ways people find the website
 - Messaging Tools
 - Aesthetics, Brand Management & Social Media
- Your Strategy
 - Budgeting, Customers, Messages
- Final Thoughts



YOUR ONLINE FOOTPRINT

Why is it important?



97% of consumers look online for local goods and services.



4 out of 5 consumers use search engines to find local, or nearby, information.



Businesses that are online are expected to grow 40% faster than those that aren't.



Businesses with complete listings online are twice as likely to be considered reputable.



37% of businesses have claimed a local business listing on a search engine.

Google Statistics, 2015



Optimizing Your Online Footprint

1. Website

2. Search
Engines

3. Reputation
Management

4. Aesthetics

5. Social Media

WEBSITES

The Virtual Location

- Are a destination
 - A place for people to go
- Are a platform
 - For products & services, ideas, content, messages
- Are a tool
 - To sell – depending on functionality of the host
 - Check out our eCommerce Guide at
<http://sbdc.mt.gov/Portals/131/shared/SBDC/docs/StartUpGuides/ECommerceSellingGuideSBDC.pdf>

All of these uses of a communicate YOUR BRAND!



WEBSITES

Optimizing Your Digital Destination

Website

- ✓ Do you have one?
- ✓ Is it functional?
 - ✓ Responsive design (aka: mobile design)?
 - ✓ A distinct call to action?
 - ✓ Easily navigated?
 - ✓ Does it collect info ('Contact Us' page)?
- ✓ Are there testimonials?
- ✓ Outbound & Inbound Links:
 - ✓ Does it list everywhere else you are online?
 - ✓ Does it link to other relevant sites?



WEBSITES

Optimizing Your Digital Destination

Website

- ✓ Do you have one?
 - ✓ If not, determine what you need.
 - ✓ Is it just informational?
 - ✓ Is eCommerce functionality necessary?
 - ✓ How much time will managing it take?
 - ✓ Do you have the skills to design it, create the content, manage it...and the time to do so?
 - ✓ **These questions will help answer if you build it yourself or hire someone to build it.**
 - ✓ Where is your time most profitable???



SEARCH ENGINES & REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

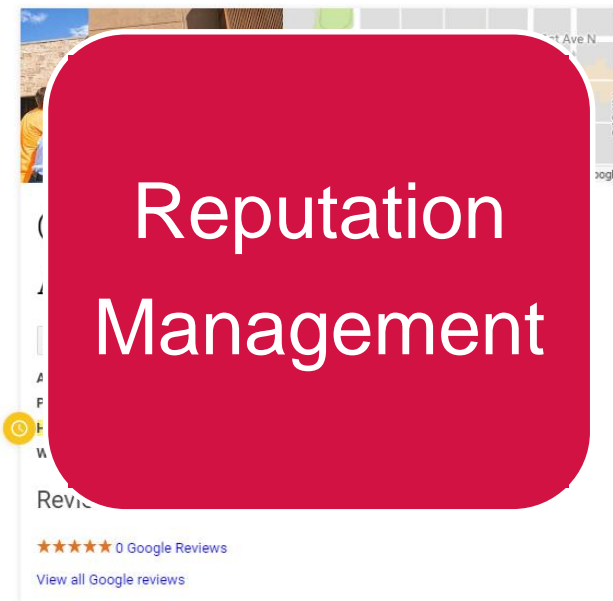
How People Find What They're Looking For

GOOGLE - FREE

- Get Your Business Online:
 - <https://www.gybo.com>

YAHOO – “FREE CLAIM”

- 1 out of every 8 searches are on Yahoo
- Business Listing Information DBA “Luminate:”
 - <https://www.luminate.com/local-listings/verify-business>
- Full service options:
 - <https://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/>



If you're a home-based business, there are options to not list your address.



SEARCH ENGINES & REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

People Are Talking about You! Including Tourists!

