

7

Steps to Launch Your Store Online

1. Start by Defining Your Online Goals

Before you build anything, you need to be clear on what you're hoping to achieve with your online store. Are you trying to grow sales, reach new markets, simplify inventory management, or add convenience for your existing customers? Each of these goals will shape how your website is structured.



2. Choose the Right E-commerce Platform

Once you know what you want to accomplish, the next step is choosing a platform that supports those goals. You have several options, including Shopify, WooCommerce (built on WordPress), BigCommerce, and Squarespace. Each platform has its strengths depending on your needs, budget, and technical experience.



3. Organize Your Product Catalog for Online Sales

Start by grouping your products into categories that are intuitive and easy to navigate. Use clear labels that reflect how your customers shop. Within each category, provide detailed product descriptions, accurate pricing, high-quality photos, and any available variations like size, color, or material. The more confident your customer feels with the product, the more likely they are to buy.



4. Set Up Payment and Shipping Options

To sell online, you need to give customers secure, convenient ways to pay and receive their orders. Choose a few options that your audience is familiar with. Shipping setup depends on your products and where you plan to deliver. If you already have a shipping system in place at your physical store, look for ways to integrate it with your website.



5. Connect Your Online and Offline Operations

Bringing your store online doesn't mean your in-person business takes a backseat. In fact, the most successful retailers find ways to create harmony between both. That means syncing inventory between your store and website, offering local pickup through your site, or even using your website to drive foot traffic with promotions and events.



6. Invest in a Professional Design and User Experience

Just like your physical storefront reflects your brand, your website should do the same. A clean, user-friendly layout builds trust and makes it easy for visitors to navigate. A professional designer will create a homepage that captures your brand identity and guides visitors to your key products or categories.



7. Promote Your New Online Store

Once your website is live, it's time to let your audience know. Promote the launch using email newsletters, social media posts, and in-store signage. Highlight any special online-only offers to encourage people to visit your site. You should also set up your Google Business Profile and link it to your site. This makes it easier for local shoppers to find you in search.

