Visualsoft

The Ultimate Guide

to eCommerce Success In 2022

Think bigger

Contents

Guide Overview

For many, 2021 was a year of uncertainty, due to the effects of Covid-19. However, for lots of businesses who exist in the online realm of eCommerce, this has had a positive impact on fast-tracking their online growth.

Consumers are adapting and spending more time **shopping online** than ever before. Businesses **who aren't online** are rushing to **get online**, and those who are online are looking to jump ahead of the game in order to stand out and increase their brand and revenue in adherence to changing consumer behaviours and expectations.

Whichever one of those pots you sit in, this guide is a great resource to have at hand, filled with tips and ideas to help you not only survive in the online realm but the fundamentals to succeed. From choosing platforms that assist and adapt to your growth, to effectively communicating with your customers, this guide will give you industry insight into eCommerce success in 2022.

So what are you waiting for...

Choose the Perfect Platform

Choosing the perfect platform for your eCommerce business is a crucial element to providing a seamless shopping experience for your customers, and the opportunity to grow your business.

With that being said, it's important to consider a few points when it comes to choosing a platform that is best suited to your business, services and goals.

Be sure to consider:

✅ Growth

Having an eCommerce platform that can adapt and expand your offerings should your business grow its customer base is extremely important. It would be a huge shame to have spent time, money, effort and resources building your online store, for it to be unable to accommodate when your business matures; serving more customers, holding more stock, offering more products.

If there are issues with your site due to your platform not being able to deal with functioning at a higher capacity, this will ultimately drive away the customers you worked hard to build relationships with.
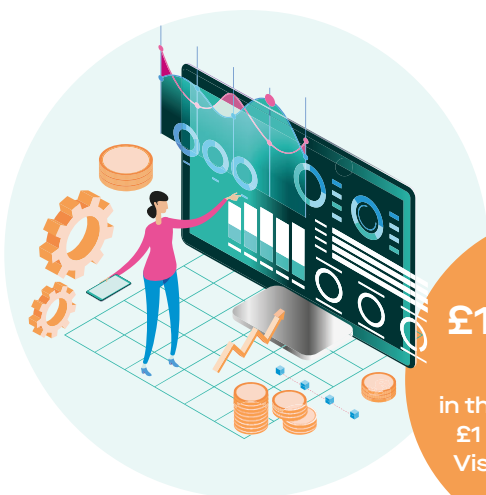
✅ Costs

In one of the most competitive spaces the world has to offer, the online sphere can be difficult to navigate your visibility, whilst also creating a memorable experience for your customer.

That's why investing in a platform that provides an easy, efficient site for your end user to access, understand, and purchase your services is extremely important.

The majority of platforms will incur an ongoing monthly cost. Ensure to check the costs of different providers, and whether or not they include the fundamentals such as: the platform, maintenance and support to get the most value out of your provider.

Always choose the provider that best fits the services you offer, your customer needs and your business aspirations.

This is something you don't have to worry about when opting for a Visualsoft platform solution. It is built with growing and scaling eCommerce businesses in mind.

For every
£100 SPENT ONLINE
in the UK last year, over £1 went through the Visualsoft Platform*.

✓ Customer experience

Providing an elevated customer experience is what will make you memorable, set you apart from your competitors and keep your customers coming back for more.

The experience your customer has will impact both customer retention and acquisition. One bad experience with your brand can be the difference between them coming back again and again, and them telling their friends and family not to trust you.
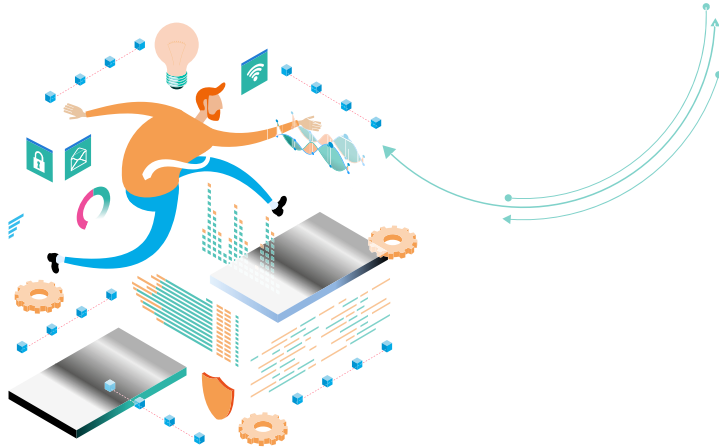
So what do you need to look out for when choosing a platform that will offer your customers a continual positive interaction?

