

Excerpts from the Online Store Handbook



(How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience)

Discover the **SECRETS** that I used to **DESIGN** and **PROMOTE** my online store when I had **NO** computer experience....

....I'll also tell you where to **FIND** the products to sell in your store.

By Scott J. Patterson
© 2004

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Legal Notice.....	3
Online Store Introduction.....	4
What is Included in this eBook.....	4
Why Open an Online Store?.....	6
A Short Quiz.....	6
What is Success and how do you Achieve it?.....	7
How did I get My Start?.....	8
Online Store Profile: Why did you Start your Online Store?.....	10
What you Need to Start an Online Store.....	11
Finding Your Product.....	17
Where to Look for your Product.....	17
How to Find the Right Product.....	21
eBay Boot Camp.....	23
Why eBay can Help you.....	23
Designing your Website.....	25
Step 1: Sketch out the Design of your Website.....	25
Step 2: Find a Template to Match your Sketch.....	28
Step 3: Find a Site Building Program and Incorporate your Template.....	29
The Two Most Important People to your Success.....	32
The Customer.....	32
The Competitor.....	34
Website Promotion.....	37
Freebies and Contests.....	37
Online Store Profile: Freebies and Contests.....	41
Internet Directories.....	42
...And Finally.....	46
Appendix A: Tutorial – How to Set up a PayPal Shopping Cart.....	47

Legal Notice

The information presented herein represents the view of the author as of the date of the publication. The author and publisher shall in no event be held liable for any loss or other damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. The author does not imply any results to those using this report, nor is he responsible for any results brought about by the usage of the information contained herein.

This publication is given with the understanding that the author and publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional advice. If legal or other expert required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

This report is for informational purposes only. Copyright permission is granted neither in whole nor in part, unless expressly granted by Scott J. Patterson

Online Store Introduction

What is Included in this eBook

Congratulations!

You have taken your first step to starting your very own online store. Although this is a free version of my **Online Store Handbook**, I have included the basic steps that will help you start your very own Internet business. If you find this information to be useful and want to read more about starting an online store, you can **check out the Premium Version** from our website.

In these pages, you will find valuable information that will help you stock, build and promote your Internet business. Even if you do not have any computer experience, I will **help you learn** all the skills that are necessary to operate an online store.

The information that is included here took me years to accumulate and is the result of many trial-and-errors. It is my hope that you use this resource to develop your business without the guesswork and mistakes that I had to go through.

In addition, I have questioned some of the top online storeowners to **discover their secrets**. Their comments and experiences are included throughout this eBook to help demonstrate some of the skills that they developed while building their business. In fact, I never thought of many of the successful techniques that some of the storeowners used. Although a majority of these Webmasters sell jewelry related items, they apply the same principles that you will need to operate your online store.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Each section includes a tutorial on the best methods to develop your business. In addition, I have included **links to websites** that will help you along the way. I will tell you why each link is important and how it is important.

In this ebook, you will find a multitude of different tips and tricks that will help you succeed with your endeavor. Some of the information includes:

- Where to find a winning product to sell
- How to design your website even if you don't know HTML (the basic language that allows you to design web pages)
- The trick to finding inexpensive and free software programs that will allow customers to purchase your items directly from your website
- Free ways to promote your website and be seen by millions of users
- Unique ways to market your product that fits within your budget
- How to turn your visitors into **paying customers**
- Where to find the paperwork that is necessary to become a legal business
- How to use eBay and other auction sites as a "boot camp" for selling online
- Where to set up your business and how to store your merchandise

By reading this eBook, you will receive information that is important now and in the future. The information available here will not only help you start your business but will enhance it as it grows.

Now that I have told you what to expect in these pages, I ask you to read the next section to see if you have what it takes to achieve success.

Why Open an Online Store?

A Short Quiz

Although there are many benefits, each one of us has a different reason for wanting to operate an online store. For instance, my primary goal was to stop commuting long hours to a job that I hated. Below, I have included a short “quiz” that will help you find your reason for wanting to run an Internet business.

Do you want to:

Work at home so you can spend more time with your family?

Earn money for yourself instead of another business?

Stop commuting long hours and wasting time at a job that you hate?

Earn an income that exceeds your current wages?

Work hard at a business that you own?

Run a business while having some free time for leisure activities?

Sell products that people want and help make them happy?

Start a business that doesn't require much upfront money?

Generate a steady part-time income, so you can afford a vacation or pay extra luxuries?

Sell your products in addition to your regular business?

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

What is Success and how do you Achieve it?

If you couldn't answer 'yes' to any of these questions, then you might not have the basic requirement to successfully run an online store. Almost every person who starts an online business has the **desire** for a better life. If you do not have the **motivation** to succeed, then your business will fail. By saying this, I hope to save you the time and money you would waste if you're not truly motivated.

If you answered yes to some of these questions, then you have the one qualification that is necessary to run an online store.

The will to succeed is the result of desire.

Almost every great achievement in the world is the result of a person with drive who wanted something better. **If you are motivated then you can achieve your goals.** All the skills that are necessary are listed here and can be gained with practice.

Now that you know that you have the basic motivation and desire, I ask you how you would measure success. Just as with your reasons, each of us has a different measure of success. For me, success is measured by the **achievement of a goal.**

So, what are your goals?

My primary goal and motivation is to run a business that doesn't require a long commute to a job that I hate. Money isn't that important, just the freedom to do what I want. Your goal might be different. You might want to accumulate a large amount of wealth, or work at home, so you can enjoy time with your family. As a result, the only thing that I can tell you about success is that it is measured by obtaining a goal.

While reading this information and then running your store, remember your goal. There will be times when nothing seems to go right, but if you keep your goal in mind and stick to your dream, then you will succeed.

How did I get My Start?

You might be wondering, “who are you and why should we take the time to listen to you?”

My answer to that is that I used to be **just like you**.

One day, I was sitting in traffic during my daily commute to a job that I hated. If you are familiar with the roads in New Jersey, you know that a 20-minute trip usually takes an hour during rush hour traffic. So each day, I was wasting 2 hours driving to work at a job for 9 hours.

The sad thing was that the pay wasn't even that great. During one of these congested days, I started to feel angry that I was commuting to a job that I despised at a wage that barely paid the bills. I thought about how there must be a better way to earn a living.

While driving an idea occurred to me. After hearing about the **billions of dollars** being made on the Internet, I realized that if other people were making money, why couldn't I do the same?

The only problem was I knew **nothing** about how to design a website and I lacked any real computer skills. While at my job, I started to research ways to make money on the Internet. Eventually I discovered that there were hundreds of people earning a full-time income by selling products on eBay.

For a couple of weeks, I read every piece of material on eBay. I found a lot of good material that helped me to discover the tricks of selling products on online auctions. Finally, I felt that I was ready to make my fortune.

For a year, I used eBay to sell everything from textbooks to hip-hop jewelry. Although I was making a steady amount of money, I never came close to earning a **full-time income**. Eventually, I discovered a **unique product** (evil eye jewelry), which increased my sales. Again, I received a large amount of orders, but selling at an online auction wasn't helping me make the money that I wanted to make.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

I took a look at why my eBay career wasn't working the way I thought it would. After careful study, I noticed that there were over 10 different sellers of the same product that I had. Since we were all in the same forum, we had to directly compete with one another for our share of the "eBay pie". As a result, we were driving the sales price so low that we barely paid for our expenses. I was barely making any profit on the items that I was selling.

Knowing that my eBay days were numbered, I looked for other avenues to sell my product. After careful research, I found that the Internet was full of successful online stores that didn't rely on eBay to bring them traffic. In addition, there weren't many websites that sold the same product that I did. A side benefit was that they charged higher prices than what was available on eBay.