YELP — All industries

- <https://www.yelp.com/>

TRIPADVISOR — Travel Related

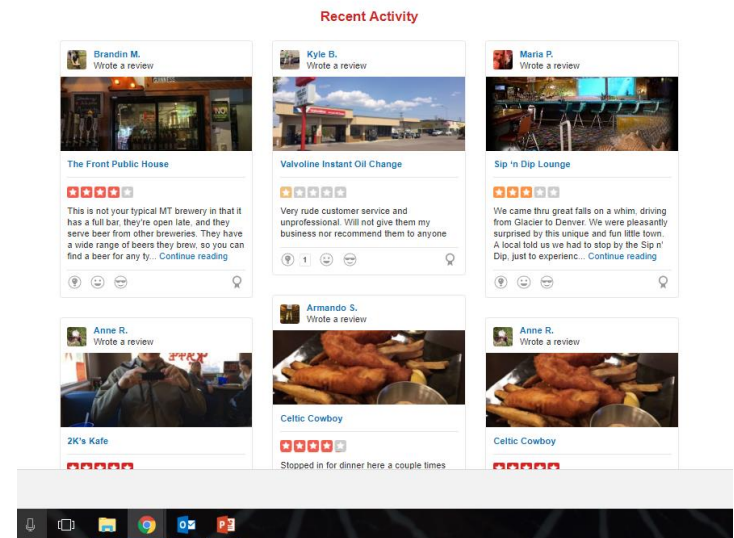
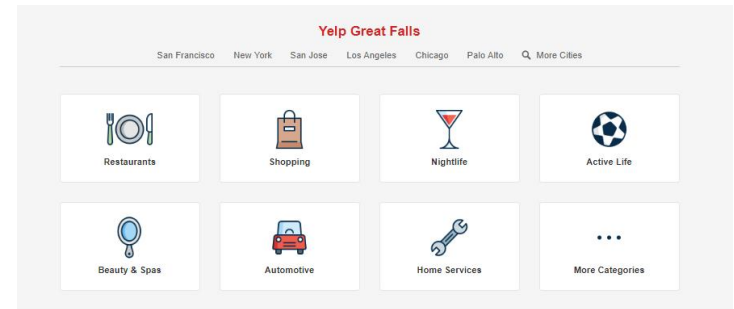
- <https://www.tripadvisor.com/>

IMPORTANT POINT #1:

If you don't curate your brand, people will do it for you.

IMPORTANT POINT #2:

- Every decision you make, has a brand impact.
- Every brand decision you make, has a financial impact.



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SEARCH ENGINES & REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Paid Tools to Manage All Your Listings

YEXT

“Knowledge Manager”

- <http://www.yext.com/>

LOCALWORKS

Cross platform – 60+ sites & local listings

- <https://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/local-listings>

Guide customers to your door with Localworks

Start by finding your business listing

Get your business listing on Yahoo, Google, Yelp, WhitePages, Bing, MapQuest, Superpages, and more!

Localworks
\$29⁹⁹
per month

- Guarantee your presence in 60+ local directories
- Enhance your listing with offers, more photos, and extra details
- Quickly change and update your listings across the Web
- Easily track performance

Get started

The image displays a grid of logos for various online directories and search engines, including Yahoo, Google, Bing, Yelp, and many others, illustrating the cross-platform reach of the Localworks service.

Question #1: Can I afford to not manage my reputation?

Question #2: Where is your time most profitable?



MESSAGING TOOLS

Optimizing Aesthetics: Communicating Without Words

Overall Aesthetics

- ✓ Are the logos/images you're using high resolution/professional quality?
- ✓ Do they relate to your brand?
- ✓ Do you have a plan to create a steady flow of good images and content?
- ✓ Will you need to outsource content creation?