- Easy user interface
- Easy navigation
- Loyalty rewards
- Varied payment methods
- (Dynamic content) Personalisation features

Taking these factors into account when choosing a platform provider, will benefit both you and your customer. It aids in making you a trusted and reliable source, showing you understand your customers wants and needs, as well as understanding your industry and trends.

So when it comes to making a platform decision, you have the essentials to ensure you choose a platform that will perform.

This is something you don't have to worry about when opting for Visualsoft's platform solution. It is built with growing and scaling eCommerce businesses in mind.

100% UK design, build & support teams

- 365 Day Technical Support (8am-12am)
- Fully Developed In-house

Feature rich & highly configurable

- Flexible / Customisable Wireframes
- 600+ Feature Extensions / 11,000 Settings

Big data insights

- For every £100 spent online in the UK last year, over £1 went through the Visualsoft Platform. Over £1,000,000,000+*

Expert technical teams

- Over 90+ Developers and Support Engineers

Our platform provides the opportunity to create a bespoke site, and a transparent pricing plan based on service.

Choose the Perfect Payment Gateway

Insights brought to you in partnership with

PayPal   **checkout**.com

Payment gateways exist to support the transaction between you and your customer. But why is this so important in modern retail?

PAY

Shop Safer

Using payment gateways is a **safer method for customers to purchase online**. Seeing renowned trusted payment providers on your site can help build trust, relationships and loyalty with your customer base.

Shop Easier

Most payment gateways offer a **seamless, quick checkout process,** so your customer has an easy and enjoyable experience with your brand, which can often be a factor in repeat custom. And who doesn't want that?

Increase Sales

Wanting to increase sales? Studies show that **40% of customers** shopping online will exit midway through checkout if the process is long and difficult. So an easy payment option should positively impact your sales.

60% of eCommerce shoppers

will abandon their cart if they cannot pay using their preferred payment method*

Multiple Payment Options

Consumers love flexibility and convenience. Which is why having payment gateways with multiple payment options such as PayPal and Klarna, with buy now pay later or pay in 3 methods, should be high on your list of priorities.

These methods are a great way to give customers a more comfortable experience knowing they have flexibility when it comes to purchasing without having to use their credit card that inevitably comes with the added interest.

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BANK

## End-to-end payment solution with Checkout.com

Checkout.com is a leading, cloud-based payments solutions provider that helps brands drive more value from their digital payments. Their modular payments platform is purpose-built with performance, scalability and speed in mind.

Checkout.com offers improved acceptance, more transparent and actionable data and a scalable product structure that merchants can adapt to their needs. Combined with deep, local expertise and truly white-glove service, they're a fantastic payments partner for businesses looking to integrate better payments solutions globally.
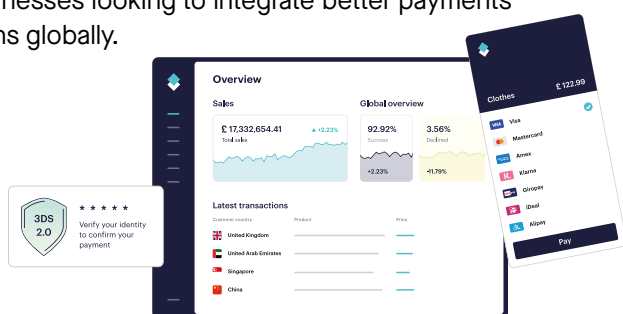
Don't believe us? Take it from **Checkout.com** themselves, a renowned and trusted payment provider and technical partner of Visualsoft