If I could develop my own website, I could successfully compete with them and make some real money. All I needed to do was build a website, and then learn how to effectively promote it.

Since I was working to build an **online** store, I used the Internet as a way to find out how to start my business. The main obstacle that I encountered wasn't a lack of information, it was the **overwhelming** number of websites. Most of the sites that I discovered fell into several categories:

- ***Get rich quick schemes that promised tons of money for little effort***
If you believe in the claims of these products, then I have some swampland in Florida that you might be interested in. Any success on the Internet requires planning and good old-fashioned hard work.
- ***Tutorials on how to build a website*** Although many of these sites provide an incredible amount of material, very few actually dealt with the uniqueness of running a store where you sell a physical product.
- ***EBay Guides*** While many of these websites provide useful information on how to run an eBay business, they delve very little into the unique aspects of running an online store.
- ***Directories to tons of links to other sites*** Even though these websites provide a great collection of links to other sites, they didn't go into the

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

details of why the websites were important or how they would help a neophyte online storeowner.

After a long and extensive search, I came to the realization that there isn't one source that describes everything a person needs to run an online store. As a result, I was forced to collect information from tons of sources. I read every available article and tried hundreds of software programs. In addition, I made a lot of mistakes that I learned from. Any good advice that I found, I implemented on my site.

Eventually my research paid off and I developed a **website** that receives a steady amount of traffic each day (usually 1000-2000 visitors). Besides receiving visitors, I also receive many **orders from customers**. In fact, I sell more items at a better price than I would at an online auction. Currently my business is growing each day and will eventually far surpass all the goals that I set when I started.

All of the information that I used to succeed is included in here. In addition, there are many tutorials on promotional methods that other Webmasters have successfully used to grow their businesses. By carefully following the advice listed here, I can virtually guarantee that your online business will be a success.

Online Store Profile: Why did you Start your Online Store

Pierrette d'Entremont of **Beans Handmade Creations Jewellery** began making jewelry in 1996, but didn't build a website till 2000. At the time she had a real business, but had little html writing experience. After a few months of effort, she was able to learn the skills necessary to build and promote her site

Justin Young of **Body Jewelry 99** got his start when he went to an online store conference. He had web design experience so he knew how to start a website. So instead of paying people to build his store, he did it himself.

Bob Edwards of **Jewelry 24 Seven** initially built his business offline. He initially peddled cheap costume jewelry on 86th St. and Broadway in Manhattan and then moved to Flea Markets where he sold silver jewelry. Eventually he bought a computer and discovered eBay in 1998. He now operates his business as a full time job.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Susan of [Sun Country Gems](#) built her business after her mother passed away, leaving her jewelry making tools. She wondered what to do with them, and started thinking about making jewelry and selling it on the web. Being unemployed with no prospects, Susan thought she would give selling on the Internet a try. Her first necklace sold for \$175.00 on eBay and was immediately hooked! Still waffling between beads and jewelry, she decided to try selling both from my own web site. The beads sold better, so she is now in the bead business.

Amanda of [Pure Pearls](#) opened her online store after doing a considerable amount of e-commerce research. She found that an Internet business would be the best avenue for her pearl business in order to keep prices low for Amanda's customers.

Goina of [NZ & Pacific Art](#) had a few personal pages about New Zealand on the internet and received an email from an American. He was looking for a Maori bone carving and could not find any bone carvings online. Neither could they. So they started a website with 12 bone carvings to fulfill this need.

Justin Abramowitz of [Bargain Cell Direct](#) started his store because he wanted to sell larger volume than he was on eBay.

Aaron of [Angel's Keepsake Cottage](#) got inspiration for an Internet business when he saw an infomercial that discussed being your own boss and selling products in a lot of different ways. He always wanted to try a business online, so he just that.

L.K. Hansell of [Adornables Handmade Jewelry](#) started out wanting to make jewelry as gifts for friends and family. She found that her designs were well received and that she had real talent. Eventually, she helped stock a friend's local boutique and eventually started her website.

Emily of [Place For Jewelry/Silver Jewelry](#) Place opened her online store because she loves jewelry. One day after the holidays she was bored and decided to start selling jewelry online and out of her home.

Okay, I am now done talking about other people's Internet businesses. Let's start discussing how you are going to build **your online store**....

What you Need to Start an Online Store

Before you start your online store, there are certain items that you need. Although there are many other tools and software that will help your business, the following items are absolutely necessary for the success of your business.

Computer Although it doesn't have to be the latest and greatest thing, you should have a functional computer that can handle at least 3-4 programs running at the same time. You should also have a computer with at least a couple of Gigabytes (GB) disk space, a processor of at least 700 MHz, and at least 200 MB of RAM.

Internet Connection I am assuming that if you are reading this eBook, then you currently have an Internet connection. Again, you don't need anything fancy. You can run a good business using the standard dial-up connection. On the other hand, your life will be easier if you have a high-speed connection. When starting an online store, a majority of your time is spent visiting other websites and downloading software. A fast connection can help you save time and focus more on building your website. A good high-speed connection usually costs about \$20-\$30 more than your dial up. If you have cable television, a lot of times you can get a combination deal that will help you save a little money.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Name	Notes
Earthlink	One of the more economical high-speed internet connections. Prices start at \$29.95. Their connection speed is 70 times faster than the standard dial-up.
ISP	At \$12.95, this is the lowest money you can pay without purchasing high speed internet. This service is 5 times faster than standard dial up.
Starband	Provides high speed internet through satellite capabilities. Prices start at \$69.95
Netzero	Although this is quicker than standard dial-up, Net Zero isn't as fast as high-speed connection. At \$14.95, this company provides a solution to those who cannot afford the high prices of a faster connection.
Verizon	One of the best providers of high-speed service. May not be available in certain areas. Prices start at \$29.95.
Road Runner	Another quality provider that offers their service at \$29.95 a month.
Comcast	Another major provider of Cable internet. If you cannot find service in the above two, then this company offers quality high-speed internet. Prices start at around \$40 a month.
Aol Broadband	In addition to providing an Internet portal, AOL now offers a broad band service that works in conjunction with high-speed services. That way if you are comfortable with AOL, you can still use their services if you want to have a faster connection.

Software Programs- Your computer should have a few software programs that will help you develop your business. The following programs allow you to simplify many of the daily tasks that you will do as a Webmaster:

- First, you should have a **Site Building Program**, which will help make designing and editing pages easier. Later on, we will go into greater detail on these software packages.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- Next, you need basic applications such as a word processor, spreadsheet, and notepad. Since you will be sending and saving a lot of files, having a good office package can help you. The industry standard is Microsoft Office, which is installed on most computers. If you do not have this on your computer, don't worry! There are a lot of quality substitutes that you can get for free or for a nominal charge:

Name	Price	Notes
Microsoft Office	\$199	The industry standard for word processing and spreadsheet programs, Microsoft Office might be a little more expensive than most people can afford. The good news is that many computers automatically come with this package.
Open Office	Free	A great multiple program tool. Besides the standard applications, this software comes with a drawing tool.
Star Office 7	\$79.95	A low cost alternative to Microsoft Office, this application is compatible with most other programs. This helps when you are sending files to potential customers.
602 Software	\$59.95	Another great alternative to Microsoft Office. It is 100% compatible and has the exact same layout. This is perfect for people who have a very limited budget.

- Finally, you need a basic photo editing software program. No matter how well skilled you are at photography, there will be times you will need to edit your pictures. The majority of your editing work will entail resizing images and cropping parts of them.