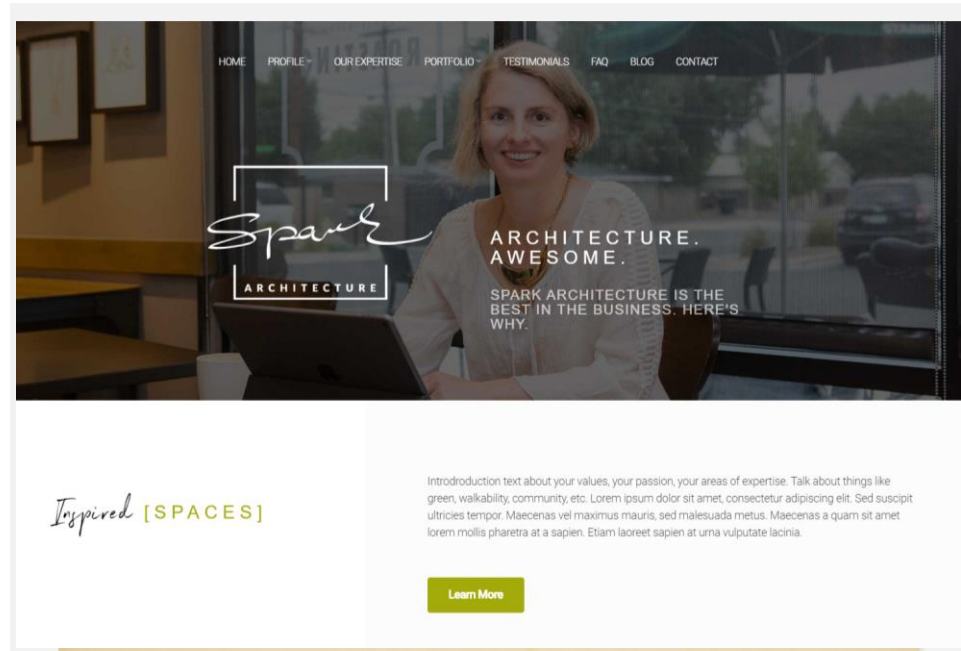


MESSAGING TOOLS

Optimizing Aesthetics: Communicating Without Words

How do we communicate without words?

Overall
Aesthetics



Funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

MESSAGING TOOLS

Optimizing Social Media: Communicating With Words

Social Media

MY VIEW:

- ✓ Social media platforms are?
- ✓ Have you updated recently?
- ✓ Audience targeted?
- ✓ Are you posting relevant,
- ✓ Space is limited and time is media.
- ✓ Space is limited on platforms to
- ✓ Teach you'll use social media to drive traffic to your website.



MESSAGING TOOLS

Why Use Social Media?



Social Media

1. Build your brand

- You shape the way you're viewed
- You create the conversations you want to have

2. Drive conversions

- When someone is looking for you, can they find you to “convert”?
- Sales/Actions that are trackable

3. Increase conversations

- Who do you want to hear you?
- What do you want them to say about you?
- Who do you want them to say it to?
- Where do you want them to say it?



MESSAGING TOOLS

Social Media: Getting Started

Which social media sites are right for me?

- My Recommendation: Facebook to start. Start with only one, unless you have an experienced manager.



Who should post on my accounts?

- You *(if you take the time to strategize/study best practices)*
- Experienced social media manager and/or someone who understands marketing strategy.
 - Always ask for a proposal and tracking metrics before you hire.



MESSAGING TOOLS

Social Media: Best Practices

What do I post?

- Relatable pictures, links to news, shares from partners
- Conversational—not direct selling
 - *The goal is to establish yourself as an expert in the industry!*
- Tools: Google Alerts, Tumblr, industry newsletters, etc.

What time of day should I post?

- Depends on your target market
- 1–4 p.m. get the highest click throughs
- Find data in the ‘Insights’ tab

PERFECT POST:

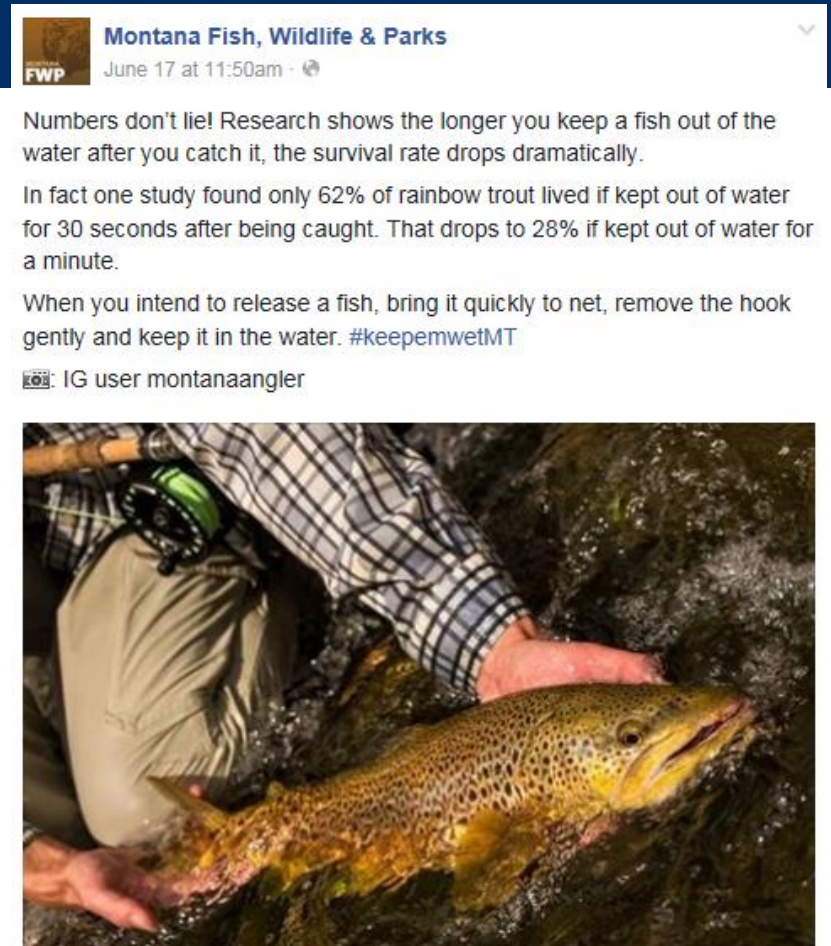
1. A link, photo or CTA
2. Brief: 100 characters or less
3. Posted within a regular schedule
4. Timely/Newsworthy



MESSAGING TOOLS

Social Media: Best Practices

- When you post something, make it *worthy* of sharing every time
- Don't forget: People like to read your news. Montana towns are a hot/niche topic, makes people feel informed or "cool"
- Pictures are key for shares



YOUR STRATEGY

Budgeting: Why Start Here?

Budgeting Provides Focus

- By determining why you're spending...
- What are your goals?
 - ROI? Brand Awareness?
- What do you want your marketing efforts to produce in results?



Budgeting Provides Direction

- By determining where to spend...
- Helps address your Marketing Mix
see handout
- What can I afford?
 - Traditional Outbound (Branding) or
 - Modern Inbound (ROI)?



INDUSTRY DATA COMMON SIZE

Highlight text

Average by Year (Number of Financial Statements)

Income Statement	Last 12 Months (0)	2016 (0)	2015 (1)	Last 5 Years (9)	All Years (19)
Sales (Income)	--	--	--	100.00%	100.00%
Cost of Sales (COGS)	--	--	--	67.20%	58.66%
Gross Profit	--	--	--	42.15%	50.17%
Depreciation	--	--	--	0.58%	0.85%
Overhead or S,G,& A Expenses	--	--	--	17.61%	27.30%
Payroll	--	--	--	9.84%	15.23%
Rent	--	--	--	4.67%	7.27%
Advertising	--	--	--	1.44%	1.79%
Other Operating Income	--	--	--	0.00%	0.09%

YOUR STRATEGY

Target Customers

Market Analysis – A Definition

- What you know about your business
- What you know about your competition
- What you know about your ideal customer



Sources of Market Data

- Primary Sources
 - You
 - Your employees
 - Your website/"Insights" pages
 - Interviews/Surveys
- Secondary Sources
 - Data research entities such as Census Business Builder,
 - Montana Site Selector, ESRI, JobsEQ, etc.



YOUR STRATEGY

Strategic Messages: Inspiring Action through Meaningful Connection

Things to Think About

- Information
- Interaction
- Call to Action
 - *Tell them what you want them to do!*



Mindset Shift

- Why you do what you do
 - This “makes meaning”
- How you do what you do
- What you do
- Example: Blue Apron
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0gXD8u3F-Y>



FINAL THOUGHTS

What is Your Goal?