" Our research shows that 60% of eCommerce shoppers will abandon their cart if they cannot pay using their preferred payment method. Losing a customer at the checkout because you have not offered a customer's preferred payment method means sunk acquisition costs — and therefore lost revenue. Build smarter strategies by evaluating and adapting your APM portfolio with insight into conversion, cost and risk."
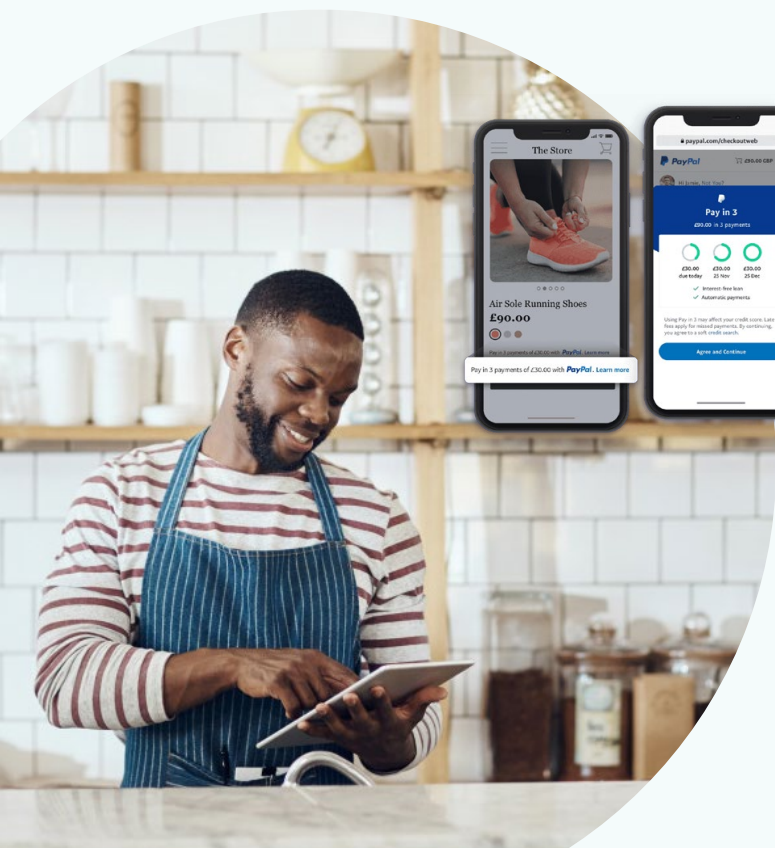
Drive new levels of sales and growth with Visualsoft and PayPal Checkout

From simple to completely custom, there's an integration that's right for you. No matter which integration you choose, PayPal Checkout will intelligently present the most relevant payment types to your customers, making it easy for them to pay using PayPal, credit or debit card payments and other payment method such as Pay in 3; all seamlessly integrated with Visualsoft.

PayPal

If building a trusting and comfortable experience for your customer whilst increasing revenue is something you want to achieve, then ensuring you have the perfect payment gateway for your customers is certainly key!

Build Trust

It's more cost effective to retain your recurrent customers, than it is to acquire new ones*

The ingredient to a good relationship is building trust. And having a good relationship between your customer and your brand should be a priority when trying to be a successful player in the world of eCommerce.

Making a customer feel like you understand their needs, they can trust you and they feel appreciated for choosing your services to spend their hard earned money on is extremely important, and can set you apart from your competition, and aid in brand loyalty.

How Do I Build Trust?

Building trust between you and your customer is an ongoing process. However studies have shown that it is more cost effective to retain your recurrent customers, than it is to acquire new ones.

Your current customer base will also massively assist you with customer acquisition just by word of mouth solely on the basis of having a good experience with your site and services. So building trust with your current customers will not only help with repeat purchases, but save you time and money acquiring new ones.

Ways of building trust with your customer can include:

Loyalty programs - rewarding your customers for shopping with you

Encourage customers to leave reviews - this shows you're genuine and believe your services are of a standard that you don't need to worry about shoppers experiences

Provide excellent customer service - be on hand to help customers, and be empathetic and willing to resolve any issues they may have

Be transparent - ensure your marketing is not misleading to your customers. Act upon promises, and remain integral to your brand morals.

Optimise for Mobile

Studies show that in the last 8 months, 79% of mobile users have made a purchase using their mobile*. Which suggests that if your site is not optimised for easy use on a mobile phone, then bump that up your priority list.

Why is Optimisation so Important?

Mobile optimisation ensures your site is adjusted to a smaller screen with navigation and images rendering to fully function as it would if you are on a desktop. Having a site optimised for mobile assists in ease of use, another outlet to browse and purchase, and builds reliability with your customer.

Impulse Purchases

Not only does having an optimised site add another channel of access for you to make sales, it provides an outlet for a large increase in impulse buys.