Although there are many deluxe packages like Adobe Photoshop, you can get by using alternative programs like the ones listed below.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Name	Price	Notes
Adobe Photoshop	\$99.99	The top selling photo imaging software. The basic elements package allows you to edit photographs without spending hundreds of dollars on advanced features that are not necessary.
Solid Capture 1.0	29.95	Easily allows you to capture anything on the screen with a single key and save to clipboard, a file or image editor. Can create photos that will be instantly web ready.
StudioLine Photo 2.0	44.00/ Free	Basic imaging software that allows you to crop and adjust photos. StudioLine Basic is available FREE.
Ulead Photo Impact XL	89.95	Innovative image editing tools. This package allows you to edit, manage and share digital photos. Digital photography tools, filters and effects.
Ultimate Paint 2.84	39.95	Full-featured editor for image creation, retouching, viewing and manipulation.
Fresh View 2.0	Free	Organize and view multimedia files. Comes with thumbnail view and supports 86 multimedia formats
Simple Image Editor for Web Developers 2.3	15.00	Easy to use and crop images. Upload images to web site

Digital Camera In order to take pictures of your product, you need a digital camera! Your camera should have a few basic functions, which will help enhance the photograph of your item. We will go into more detail on product photography in later section!

Patience and a positive outlook Again, I reiterate that building an online store requires a good amount of hard work. Although there are many rewards, there will be times when you feel frustrated. By remaining optimistic and having **faith in yourself**, you will ultimately succeed. On a personal note, I encountered many obstacles when I first started my online store. In fact, it took me over a month just to get my first sale. By having patience, I was able to overcome every problem.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

All right, now that you have the necessary tools for starting your online store, let's go shopping....

Finding your Product

Where to Look for your Product

Finding that perfect product for your online store may seem like a daunting task. With the thousands of online stores, every imaginable product is sold somewhere.

So, you might wonder why would you want to sell a product that someone else already sells. My answer is that the majority of online stores do not achieve their maximum potential. Most of them fail to reach all of their prospective customers. As a result, there are opportunities to sell virtually any product. All you have to do is find the right one for you and follow the guidelines described throughout the website.

So what should you sell?

Like many other things, what you sell depends on your unique situation. Each of you comes from a different background and experiences that will ultimately guide you towards the perfect product. Below, I have listed various methods of **discovering the right merchandise** for you:

Find products that interest you Common adage is that a person should stick with their strengths or interests. That being said, many find their niche by exploring their hobbies and interests. If you are particularly good at something, then you might be interested in selling merchandise associated with that interest.

For instance, if you enjoy running (yes, some of us actually like running for hours), you might want to think about selling running related apparel and sneakers.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Make your own merchandise If you have artistic ability, then you should consider creating a store where you sell products that you manufacture. That way, you can enjoy your hobby while making some money. Matthew Nix, owner of [Create a Pendant](#), sells jewelry that he manufactures at home. Since he sells a unique item, many other stores buy his products to resell to their customers.

Products From Your Own Store If you already have a retail store, then starting an Internet business should be fairly easy. Since most storeowners get their merchandise directly from the manufacturer, they are able to **instantly compete** with other online stores in their market. By having a product, you can instantly focus on creating and promoting your Internet business. In addition, you have the advantage of knowing how to respond to your customer's needs and demands.

Developing an online store also is a wonderful way to supplement your income. You can use your Internet business to attract new customers and offload products that aren't selling that well. In addition, you can help your current retail customer's needs by giving them the option of buying your merchandise without leaving the comfort of their home.

Offline Businesses A good source for products can be found by approaching local retail businesses in your area. Many small business owners have the desire to sell their merchandise online, but might not have the time, resources or knowledge to do it themselves. You can help them by creating a partnership where you would run the online portion of their store in return for a commission on the sales. Since many big name companies only distribute their products to established businesses with a physical location, you can use these businesses to sell products that might not be available to other online merchants.

Fashion, Entertainment & Technology Magazines and Newspapers By looking at current magazines, you are able to get an idea of what is **hot and fashionable**. Although the average person, myself included, might now know what is popular, you can train yourself to pick out potential products.

Once you find an item that is interesting, do some research to find out where it is manufactured. Many times, there are wonderful products that might not be reaching their full potential. Often, you can approach these businesses and buy directly at a fraction of the retail price. This works

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

best on products that have just started and have not developed a great following. By working with the manufacturer, you can be one of the first people to sell a potentially hot selling item.

To do research on merchandise, you can go to your local library, which usually has every periodical imaginable. Then, look through each one and see if anything catches your eye.

Top 1000 Keyword Search Every day there are millions of people searching for items on search engines. From these requests, a **list has developed** which ranks the top 1000 most requested search terms. Although of these searches are major websites, there are requests for products which have become suddenly popular among the population. By knowing that there is a demand for a particular item, you can be ensured that selling this product will generate a good amount of sales. The trick is to find the right merchandise as it becomes popular and negotiate with the manufacturer to see if you could sell it directly from your online store.

Estate Sales and Garage Sales Although this is a trick that is commonly used by eBayers, you can also sell second hand goods. If you have the ability to distinguish valuable antiques or second hand items, then this might be the business for you. There are many very successful online stores that only sell used items. If you can find a niche and a steady supply, then you should pursue this opportunity.

Visiting Other Countries Even though this applies to a small group of people, you can find great sources of products when you visit other countries. Due to the high competition in many nations, there are a number of manufacturers who would love to have a person selling their products. All you need to do is find them and arrange an agreement on how you will sell their goods.

When making this type of agreement, you have follow local laws and take precautionary measures. A lot of these businesses require money transfers prior to shipping your goods, so you should ensure that you are dealing with a reputable business. A simple way to do this is to ask for business references and follow up with these people to find out if they had a favorable transaction with the company.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Dropshippers A number of websites offer products that they don't even own. Called dropshippers, many online storeowners form joint ventures with other businesses and agree to market a product, which is then sent out by the manufacturer. This works perfect for Internet business owners who don't want to spend money on products that there are not sure can be sold.

Dropshipper companies can be found by doing an internet search or by exploring some of the links that I have provided below.

Online Directories Like every other aspect of society, searching for products has become easier with the creation of the Internet. There are plenty of directories that you can use to find the right product. If you cannot find a product using the above sources, then you will be able to find your merchandise in these directories. Since so many Internet businesses use these directories to find their products, I will devote a whole section on them....

Alibaba	Great resource to find products throughout the world. Items are broken down into specific item type or country. In addition, they provide a listing of "hot products" that are selling fast.
Wholesale Central	Probably the largest wholesale directory with over 50 categories of 100,000 products for sale. In addition, Wholesale Central has search function where you can look for specific merchandise.
Liquidation	Similar to eBay in its auction function, Liquidation lets you bid on large surpluses of wholesale products. The major drawback is the large shipping and handling fee that they charge for using this source. Carefully read the terms of services before bidding on any item. Finally, Liquidation sells large quantities of the same item, so be sure that you can sell them before you purchase from this site.
Global Sources	Large hub where buyers and sellers of wholesale products meet. This is a great place to find items from foreign countries.

How to Find the Right Product

Your choice in merchandise will be the most important decision you make as an online storeowner.

After reviewing the above sites, you will develop a list of different merchandise that you can sell. Write down the products that are interesting to you. Once you have a good list, it is easy to figure what merchandise will be the best for you.