Traditional Outbound (AKA: Brand Awareness/T.O.M.A.)

- Concerned about \$1 for \$1 return? Lose money?
 - TYPES: Billboards, Yellow Pages, Newspaper, Radio, TV
 - COST DIFFERENTIAL: \$346 Avg Cost/Lead

Modern Inbound (AKA: Lead Generation/Business Development)

- Expect Return on Investment?
 - TYPES: Banner ads, Social Media, SEO, ReMarketing/ReTargeting, Yelp
 - COST DIFFERENTIAL: 61% less than traditional marketing

Source: State of Inbound Marketing, Hubspot , March 2012



FINAL THOUGHTS

Why is Modern Marketing So Important?

SURVIVAL RATES...



8 out of 10 businesses make it one year



5 out of 10 businesses make it five years



3 out of 10 businesses make it 10 years

Source: U.S. SBA Office of Advocacy: FAQs June 2016





Questions?

Please contact me...

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Great Falls Development Authority

October 5, 2017



FINAL NOTE

Please help us make
The Small Business Webinar Series better...

complete our Survey Monkey!

Look for the link is in the “Questions?” pod.



UPCOMING SCHEDULE

November 2: Employee Retention – Creating a Positive Company Culture

December 7: Developing Your Story – A Foundation for Funding

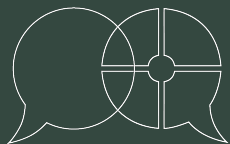
All resources available at:

<http://www.msucommunitydevelopment.org/smallbusiness.html>

or

<http://sbdc.mt.gov/classroom>





G2.01

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

/Marketing

DECISION SHEET

v2.0

Intention

The company can choose between different kinds of media to communicate its message and profile.

By getting an overview of the media possibilities, we can make the most suitable marketing mix for our customer groups.

Process

Start by going through the listed marketing media. Next, tick off how useful you think each media is for a marketing campaign right now.

Continue by noting which specific customer group(s) each media should be used for. Then decide how exactly you want to use the media.

Finish by figuring out how much it would cost to use each media in your marketing campaign.

Next Step

- Start making the materials you need for the marketing media you have given the highest priority.
- Calculate the total costs of your marketing mix.
- Make action plan for the marketing campaign.

Licensed to:

Developed by:



Marketing Mix

Choose media and message for your customer segments



MEDIA TYPE	MARKETING MEDIA	Priority (1-3 tick)	FOR SPECIFIC CUSTOMER GROUP	HOW TO USE MEDIA (publications, message, timing etc.)	EXPECTED COST
Advertising	Daily newspaper				
	Magazines				
	Professional publications				
	Handbooks				
	Outdoor (postcard, busses etc.)				
	Web (banner ads)				
	TV (local/national)				
	Radio (local/national)				
Digital & printed material	Brochures /product sheets				
	Company presentation				
	Flyers				
	Posters				
	Powerpoint presentation				
Online media presence	Website				
	Social Media				
	E-newsletter				
	Blogs				
	Google AdWords				
Direct marketing	Direct mail				
	Direct e-mail				
	Telemarketing				
	Customer visits				
Publications	Newsletters				
	Magazines				
	White papers (case studies)				
Promotion	Trade fairs				
	Conferences				
	Product samples				
	Sponsorships				
	Merchandise				

Date:

Name:

Company:

HOW TO SELL ONLINE



Get your business selling
online in a few simple steps

Tips for limited budgets, expanding your
footprint, selling on social media sites,
sales tax, regulations, international
selling info, and more.



sbdc.mt.gov

HOW TO SELL ONLINE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

There are many options when deciding where and how to sell online. Start with your goals. Who are your target customers? Where do they currently shop online? What look and feel do they deem “credible” to buy from? Have a blueprint in your business plan—to get to your first million in sales, how many units need to be sold?

Now you’re ready to...

