

10.10: Advantages and challenges

Throughout this chapter we have discussed some of the benefits of using eCommerce. In short, with online retail already a trillion dollar industry and growing each year, to stay in business, businesses need to be operating online. It is no longer simply a nice to have, but is an essential part of business in the 21st century.

The beauty of eCommerce is that it is easily tracked and monitored. Analytics tools provide incredible data that can be monitored in real time, and changes implemented quickly. It makes this space dynamic but also incredibly competitive. Online shoppers have more variety and options than any shopper has ever had before, and catching their attention is more and more difficult. But, once you have caught potential customers' attention, your eCommerce platform has to be good enough to keep their attention and guide them through to completing their conversion.

Besides stiff competition, and being an incredibly dynamic and fast changing environment, eCommerce has other challenges. There are many factors operated by other service providers, or that are simply beyond your control. Issues such as crashing servers, slow data, errors on external payment gateways or faulty links in display ads, all impact negatively on your brand, even though you have little to no control over such issues. If a user is trying to access your online store, and these issues impact negatively on their experience, it is your store they associate this experience with.

Choosing appropriate service providers who can meet the needs and future demands of your site is key, so take time to carefully consider and review your options when setting up your site.

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