With your list in hand, you can research products and discover the one that will **maximize your profit** and have the most customers. The following steps will guide you through the research process:

- Create a key word description for all of your prospective merchandise. Here, you will write down every possible word or phrase that can describe the product. If you are unsure of what words to use, take the description provided by the manufacturer or wholesaler and write down some of the words that are listed there.
- Take your word list and go to [Overture](#). This is a great tool that lets you know how many times a keyword or phrase was requested in their search engine. On this site, you can enter each item on your list and see how many people requested information on that item.

Once you have finished with your list, you will find which products are more in demand. In addition, there will be some items that don't have a large audience, but might still be a good niche product. Don't discount merchandise just because there is a small demand for it.

- Go to your favorite search engine. If you don't have one, then you can use [Google](#). Enter the product phrases or words in the search box. The search engine will bring up all the pages that have the product on their websites. The results of the search will show the following:
 - **Your competition** After discounting the directories or informational sites, you will have a list of all your competitors. If you find a large amount of websites, then you know that your online store will have a lot of competition.
 - **The price** The websites that list your potential product will have prices listed below each item. After looking at a few websites, you get an idea of the average sales price of the merchandise.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- **Opportunity** In addition to finding competition, you can use search engines to discover **hidden opportunities**. There are many products that are in high demand but are not sold in many online stores. Also, many websites that do sell the product are not maximizing their efforts. The products that fit in this category will make a great item that you can sell. Write down the merchandise that you think has the best opportunities.
- Now that you know the average selling price of your potential products, you can compare it to the buying price that is set forth by the manufacturer or wholesaler. Once you deduct the difference between the buying and selling prices, you will have your profit margin. Calculate this for each product and you will have a list of profit margins for each product.
- Compare your list of profit margins and opportunities to discover the best item to sell on your online store. Although this not an exact science, comparing each list will allow you to review the potential for each product. When you have decided on the item that you want to use in your online store, you should then contact the wholesaler or manufacturer to obtain the merchandise.

(This is just a sampling of our “How to Find the Right Product Section”. If you want to see more tips and product sources, [order the Online Store Handbook](#) now)

eBay Boot Camp

Although this ebook focuses on online stores, there are many principles and skills that can be obtained by selling on eBay.

While you are building your Internet business and promoting it, you can practice selling your merchandise on eBay and other auction sites. Usually it takes over a month to receive a sale, so during this time you can gain experience learning the many skills that you will need as you operate your online store.

You might be wondering what eBay has to do with running an Internet store.

Personally, I feel that eBay is like a **boot camp for online storeowners**. Here, you will be able place your product directly against competitors and learn how generate sales for your merchandise. By using eBay, you can learn how successfully do the following:

- **Price your product** With the overabundance of sellers on eBay, you have to quickly learn the right amount to charge for your product. Online auctions teach how to respond to the demands of the market and how to adjust your prices based on the actions of your competitors. Just remember that the eBay value is usually drastically lower than the product price in an online store.
- **Care for your customers** With the eBay feedback system, you get immediate information on what you are doing right or wrong with your selling practices. If you are doing something incorrectly, your customers will let you know. In addition, you will learn how to deal with those off-the-wall customers who are never satisfied.
- **Ship your products** You might think that shipping an item doesn't require any skills. In reality, your shipping methods can mean the difference between a one-time or a life-long customer. By using eBay, you will obtain experience in sending items to your customers and the best methods for sending your product safely.
- **Communicate with your customers** As your store develops, you will discover that communication is absolutely vital to building a loyal customer base. Through eBay, you get practice in updating the buyer and letting him or her know that the purchase will arrive safely.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- ***Sell your merchandise*** The biggest difference between success and failure on the Internet is how a product is demonstrated to the customer. Since the prospective buyer cannot physically inspect the item, it is up to the seller to give the best possible description and picture. Besides detailing the features, you will learn the best keywords to build the desire in people to purchase your products.
- ***Photograph your product*** Although you might not think much of it, but taking quality pictures of your items can mean a huge difference in your sales. When I first started out, my product photos were horrendous. After studying the pictures of other sellers, I noticed that they all followed a few simple rules. Once you start posting a few auctions, you will learn how to improve the quality of your photographs.

After reading the previous statements, you be wondering, how eBay “teaches” all of these things.

The answer is simple:

If you make a sale, then your methods are working. If you don't, then you have to analyze what didn't work.

Also, if you receive a complaint or negative feedback from your customer, then you know that you need to improve on some aspect of your business.

Finally, eBay has dozens of forums with fellow sellers that are more than happy to help out with your fledgling business.

<http://pages.ebay.com/community/boards/index.html>

If you encounter a problem, you can get immediate a feedback on how to successfully fix it.

Designing Your Website

Although in the premium version of the ebook, there are 12 steps to build your online store, I have condensed the information into three major steps:

Step 1: Sketch out the Design of your Website

Instead of telling you how to design a great website, I have provided a link to the [World's Worst Website](#). The author of this site has placed what is considered the more annoying aspects of many websites. So, you should probably think twice about using some of the same things shown here.

The design of your website will be the first impression that you make on your prospective customers.

A well-designed online store will encourage your visitors to **spend more time on your site**, while a poorly designed website will turn away potential customers. In order to create a great website, it is necessary to plan out your design prior to creating the store.

In order to get an ideas on designing your website, you should first take a look at some of your favorite online stores. This will help give you ideas on what a good website looks like. When viewing these sites, you should ask yourself:

- Do they use a particular color scheme? Do the colors blend well with one another or is it an eyesore?
- Where do they place their links and menu commands? Do they have a tool bar on the side or are the links spread throughout the page?
- How many graphics are used? Do they enhance the web page or do they distract the user from the main purpose?

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- How do they present their merchandise? Do they separate the items on specific product pages?
- Are there any flash effects or special scripts that makes it an interactive website experience?
- Does the Webmaster include any interesting forms or fields where users can insert their information?
- What customer support pages do they use? (ie: About Us, Contact Us, Privacy Policy, Return Policy, FAQ's) – By the way, all of these are good items to have on your website!
- Are all links on the site 1 or 2 clicks away? Unless it is a very large directory of links, you should be able to access every page with just a few clicks.
- Do they make it easy to return to the home page when a visitor views other sections of the site?

After viewing a few websites, you will begin to formulate an idea of how your website should look. Once you have a rough idea of the design, sit down and make a sketch of your website. Don't worry if you do not have any artistic ability. The important thing about this step is to create a rough design that will help you find the best template.

On the sketch, the following should be mapped out:

- **Level of graphics** While a graphic intensive site tends to be more visually pleasing, a large amount of images tend to slow down page loading speed. Since you will have product photographs, there has to be a balance between your graphics and photos. In addition, any graphics used should be smaller than 100 KB in size.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- **Layout of Products** When presenting your merchandise, a decision has to be made about where and how many should be shown on each page. While many online stores list their products on a few pages, it is more helpful to customers to have a number of refined categories that allow visitors to find merchandise quickly.
- **Internal Links** A well-designed website contains links to other pages that are easy to find and are in the same location on every web page. Besides being noticeable, Webmasters usually place all their links on a menu that is to the left of the primary content. To further help visitors, many website owners place important **links** at the top or bottom of the page in addition to the location on the menu bar.
- **Link Structure** In addition to designing visible links, it is important to arrange all the pages on your website to be no more than two clicks away from the home page. On your sketch, map out all the pages that you will use and how they connect to one another.
- **Color Scheme** The fonts and colors of a website should blend well with the photographs of your products. Although it is tempting to include every color in the spectrum, usually a simple website with a few colors is the better choice. A majority of top websites use a basic white background with 3-4 complementary colors used to highlight the borders, menu tabs and tables.

Now that you have the basic sketch of your online store, we move on to the next step where you look for a template that matches your concept...