ASSESS ALL YOUR SELLING OPTIONS	3
CHOOSE A WEBSITE HOST	4
CHOOSE AN ECOMMERCE PLATFORM	5
REGULATIONS, TAXES & INTERNATIONAL SELLING INFO	6
DETERMINE SHIPPING LOGISTICS	7
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	8
MORE RESOURCES	9



1

ASSESS ALL YOUR SELLING OPTIONS

Only focus on one ecommerce site or plugin at a time. Do not attempt more channels until one is optimized.

Before you start selling products online, **do your homework**. Find out industry norms for where and how to sell your product. Check out competitor placements, and margins achievable on various platforms. The table below compares current popular ways to sell online:

	WEBSITE	FACEBOOK	ETSY	TWITTER	PINTEREST	AMAZON	GOOGLE
Description	Sell on your e-commerce website. You design it and direct buyers to it.	Sell on the new shop section. Add a shop button to your page.	Sell on this ecommerce platform. Etsy is your online storefront.	Sell products you feature on Twitter as images.	Sell products you feature on Pinterest as images.	Sell your inventory on Amazon instead of your own store.	Sell online and in-store inventory on Merchant Center.
Audience	Whomever you tell about it, whether via social media, ads or other.	Targeted audience you refine—local or anywhere in the world.	Anyone directed to your store or customers searching Etsy for your products.	Your followers, or anyone who sees your posts.	Your followers, or anyone who sees your pins. Mostly female audience.	Anyone searching for the items you are selling on Amazon.	Targeted audience you refine—local or anywhere in the world.
Other Info	View a comparison chart of all available platforms here.	Utilized mostly by retail businesses. Option to purchase on your website.	Mostly a female audience. Meant for crafts or eccentric items.	Can only plug into Twitter if you're using specific ecommerce platforms.	Can only plug into Pinterest if you're using specific ecommerce platforms.	This professional selling guide discusses discounts, large volume and more.	Considered shopping campaigns or shopping ads.
How To	See the site host you select for instructions on how to build.	1. Set up a Facebook shop. 2. Another good article to set up.	Visit Etsy's how to section to get started.	Visit Twitter's how to section to get started.	Visit Pinterest's how to section to get started.	Visit Amazon's selling services site to get started.	Visit the Google Merchant Center for more info.

2

CHOOSE A WEBSITE HOST

Register a domain name on GoDaddy.com, Namecheap.com, Name.com or Bluehost.com

First things first! When you register your URL, be sure to:

(1) research your chosen company name. [Do a “knock out” search](#) for Federal & State trademarks (or consult an attorney),

and a Google search for who is already using the name, and if it’s directly related.

(2) Register every online account available for your business name on social media, preventing theft in the future. Also, secure all similar domain names for better SEO.

You have many options when it comes to choosing where and how to create your site.

Review your options before you begin:

Build-Your-Own Drag and Drop Full Site with Ecommerce	Other info aside from product your selling will appear on site.	Easy to build for a novice.	You aren’t responsible for costly site repairs, but you are subject to	<i>Host Options:</i> Weebly Wix Squarespace More
Build-Your-Own Drag and Drop Ecommerce-Only Site	Bare minimum info appears on the site—the site is only a storefront.	Easy to build for a novice.	changes in policies and updates from the website company.	Shopify Bigcommerce Weebly Squarespace More
Build-Your-Own Content Management System (CMS) Site with or without ecommerce	Usually other info aside from product your selling will appear on site.	Can be complicated to build.	Not subject to changes in policies. You manage and pay for repairs.	Wordpress Joomla Drupal More
Outsource It	Can have other info appear, or just a storefront.	Someone else builds for you. Can be costly.	Website builder takes care of changes. You pay for repairs.	Talk to your builder about their site host options.

Need More Info?

[This link gives an overview](#) of the difference between CMS and drag-and-drop.

[This link](#) gives website and template options for purchase.

3

CHOOSE AN ECOMMERCE PLATFORM

If you're building a drag and drop or CMS full site from the *previous* page, you will need to also select a company to host your ecommerce.