The vast majority of people have a mobile phone in their pocket. It's a go to when they have a free moment or two to scan their socials, message a loved one, and browse the web. And if you're lucky, and your site is optimised for mobile, they may even have a minute or two to purchase something from your store.

So you're missing out on a large demographic by not having an easy to use mobile friendly site for your customers to browse.

Did you know...

Google Prioritises Optimised Sites

Search engines such as Google, prioritise sites that are mobile friendly, ranking them higher than those who don't?

This provides more visibility for sites that are adapting and making changes toward providing their consumers with the easiest and slickest service possible. More visibility, more traffic to your site, more sales.

If your site isn't optimised, make sure to add that to your to-do list this year to improve the eCommerce experience you're providing.

Create Rewards Schemes

Are you rewarding your customers? If not, you probably should be. Rewards are one of the best ways to motivate your customers to shop with you again, and again, and again.

Make Your Customers Feel Appreciated

Encouraging your customers to support your brand because they feel appreciated can be achieved with a loyalty scheme.

🎁 Can you offer them **10% off** their next purchase?

🎁 Could you offer them a **voucher** for referring you to a friend?

🎁 Could you give them **free delivery** when they spend over £50?

10% OFF

The reward options are endless, and totally personalisable to your audience and their behaviours. Making your customers feel appreciated for choosing to shop with your brand will help have a positive impact on your brand reputation and help with repeat custom. Rewards often motivate customers to come back, and if they've had a slick experience with you, they will.

Boost Profits and Gain Customers

Whilst loyalty schemes are beneficial for your audience, they're mutually beneficial to you too.

Done correctly, they can help boost profits, introduce new customers, and reduce costs of acquisition. For instance, if you offer a **'refer a friend'** reward to your current customer, you have not only **encouraged a purchase from your current customer** with a reward, but you have a**cquired a new customer** using very little resource and time.

Rewarding your customers offers a host of mutual benefits, for both your brand, revenue and customer satisfaction. This will positively impact your eCommerce business growth through relationship building.

Cross-sell and Upsell

Looking to increase your revenue? Now we're talking.

For most businesses, this is an ongoing goal to achieve year on year, and usually means more marketing, more resources and more money to acquire new customers or encourage current ones. But it doesn't have to.

Cross-selling and upselling are perfect methods of achieving an increase in revenue, and are techniques most businesses can adopt.

Cross-selling

Cross-selling is offering another product or service to a current customer to increase the value of what they have purchased.

An example of cross selling would be selling someone a phone, also selling them an insurance package, and the earphones to go with it.

Upselling

Upselling refers to selling a customer a better specification of a product or an additional service of a product they're purchasing.

For example, if you're selling a car, you could offer the customer the version with the higher specification with the sat nav included, cruise control and an alarm system as opposed to the slighter cheaper version that doesn't include any of these.

Benefits of cross-selling and upselling

In addition to an increase in revenue, cross-selling and upselling has a whole host of other advantages you may want to reap the benefits of:

Personalising the customer experience - You can add value by offering recommendations based on what they're currently purchasing and what their needs are.

Enhances trust and loyalty - If what you upsell or cross-sell your customer is of quality and adds value to them, you're more likely to get repeat custom.

Optimises value of sales - Acquiring new customers is more expensive than gaining new ones, so targeting the ones you already have with more products is a cost effective way to increase revenue.

Why not make 2022 the year you master the art of cross-selling and/or upselling to assist in prosperity this year.

Easy to use User Interface (site layout)

Is your site easy to use, easy to navigate and offers an easy user journey for your consumer? If not, this could be the difference between a short trip to your site, and back onto the search results for a site that is in fact easy to use.

What is User Interface?

User interface (UI) refers to the website your user sees and interacts with when on your site. It is important that your user finds it easy to find what they're looking for and can easily navigate around your webpages.

Why Is UI Design Important?

Having a well built site with a good UI will provide your customer with a seamless and intuitive experience with your brand.

This ultimately results in more time spent on your site to browse your products and services and will often be a factor in increased sales and bringing a customer back to your store. A bad user interface is unlikely to make a customer want to return to your site.

Good UI Design = Enhanced user experience, helping you generate more traffic, and keep your visitors engaged and retained

Keep your customers coming back for more this year having had an easy experience with your brand thanks to an easy and efficient UI.