Step 2: Find a Template to Match your Sketch

Using a website template is a cost-efficient way to build an online store. If you are not familiar with them, templates are pre-made web pages that you can use as a central design for your online stores.

Most of them are simple to implement and allow a lot of flexibility for tailoring your specific website. Depending on the amount that you are willing to spend, a template can look as good as a professional website.

After sketching out the basics of your online store, you can search through template directories to find one that best fits your design plans. Using the sites below, you can browse through thousands of different templates. Each site allows you to view the template before purchasing. In addition, there are a number of websites that give away free templates in exchange for a link back to their site. Below, I have listed a sampling of some good template sites:

Template Empire	If you are looking for dynamic website templates, this is the place to go. This is a great site to purchase professional templates at a pretty affordable price.
My Free Template	Has about 80 free website templates. Like many other sites, it offers high quality professional website templates for a nominal charge.
Web Design Helper	This is where I got the free website template for my site. They have over 300 different designs and types of templates. In addition, they have a rating system of the difficulty in implementing the website template.
Free Web Templates	Over 500 free website templates and 500 premium web templates. Great place to find the perfect design for your website!

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Once you have found a good template, you can move on to the final step where you build you're the beta version of your website.

Step 3: Find a Site Building Program and Incorporate your Template

Many people use Site Building Programs to create their site as an alternative to starting from scratch. Instead of spending time coding each page, many people use this software to save time. When used in conjunction with a template, these programs allow you to build your online store in hours instead of days.

As the Internet grows, so do the options for these software packages. The choices that are now available on these software packages are vast. Some come with a simple format that helps you with the basics, while others offer full web building tools including flash effects. Besides having a variety of options, Site Building Programs are sold at different prices. While they all cost some money, you try many of these packages for free. Usually, you can find a software package that can fit your needs while spending under a hundred dollars.

Below, I have listed a good sampling of what I consider the available programs. They are all considered “What You See is What You Get” (WYSIWYG) programs. This means that you are able to see how a page will appear as you edit it. This is helpful due to the fact that you can change anything that doesn’t look the way that you want it to:

Name	Price	Notes
FrontPage	\$199	This software package makes it extremely easy to create and design web pages. The tools and appearance are very similar to the Microsoft Word program, which most people know how to use. You can use this link to go directly to the Microsoft site and download a trial version of this web design software package.
Dreamweaver	\$399	A very good website design software system that has a ton of features. It is considered the main competitor to FrontPage, but costs a little more. Dreamweaver also has a trial version of this web design software product.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Ewisoft	Free	An easy to use WYSIWYG program. Has many of the same tool bars as a Microsoft program
Mozilla	Free	A free Site-Building program that comes with advanced features while remaining fairly simple to use.
CuteSite Builder	\$69.99	If you don't know HTML or FTP, then this is another great package to use. Comes with pre-designed templates. You can add custom content like photos, images and links and publish with just one click.

Once you have a good Site Building Program, it is fairly easy to use to your template to build your site. All you need to do is follow these simple steps:

- 1) **Find the source code for the template** This can be displayed on your web browser as you are looking at the template.

If you use **Internet Explorer**, the source code is found under the View toolbar at the top. Once there, scroll down until you see the word Source or View Source. Click there and you will see the coding for the page.

If you use **Netscape**, the source code is found under the View toolbar at the top. Once there, scroll down until you see the word Page Source. Click there and you will see the coding for the page.

- 2) **Copy and paste the source code into the HTML editor** After finding the source code, highlight the entire document and then paste it into the code portion of your HTML editor (this is the section that has all the HTML information).
- 3) **Edit the web page to fit your needs** When you have pasted the code, you can begin to edit the web page. Start by switching over to the WYSIWYG editing mode to see how your web page will be viewed. Now, begin to change the appearance of the page. The changes can include the title page, the menu item, color schemes, etc.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Congratulations!

If you have followed these steps, you have created the first page of your online store. To make your site interactive and add photographs of your items, you need advance features. We cover how to do this in the **Online Store Handbook**.

After completing the website design, you need to add the shopping cart buttons that allow your customers to purchase items directly from your website. In Appendix A, I walk you through the free PayPal shopping cart system.

The Two Most Important People to your Success

Once you have finished designing your store, your site will be ready for customers. Before you start promoting your site, it is important to learn about the two groups of people who will have the biggest impact on your business. By understanding them, you will be better equipped to promote your online store.

The Customer

If you could learn one thing from this section, it is this:

Customers are your number one priority. In order to sell your products (and make money), you have to have customers! A good marketing plan will build your online store empire, while a bad one will lead to failure!

Allow me to simplify:

Bad Marketing = No Customers = No Money = Staying in Job you Hate

Seems pretty obvious, right?

Many fledgling businesses fail to realize this **basic principle** and end up in failure. Before trying to promote your Internet business, you have to understand your customers and how you can attract them.

First, you must decide on the type of person you are targeting. The characteristics of your customer can include the following: gender, age, ethnic group, religion, economic status, geographic location, and social class. In addition, other important traits include the social characteristics of your customer, such as professional organizations, clubs, families and friends. Finally, events such as holidays, birthdays or anniversaries can have an impact on a customer's need for your product.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Once the traits of your customers have been defined, it is vital to recognize their **fundamental needs**. Remember that people don't buy products. They buy the benefits that your product gives them. For instance, if you sell shoes that help alleviate sports injuries, then you are actually selling injury prevention, not shoes!

To understand the benefits of your products, it is important to put yourself in the place of your potential customer.

When putting yourself in the shoes of the customer, you have to answer some basic questions:

- Why will they buy your product?
- What benefit do you give them?
- What are the obstacles that prevent your customers from purchasing your product?
- How can you eliminate these hurdles?

Most customers have reservations about purchasing products from online stores. As a result, it is necessary to focus on describing the benefits of your merchandise while reducing your customer's resistance to online shopping. Also, you want to make it as easy as possible to obtain your merchandise. To alleviate this worry, and **increase your sales**, you should include the following on your website:

- A description of how your **product benefits** them. Also, include information on why your particular item is better than your competitor's merchandise.
- A plan to accept different **methods of payment**. Not every person has a credit card or is comfortable with using it online. By providing an alternative means of accepting payments, you can increase your customer purchases.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- A description of your **delivery methods** and expected time of arrival. In addition, the cost to the consumer needs to be clearly stated.
- An extra **incentive** such as a free item or free shipping which helps to persuade people who are on the edge of making a purchase.
- A return-policy that will help to alleviate any fears of a defective item. This will inform your visitors on how they can send back the product if it doesn't fulfill their needs.
- A statement that you will **follow up** with your customers to make sure that they are happy with their purchase. A great way to do this is to send follow-up emails and respond quickly to any potential problems.

Once you have formulated a plan for your customers, you can focus on the other person, the competitor.

The Competitor

The main obstacle in attracting and maintaining customers is your competitor. Basically, a competitor can be any online or offline business that provides a substitute for your item.

Most rivals are pretty obvious to spot. They are the businesses that sell goods that are similar to your products. On the other hand, some competitors can be companies who sell different products, but still provide an alternative means of **helping customers**.

Going back to the shoe example, a substitute could be any piece of exercise equipment that alleviates the customer's injuries.

In order to **prevent your competitors from stealing** your potential customers, it is necessary to understand their business by identifying both their strengths and

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

weaknesses. When studying your competitors, it is important to take note of some of the following factors:

- Who are they?
- How do their prices compare to yours?
- Do they do anything that is better than your business?
- Is there anything that makes your product superior to theirs?
- Do they appear to be expanding their business?
- What websites list their site?
- What is their rank on search engines for certain keywords? How does this ranking compare to yours?
- Do they use pay per click services or an affiliate program?