Hosted vs. Self-Hosted Ecommerce Source: Patrick's Programming Blog

Hosted e-commerce solutions are software that run on someone else's server, meaning you don't have access to the code that runs your site, and you use their website to make changes to your site. It works a lot like Facebook.

A self-hosted solution is software run on your own machine, and you own the store. You have access to the coding, and control updates. If you have technical problems you have to figure them out, ask for help, or pay for someone else to troubleshoot it for you. It functions like Microsoft Excel.

When choosing a solution, ask yourself a few questions:

1. Is your business just getting started?

If so, a hosted solution is probably right for you.

2. Do you/will you have very large sales volume online?

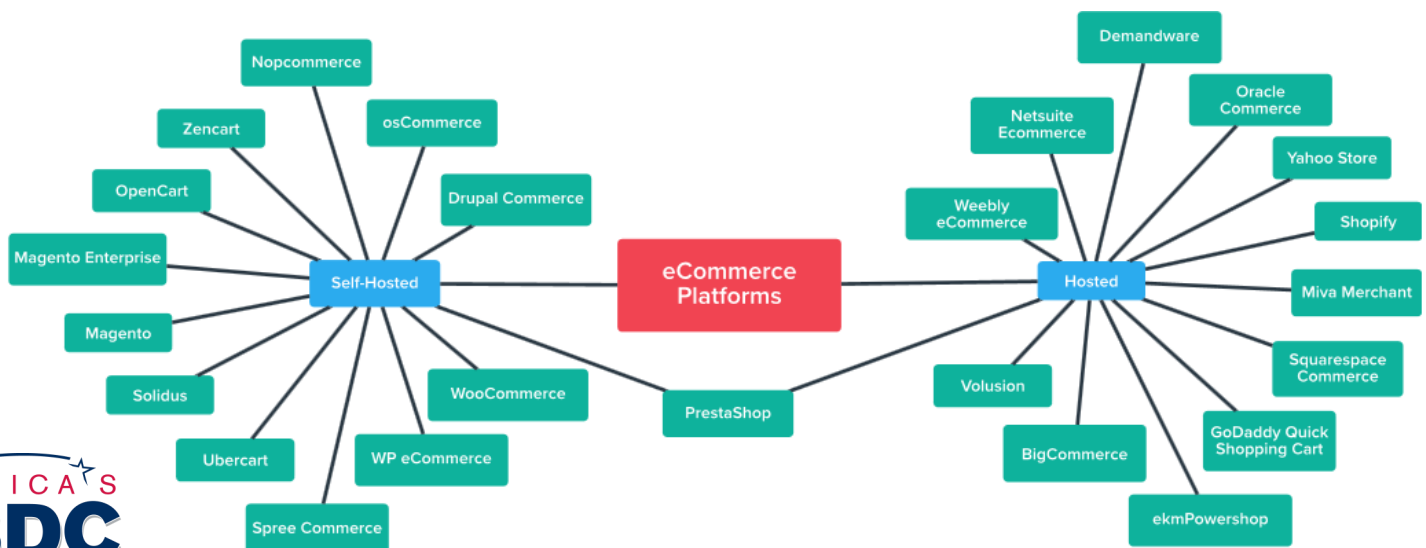
If so, a self-hosted solution may be a better choice.

3. In either case, do you have the knowledge, expertise and time to dedicate to building your store properly?

If not, consider hiring a company to build it.

[Read: Tips for Choosing a Web Designer](#)

ECOMMERCE PLATFORM COMPANIES: COMPARE THEM





REGULATIONS, TAXES & INTERNATIONAL SELLING INFO

Regulatory Considerations for Selling Online

For the most part, the steps to starting an online business are the same as starting any business. However, doing business online comes with additional legal and financial considerations, particularly in the areas of privacy, security, copyright, and taxation. Most regulations are covered by hosted sites and platforms, but if you are building your own site, abiding by regulations is more of a concern.

[Read information on each topic by the Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#)

Collecting Sales Tax Online

If your business has a physical presence in a state, such as a store, office or warehouse, you must collect applicable state and local sales tax from your customers. If you do not have a presence in a particular state, you are not required to collect sales taxes. Hosted sites and platforms are generally programmed to calculate sales tax for you, but self-hosted sites need to build these capabilities in.