Reviews

When looking to find a product, do you find yourself looking through the reviews to explore the experiences of others to confirm whether you want to buy? Well you're not alone. The vast majority of people do. Which makes having a reviewing system and encouraging your customers to use it, crucial for increasing sales.

Why Are Reviews Important to Customers?

Introducing a reviewing system may seem daunting on the chance you receive a couple of negative or mediocre reviews. However, if you believe in your product and are supplying a service of high quality to your customers then you should have nothing to be concerned about.

Reviews are important to consumers for many reasons. It adds reliability to your services, showing a true representation of another customer's experience with your brand. If you have provided a positive experience, then your reviews should reflect this.

Another factor to consider about a consumer in the world of online shopping, is that they aren't in a position to gauge a physical understanding of the product. They can't see or feel things such as quality or size. So reviews can put your customer at ease and make them feel more comfortable with an online purchase.

Having a source of truth about your products can also enable a customer to make an informed decision based on light shed by people who have purchased and used your offerings. Which in turn can aid in an increase of sales.

Why Are Reviews Important to Your Brand?

As an online brand wanting to succeed in a competitive online space, utilising as many gains as you can to add credibility to your site should take precedence.

Online reviews are a great way to do this. They add genuinity and authenticity to your brand and services, as well as adhering to features that search engines such as Google see as important, will rank you higher in the search results.

Now you're ready to delve into the world of reviews

Effective Email Marketing

Insights brought to you in partnership with

dotdigital

You may be using email marketing to communicate with your customers, but are you doing it effectively?

Effective email marketing builds relationships, allows you to personalise your communications to your customers and can help you direct them back to your site for increased sales.

How to Use Email Marketing Effectively

Email marketing is a chance to plant your brand into your customers inbox at a time that is best for them (based on consumer behaviour trends).

So why not make sure that for the moment you have captured your customers' attention, you give them something to make them feel understood, personal and of value, in order to encourage them to your site.

Effective email marketing can include:

Make it personal - use customer names, send birthday emails, direct them to their local store. Using personalised data to form the content will make a user feel you've taken the time to get to know them and their needs.

Send at optimum times - test sending emails at different dates and times, and compare things like open rates and click rates. This can help you find an optimum time to engage with your customers via email.
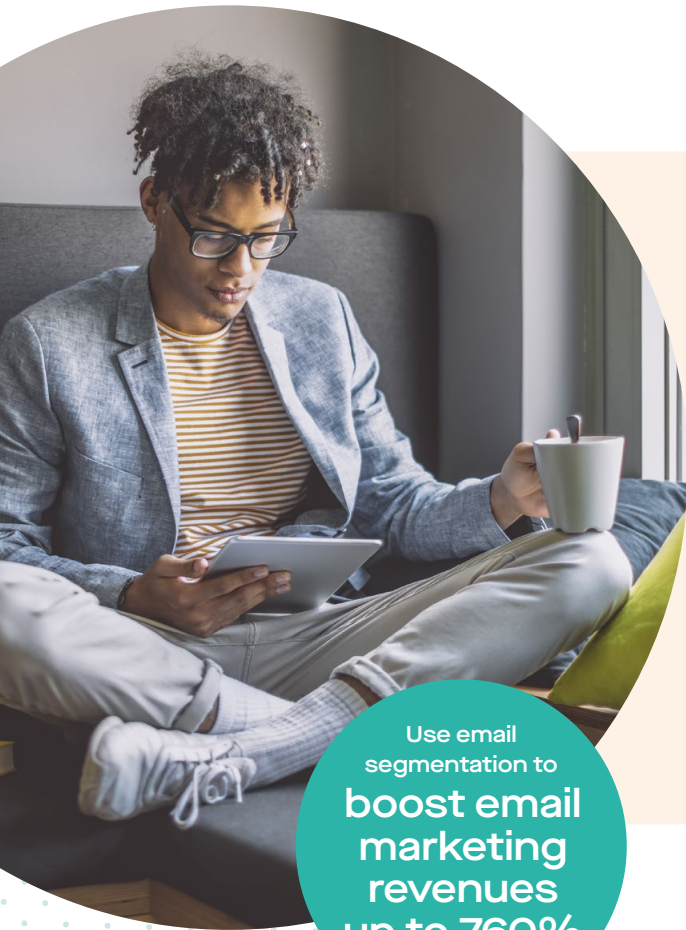
Ensure your site is optimised for mobile - emails that aren't optimised for mobile, won't present content as intended. This can look like spam and reduce your users trust in your brand, as well as encouraging them to unsubscribe.