Fortunately, it is pretty easy to find out most of this information. A majority of these answers are listed on their website. For information that is not obvious, you might want to consider joining their newsletter. By doing this, you are able to get an **inside view** of how their business is run and the way that they approach their prospective customers.

Once you know how your competitors operate their business, it is time to move on to the second part - **beating them!**

Here are some examples on how to successfully compete against your business rivals:

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- If they beat out your prices, then find ways to lower yours as well. For instance, you can reduce costs or find alternative product sources. On the other hand, if you have better prices, make it known to all your visitors. Devote a section that shows that you have the best prices around.
- When a competitor's store does something that is better than yours, find ways to mimic their successful campaigns. Study what works for them and find **innovative ways** to improve on it.
- If you have a superior way of doing business, let everyone know. Point out the areas where your competitors are lacking and demonstrate how your merchandise is better.
- Find new population segments that have been ignored by your competitors. Again, using the shoe example, you could focus on the elderly population who need shoes that help reduce various age-related injuries.
- Discover new ways of doing business. For instance, if you sell shoes online, offer a fifty-mile "test-run" before finalizing purchases.
- If your competitor is listed on a larger number of websites, contact each one of these sites and get a listing there as well. In addition, if they have a higher rank on search engines, find their link partners and have them list you as well.
- Offer an incentive such as a **free gift**, a coupon or free shipping.

Once you have customers, reward them for being loyal by giving discounts or special deals. Always remember that it costs more money to find new customers than it is to retain old ones.

Website Promotion

Freebies and Contests

“Sign up below for a free sample of our product”

Almost everyone has seen advertisements like this from companies offering free merchandise. In fact, many **powerful Internet companies** have built their fortunes by offering free stuff. The owners of these businesses understand that the best way to attract the attention of a prospective customer is to give away one of their items. The theory is that brand loyalty will be developed among the recipients of the free offer.

Unfortunately, most online stores cannot afford to give away free samples of their products. Since the Internet reaches millions of people, a freebie campaign can end up costing an online storeowner thousands of dollars. As a result, they think that offering a freebie is not a viable option. The good news is that a freebie campaign can be **successfully** run without spending that much money.

Instead of giving away numerous small dollar items, many Webmasters have moved on to holding monthly contests for one of their more expensive items. The basic principal is the same as a freebie, because you have to ask for the person’s information and email address before allowing entry in the contest. At the end of the month, you randomly select one person who wins your merchandise.

This is an effective use of a freebie because you are still building an email list of people who can be contacted about product offerings. The main benefit is that a contest only requires an investment of one item per month instead of thousands of small items being send to each person who expresses interest. You **save both time and money**.

Below, I have provided some advice on how to maximize your freebie offering. By using this information, you could have thousands of quality subscriptions to your newsletter within a couple of months.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- ***Give away an item that is in demand.*** By offering a popular item, you will generate more interest from your prospects, which will ultimately lead to more sales. In addition, provide a link directly below the contest to where your visitors can purchase the item. This will help to entice the people who want your item and can't wait to see if they have won.
- ***Keep your contest unique by offering a different product each month.*** That way you might attract people who might not have been interested in a previous month's contest.
- ***Pick the right email-marketing program.*** Use an email script that will allow automatic entry into the contest. In addition, it should provide an automatic unsubscribe link for people who want to be taken off the list. Later on we will discuss email marketing in more detail.
- ***Enter all members in each contest.*** Let your subscribers know that they will be automatically entered in all future contests. This way, you are not forced to enter their information each month. Also, by giving products away each month, you encourage people to stay subscribed to your list.
- ***List the contest rules in a prominent place.*** Let your subscribers know that you will be using their email address for future product offerings. Do not hide this fact; otherwise you will be accused of spamming. By doing this, you can eliminate people who are only interested in receiving a free item. Most people who would join the email list will have some interest in your merchandise.
- ***Notify the winner by email.*** Be sure to mention on the contest rules that all winners will be notified by email. That way, people will be more likely to provide a working address instead of using a 'junk' email account.
- ***Reaffirm that they "opted in" when you write your letter.*** When contacting your prospects in your newsletter, mention the fact that they entered into your contest. Work any product offering into the original freebie. This helps to create desire for your merchandise from the visitors who initially expressed interest in obtaining your product.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Once you have created a contest for your freebie, you have to promote it!

Fortunately, there are hundreds of places that will list your free item. In return, most ask for a return link on your site. Depending on the size of the site and the traffic that it generates, some sites require that the link be placed on your main page or the contest page. Others just require a listing in your link directory. By contacting all of the websites below, you should get plenty of exposure for your freebie...don't forget to **contact me**, because I love to win free stuff!

Name	Link Back Required	Notes
The Free Site	Main Page	The industry standard for free stuff! A link to your contest or freebie will dramatically boost your traffic.
A+ Free Stuff	On Page of freebie or contest	A long-standing freebie site. A link for your free contest or free item here will probably generate a steady amount of traffic.
Real Free Site	Contest Page	Free stuff site with a large amount of traffic. Also, each contest or freebie has tool that lets visitors rate them.
Free Vault	Link Directory	Well organized with daily updates
Freebie Land	Link Directory	Almost 50 categories of places you can post your freebie
Hull Shop Oh my Gosh it's Free! Free Stuff Cry 1-For-All-Freebies Free Stuff. Free Samples. Max Freebies Free Stuff Inc. FreePhones.biz	Link Directory	Place a link in your directory for these 8 sites and you will have your freebie listed on 8 different freebie sites. This is a great way to promote your item without a lot of effort
Free World Group	Link Directory	Gaming site with a large freebie area. Although this doesn't have a large amount of freebie traffic, it is still a great place to list your site.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

2000 Freebies	Link Directory	Vast collection of freebies with a steady amount of visitors.
No Junk Free	Image on Link Directory	Almost 30 categories of free stuff, with a search button that helps visitors find specific products
Contest Hound	Link Directory	Large database of contests and sweepstakes with an emphasis on Canadian websites.
Click and Win	Link Directory	Smaller contest website, but has interesting and unique categories
I Love Kensho	Link Directory	Japanese site that lists any contests open to worldwide entrants
Sweeps	Image on Link Directory Page	Incredible directory of contests and sweepstakes. This site has directed almost a million hits to the stores that are listed here.
Cash Net Sweeps	Image on Link directory page	Another large directory that generates traffic for stores. Handy little "find a prize" tool
Prize Tower	Link page	Create contest site that groups the prize according to the offer. So, entrants can search find your contest with ease.
Fat Wallet	Link Page	Forum where you can announce your freebie to a large audience

By providing a contest for one of your items, you can develop a steady amount of traffic for little effort or cost. If done right, you can immediately attract at least a hundred visitors a day.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Online Store Profile: Freebies and Contests

Goina of **NZ & Pacific Art** doesn't actually use freebies or contests. On the other hand, she uses 'specials' to provide incentives for people to repeat their business. In her words "when clients order quite a few carvings we usually add a complimentary bandanna, kete, keyring or paua necklace".

Amanda of **Pure Pearls** doesn't have an initial freebies, she does often provide special offers and coupons to customers. This has lead to a large amount of repeat customers.

My site I have used a freebie for about a year now. From my observation, I have generated about a 100 visitors a day just for my contest. In addition, each day 3-5 people join my mailing list just to enter the contest. Each month this letter generates a couple of extra sales. For less then 10 dollars, I am able to generate almost 20 times my investment.