[Read more information about taxation by the SBA](#)

International Online Sales

Selling your products online allows for immediate entry into the global marketplace. However, shipping your product overseas presents a few challenges if you have little experience with taxes, duties, customs laws, and consumer protection issues involved with international commerce. Hosted sites and platforms are generally programmed to calculate taxes, but again, self-hosted requires it to be built in.

[Understand legal and regulatory requirements when shipping overseas by the SBA](#)
[Export.gov E-Commerce Toolbox](#)

[Electronic Commerce: Selling Internationally A Guide for Businesses](#)

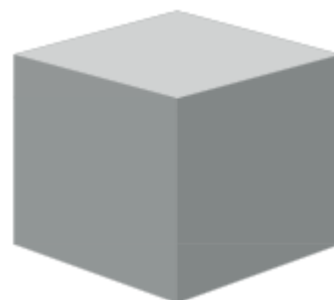
5

DETERMINE SHIPPING LOGISTICS

So...you've started your ecommerce website or platform and now you've sold your first item! Shipping is another key area to develop in your ecommerce plan.

PRO TIP: Most ecommerce sites do not generate customer facing shipping prices for you. You must calculate it yourself and add it into product costs on your site. Your shipping prices will be calculated by averages across locations, package size and weight, volume of shipments, carriers and more.

[The Beginner's Guide to Ecommerce Shipping and Fulfillment](#) by Shopify.com gives clear tips and instructions on how to ship smarter. Everything from packaging options and how to structure your rate, to business accounts and labeling is featured.



More Information:

- Companies like [Shippo](#) integrate with big name ecommerce sites to connect with multiple carriers, create discounted shipping labels, track parcels, and much more. This could be a good shipping option for your site.
- Some larger ecommerce sites display real-time carrier shipping rates directly to your customers when you pay for their higher-level pricing plans.
- Researching your competitors' shipping structure is a good idea when you start building your strategy. Learn more in this [entrepreneur.com](#) article.

Great info can be found from simple Google searches like "ecommerce shipping." [A Small Business Guide to E-Commerce Shipping](#) is another valuable online resource.

6

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS



- **“Expect some channel conflict as a cost of doing business,”** says Martin Zwilling in his [entrepreneur.com article](#). “With multiple channels, there will always be inequities and disagreements. These must be dealt with openly, and in a proactive manner if at all possible.” This means that you could have conflict with any platform you are selling on. Stay informed of their policies and monitor your monthly billing.
- **Always use analytics and listen directly to customer feedback.** Are you able to pinpoint where your customers are coming from online? Do you know how long they spend on your site or where they’re getting stuck? Set up [Woopra](#), [Mixpanel](#), [Intercom](#) to connect with customers or [Google Analytics](#) for your website to measure results.
- **Do not wait until your site is perfect to launch.** The “perfect” site may never come, you will always be improving and refining. Trust yourself and get selling once basics are covered.
- **[Make an appointment](#) with your [local SBDC Advisor](#) when you’re ready to launch.** Let our experts assess what you’ve set up and give final feedback. Don’t forget to reach out to us if you have questions in the process, too!

HOW TO **SELL** ONLINE

MORE RESOURCES

1. Entrepreneur.com is a trusted resource for small business owners. Read a variety of articles about selling online from their expert writers:

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/topic/selling-online>

2. These blog articles give ecommerce newcomers a big picture view on how to sell online:

<http://www.websitebuilderexpert.com/how-to-sell-online-ecommerce-solutions/>

<http://www.websitebuilderexpert.com/how-to-build-an-online-store/>

3. This website touts itself as “The Ultimate Selling Online Guide”. It compares many sites and platforms:

<https://ecommerceguide.com/sell-online/>



HOW TO SELL ONLINE



Have More Questions?

mtsbdc@mt.gov | (406) 841-2747

Sign up for an appointment: mtsbdc.ecenterdirect.com



facebook.com/montanasbdc



[@mtsbdc](https://twitter.com/mtsbdc)



sbdc.mt.gov