Re-engage with inactive customers - take the time to look at your customer base and segment users that have been inactive for a while. Send them a more personal email that will let them know you appreciate them by letting them know you notice their absence from your attempted engagement. Encourage them to re-engage with freebies or discounts to motivate them back to your site.

Segment your emails - email segmentation refers to sending personalised content tailored to groups that fit a criteria. This can be done by geographic location, interests, purchase history to name a few things.

According to dotdigital

" **Effective use of this segmentation technique** can boost email marketing revenues **up to 760%.** They recommend using segmentation to support activities including: issuing back-in-stock alerts for people that explored products on your site, promoting related products to customers that have made a purchase, and targeting those whose engagement stops at opening emails".

Use email segmentation to boost email marketing revenues up to 760%
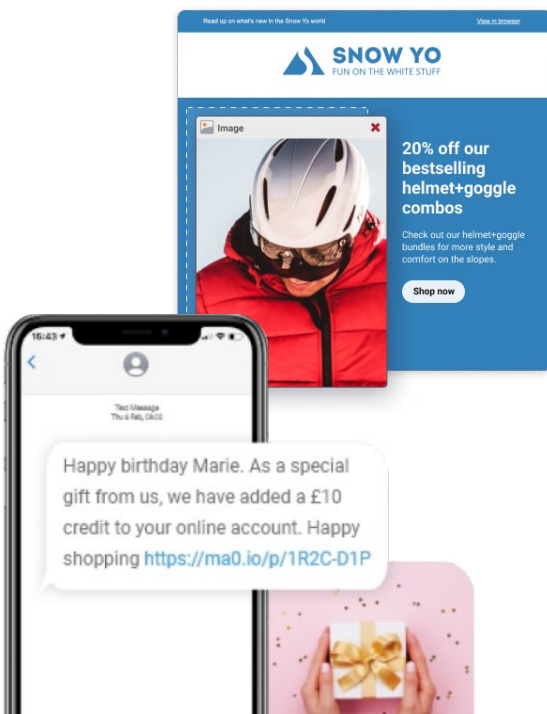
→ **Click to download Dotdigital's guide to effective email marketing.**

 dotdigital

There are lots of ways to ensure you're providing customers with effective email marketing that is beneficial for both you and your customer.

Take advantage of some of these tips and implement them into your eCommerce strategy to start effective conversations with your customers.

Multichannel Sales

Thanks to things such as accessibility, marketing and reward schemes, consumers are shopping around online more than ever. Which is why omnichannel retail should be a large part of your eCommerce strategy.

With large established online retailers such as eBay and Amazon selling virtually everything, gaining visibility can be a demanding task.

So why not leverage these channels, and look at the value of opportunity you could grab with two virtual hands, and opt for looking to sell your stock in other market places.

What is Multichannel Sales?

Multichannel sales refers to selling your merchandise in more than one sales channel, giving your customer multiple channels to purchase your products or services.

In doing this, you're putting your products in front of more customers, which should in turn, increase sales.

What is the Importance of Multichannel Sales?

If scaling your business is part of your plan, then looking into sales channels other than your own website is a step in the right direction.

It allows you to reach a consumer at multiple touch points of their buying journey, as well as at a higher frequency.

The increased exposure that comes with multichannel selling, allows you to engage with a customer you may not have otherwise reached, in an environment they prefer. Providing this level of interaction and comfortability, should result in growing your customer base and sales.

With help from this section of the guide you'll be ready to delve into the world of multichannel sales. Is this the year you look for more ways to sell?

Site Security

As a consumer, you want to feel like you're safe online when you're shopping. Personal and financial data are just some of the things we want to ensure are only sent to the intended recipient, and that it doesn't end up in the wrong hands.

To ensure this is what actually happens with your sensitive information, you can integrate an SSL into your site to protect information that comes through your site, making your customers feel at ease when shopping online with you.

What is an SSL?

SSL stands for Secure Socket Layer. This is a security technique used to express to a customer that they're in safe hands when it comes to passing over their data. The SSL creates a link between web server and browser that is encrypted, to prevent others having access to the information or having the ability to modify it.

How Does a Consumer Know You Have SSL?