Internet Directories

Before search engines became popular, the first way to get noticed by visitors was to have your website listed in business directories. These services, made famous by Yahoo!, list websites in specific categories that enable people find information really quickly.

By having a listing in multiple directories, you can help potential customers find your site with ease. In addition, the traffic from these sites is highly targeted because they already have expressed an interest in your product or service.

So does that mean that every site will automatically accept your site?

Usually, if you follow their submission guidelines, then you should have no trouble with getting a listing from these sites. Below, I have listed a few pointers that can help you get a listing:

- 1) Go to each directory and find out the correct way to submit your site. When asking for a listing, ensure that you have followed their guidelines. Any deviation from the guidelines usually results in your site not being listed.
- 2) Find right category for your website. A good one is usually a category that is very close to your product without having too many competing websites.
- 4) Write an excellent description that lists your products / services while remaining keyword rich. You want to have a sales copy that makes the potential customer immediately click on the link.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

- 4) Submit your site. As mentioned before, make sure that you have followed their guidelines.

- 5) Double check in a few weeks to make sure that they have your correct listing. If it is not, then kindly "suggest" the changes that need to be made. Remember, that the webmasters/editors of these sites are usually doing this work for free.

Below, I have listed 101 of the best directories, where you can submit your site. Most of these sites are general directories, while others cater to a specific industry or country. In addition, some of the directories require payment in order to be listed.

101 Internet Directories		
DMOZ	WordWideWebIndex	Jayde
Zeal	JoeAnt	Gimpsy
Beaucoup	Yahoo!	HotRate
Xoron	Business	Hoo-Hah
Webmaster YP	The Internet Resource Exchange	Smart Links
Web Directory	GoGuides	Lycos
Re-Quest	The Knowledge Network	SeekOn
Fly2Net	Frequently Asked Info	Phatoz
Achoo	Small Business Directory	Jayde

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

WoYaa	Click Afrique	Canadopedia
LinkOpedia	Home Business Search	Sun Stream
OpenHere	Netster	Skaffe
World Hot	Search Net Pei	Biz Directory
TurnPike	TownNet	Super Pages Canada
Illumirate	Fitness Pros	Peekaboo
EnterWeb	Internet B2B List	Maven Search
Surf Safely	Christian Website Directory	One Mission
Directory	Bee Buzz	Josh's Sanctum
My All Fish	Search 2 Search	Arielis
Arywat	Possum Pages	Search 711
Spherica	Asia Dragons	Walhello
URL Biz	Scrub the Web	123 World
Dot UK Directory	Max Promo	Local Sites
Pharos Search	Proudly Canadian	Limey Search
Aesop	India Web	Aussie Directory
Chiff	A Small Business Directory	Link Pimp

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

KnowBe	Ananzi South Africa	Ditto
1st Spot	Pedsters Planet	Search Site
Amray	01 Web Directory	Widexal
Search Warp	Start Page Canada	About
Search the Web	Zeal Australia	Subjex
Genius Find	Search UK	Fetch Dog
Wow Directory	Australian Internet Directory	Web Resources Guide
Search King	Splut	

(This are just a few of the promotional techniques that can be used to attract thousands of visitors to your online store. If you want to see more tips and advice, [check out the Online Store Handbook](#) now,

...And Finally

Well, I hope that you have found this information useful.

If you would like to read expanded advice and information on how to build an online store, be sure to check out the premium version of the [Online Store Handbook](#). Not only will you receive more tips and websites, you will be part of our monthly mailing list that gives updated information

Finally, I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this information. I hope that you have found it both helpful and informative. I wish you the best of luck!

Appendix A: (Tutorial) How To Set Up a PayPal Shopping Cart

Although setting up a shopping cart system may seem like a complex task, it is a lot easier than you think. If you use the **free service** that **PayPal** provides, setting up your shopping cart will take almost no time.

In fact, creating a button for each item only requires a few simple steps that take almost no time to master.

In this tutorial, I have provided a step-by-step description of how to create a shopping cart button for your online store items. Once completed, your website will be ready to accept credit card payments from customers.

Also in this tutorial, I have included a screen shot of each web page of the **PayPal** system. That way, you can read the description and see an example of each step.

In this tutorial, all items that have a red circle or square are points of interest that we will be discussing. By highlighting the important items, I hope to walk you through this process.

This tutorial operates under the assumption that you already have a **PayPal** account. If you don't, then you go directly to the **PayPal** site and they will walk you through the registration process. It is free and also very easy to set up.

Anyway, lets get started...

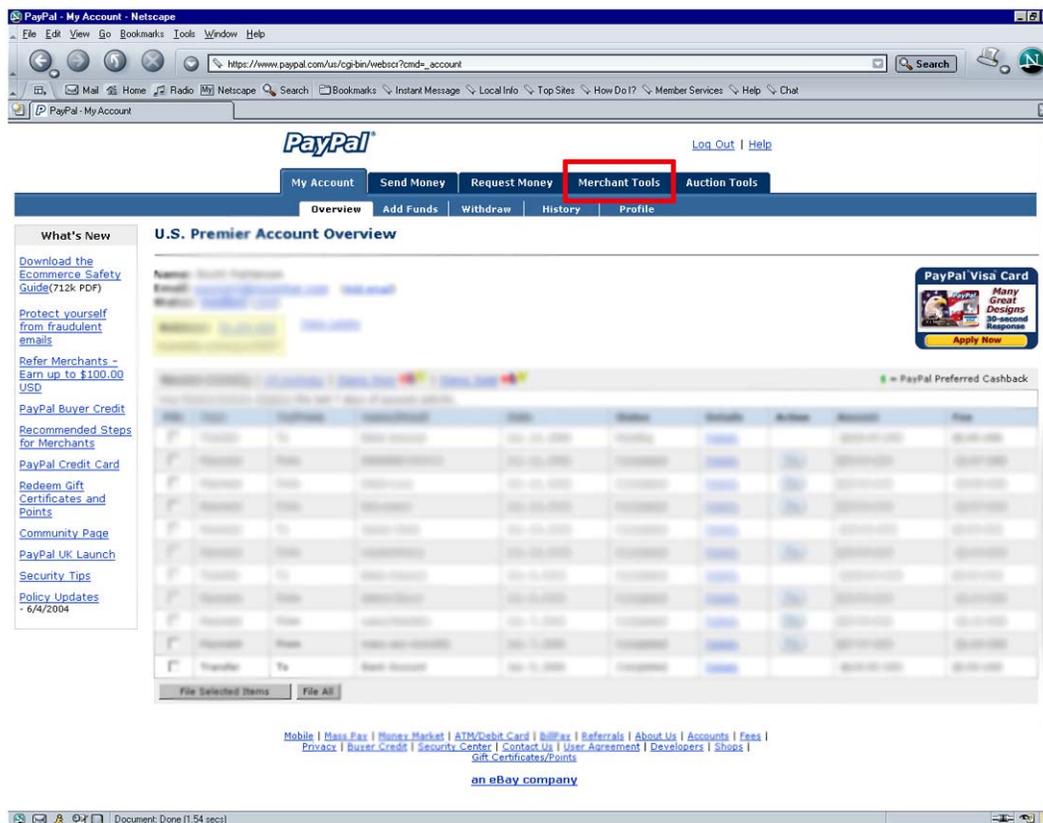
How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 1: Find the Merchant Tools Tab

Upon logging into your **PayPal** account, you are brought the main menu that shows you your payment transactions and other important pieces of information. The below screenshot demonstrates the initial menu that you will see. For security reasons, I have blurred out the banking information of my customers, but you can still get an idea of the appearance of your **PayPal** account.