In the age of modern technology and consumers knowing to be more wary online, most of your customers will know what to look for with regards to security when shopping on your site. Savvy shoppers can't be fooled!

A secure site will have 'https' at the beginning of it's URL, along with a padlock symbol. For 'in the know' users, this is a telling sign of whether you're a trusted and reliable source to be shopping from and handing their data too.

For a vast majority of customers, this is a detrimental factor to whether they will make a purchase or leave your site.

Now that you've jumped into the world of online security, it's time to get yourself into a position that provides your users with a comfortable experience with a secure site, if you haven't done so already.

Go Global

Insights brought to you in partnership with

glopal

Want to take your business to its full potential?
Then going global could be the next step for you. Taking your business international and discovering your untapped sales growth could be the answer to the exponential growth of your business.

Why Go Global?

Going global with your business can often be an intimidating vision. However, it doesn't have to be. If you believe you have a product or service that would see success and add value to international markets, then what are you waiting for?

If you do your research, going global allows you to take your products to other markets that are less saturated, and delve into spaces your competitors haven't.

It allows an introduction and access to a new base of customers, and sees your business become visible to a wider audience. The more customers that are aware of you, the more you build your brand, the more opportunity for sales.

Sounds amazing right?

How Do I Take My Business Global?

Taking your business global comes with a few considerations:

Does my product fit the culture? You don't want to try and sell ice to eskimos for instance.

Learning the language of your desired location Language barriers can slow down your venture.

Familiarising yourself with the global markets to find your market opportunity. Which one best fits your services?
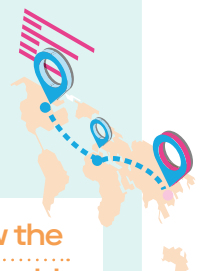
Build relationships and leverage local industry experts Get local insight into your industry and audience.

Taking into account distribution abroad Do you have a reliable shipping supplier?

If you spend the time to get to know the markets and where your services would sit, you're already on the path to success.

glopal

Our platform provides the perfect companion to integrate your services into international markets through the power of Glopal. Glopal is an end-to-end fully managed cross border eCommerce platform that instantly localise your online store so that you can sell in multiple countries, languages, and currencies. Easily connect your existing Google Shopping product feeds with buyers worldwide to grow your sales instantly.

→ **Click here for more information on Glopal.**

"

Going global is about providing international shoppers with a familiar and delightful buying experience. If you can enable them to buy your product in their language, with their currencies and payment methods they trust, then they'll trust you. Merchants investing in localisation will have a clear advantage over their competition when it comes to global success in 2022."

Patrick Smarzynski, CEO Glopal

The Cross Border Growth Opportunity

glopal for Merchants

Enabling shoppers to buy products **with currencies and payment methods they trust!**
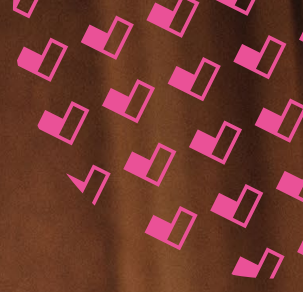
To Conclude:

There we have it, a round up of tips and ideas to take into 2022 to implement into your strategy for your eCommerce business.

As we mentioned at the beginning, the consequences of Covid-19 have set some businesses at an advantage, assisting online growth. The need to strategise and take control of how to take this growth and run with it, is crucial in future success of your eCommerce business.

Following this guide is a great place to start when it comes to climbing the ladder of growth and success. Are you in a position to kick start the process of any of the tips we have recommended but need some assistance in solution or integration?

Our platform provides the perfect companion and has intelligent features, designed to integrate and support your eCommerce ambitions.

Request a demo today!

Visualsoft

Find out how we can help you grow online:
www.visualsoft.co.uk | 01642 633604

For over two decades Visualsoft has been home to over a thousand of the industry's leading online retailers and its team of more than 360 creative visionaries, ahead-of-the-curve developers and expert digital marketers across three UK locations.

Through consistent R&D and re-investment, we've created the industry's most trusted, comprehensive and frictionless all-in-one eCommerce ecosystem.

When applied with our eCommerce 'Steps to Success' and integrated digital marketing toolkit it enables you to streamline your eCommerce and digital marketing operations, expand into new markets and grow sales - all from a single centralised platform, avoiding the need for multiple 3rd party relationships.

A smarter way to manage your eCommerce needs.

Think bigger