Anyway, to start creating your shopping cart, click on the **Merchant Tools** tab. You can see this in the screenshot as the top menu item that has the red square around it.

Click on this item to go to the next step...



How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 2: Find the PayPal Shopping Cart Link

Once you click through to the next screen, you are brought to the **Merchant Tools** section of the **PayPal** website. Under the subheading of **Website Payments**, you are given a selection of five links. In the middle, there is a link entitled **PayPal Shopping Cart**.

Click on this link to get to the next screen....

The screenshot shows the PayPal Merchant Tools page in a Netscape browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL: https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_merchant. The page features a navigation bar with the following links: My Account, Send Money, Request Money, Merchant Tools (circled in red), and Auction Tools. Below the navigation bar, the 'Merchant Tools' section is titled. It includes a subheading 'Use PayPal on your website!' and a paragraph explaining that PayPal's merchant tools make it easy to accept online credit card payments. Below this, there are three promotional boxes: 'PayPal's New Checkout', 'Merchant Referral Bonus', and 'Merchant Referral Bonus'. A section titled 'PayPal provides a variety of merchant tools to meet your needs:' lists several categories of tools. Under the 'Website Payments' category, the 'PayPal Shopping Cart' link is circled in red. Other links in this category include 'Website Payments Overview', 'Subscriptions and Recurring Payments', and 'Donations'. Other categories listed include 'Manage Your PayPal Payments', 'Shipping and Tracking Tools', and 'Invoice Your Customers'.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 3: Find the PayPal Shopping Cart Link

Once you are on the **PayPal Shopping Cart** page, you will fill out the fields that will create the buttons for each of your products. Below, I have detailed the information that is required for each field:

Item Name/Service This is basically the name that you have created for each item. The name should be both descriptive and unique. That way, when you receive confirmation of the order, you will automatically know which item was purchased. In the screen above, I used a fictional item name of **Green Handmade Shoes**.

Item ID/Number This optional step allows you to set a certain number to each product. If you have a lot of similar items and like to keep inventory, then you should complete this step. In the example above I assigned the handmade shoes with an item number of **GH103**.

Price of Item/Service you want to sell This is the actual price that you want assigned for your store items. Be very careful with this step, because you want to ensure that your price matches the one that is labeled on your web page. In the example above, I assigned a value of **\$19.99** to the handmade shoes.

Currency This is the type of currency that is set for your merchandise. The default currency is in U.S. dollars. If you operate your store in another nation, then you want to toggle this menu to match the currency denomination that you accept.

Buyer's Country (Optional) Like the currency tab, you can elect to have a page that is tailored to the country of your buyers. The default setting is for the United States.

Add to Cart Button This is how your shopping cart button will appear to your customers. If you do not like this image, you can click on the link to the right to change the appearance.

Add More Options This tab at the bottom right hand of the page allows you to customize your web pages for your visitors. After completing the above information, you should click on this tab.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

The next three steps will be discussing the items that are on one page. I have broken each down to make it easier to discuss each item...

PayPal - PayPal Website Payments - Netscape

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help

https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?__track=cart-factory/p/vcl/rec/setup_xclick-flow&refresh_country_code=1

Search

Mail Home Radio My Netscape Search Bookmarks Instant Message Local Info Top Sites How Do I? Member Services Help Chat

PayPal - PayPal Website Payments

PayPal [Log Out](#) | [Help](#)

My Account **Send Money** **Request Money** **Merchant Tools** **Auction Tools**

PayPal Shopping Cart [See Demo](#)

Add a PayPal Shopping Cart to your website so your buyers can browse your entire site, then make their purchases quickly and securely on PayPal-hosted payment pages. [More Resources](#)
Techniques, examples, demos & more.

Enter the details of the item you wish to sell

Item Name/Service: Green Handmade Shoes

Item ID/Number: (optional) GH103

Price of Item/Service you want to sell: 19.99 (\$2,000.00 USD limit for new buyers) ?

Currency: U.S. Dollars ?

If you want your buyer's payment form to default to a specific country, select a country below. Otherwise, do nothing and your buyers can choose for themselves.

Buyer's Country: (Optional) United States ?

Select an Add to Cart button

Your customers will use the image you select below to add items to their shopping cart before they checkout.

Add to Cart [Choose a different button](#)

Or customize your button! Just enter the exact URL of any image on your website.

Yes, I would like to use my own image

Button Image URL: http:// ?

To add **sales tax**, **shipping costs**, and other details to your button, click **Add More Options**.

[Create Button Now](#) [Add More Options](#)

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 4: Complete the Shipping Cost Calculation

At the top of the **Add More Options** page, you can calculate the shipping costs that you will be charging for your merchandise.

You can use this tool to create your shipping guidelines. When the customer purchases an item from your online store, these calculations will be automatically entered when your customer completes his or her order.

As you can see in the example, I have toggled the calculations to charge a flat fee of \$5 for any items purchased that total under \$100. This is due to the fact that I run a promotional campaign that provides free shipping to any customer who buys more than a hundred dollars worth of merchandise.

After you have done your shipping calculations, you can scroll down the page to the next step...

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

The screenshot shows the PayPal website interface in a Netscape browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL: https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?__track=cart-factory:p/xcl/rec/setup_xclick-flow. The page title is "PayPal - PayPal Website Payments - Netscape". The main navigation bar includes "My Account", "Send Money", "Request Money", "Merchant Tools", and "Auction Tools". The page content is titled "PayPal Shopping Cart - Page 2".

Shipping and Sales Tax (optional)

Shipping Cost Calculation (optional)

\$0.01 USD - \$9.99 USD	\$5.00 USD
\$10.00 USD - \$49.99 USD	\$5.00 USD
\$50.00 USD - \$99.99 USD	\$5.00 USD
\$100.00 USD - \$199.99 USD	\$0.00 USD
\$200.00 USD -	\$0.00 USD

You are currently calculating shipping costs based on a [flat amount](#) method.

Sales Tax Calculation (optional)

If you would like to calculate sales tax, please click "Edit"

Add Option Fields to Your Page (optional)

Options can collect information about the purchase, such as color or size. To add an option field, select a Field Type (text or drop-down) and enter your Option Name. If you chose a drop-down, also include the different choices for the menu.

[Learn more about using option fields on your website](#)

Option Field Type: Select a Field Type

Option Name: (60 character limit)

Drop Down Menu Choices: (if applicable)

(10 choice limit, 30 characters per choice. You must use a carriage return [press 'Enter'] to separate each choice)

Option Field Type: Select a Field Type

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 5: Customizing your Buyer's Experience

There are two items that you can use to customize the shopping experience of your customer:

Select a View Cart Button This is the actual shopping cart button that is shown on your website. In the screen shot below, I have highlighted a button in a yellow square. This is the button that matches the **Add to Cart** button that is the default for the shopping cart. So, if you are staying with the default entry, you should click on this button.

Customize Your Buyer's Experience This tool is used to create specific URLs that the buyer sees after purchasing or not purchasing your item.

The **Successful Payment URL** is used when you want to bring the customer back to your website and thank them for their business or give them other pertinent information.

To complete this step, you have to create a specific page on your website that will only be seen by your customers. After that, load it to server and then you can enter the URL on the box that is listed here.

The **Cancel Payment URL** is designed for people who change their mind about purchasing items from you. Creating a page for these people is a great way to entice them to buy items from your online store.

To complete this step, you have to create a specific page on your website that is seen by people who cancel payments. As mentioned before, you want to create a sales ad that will nudge them towards purchasing items from your online store.

After completing this information, you can scroll to the bottom of this page...

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

PayPal - PayPal Website Payments - Netscape

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Window Help

https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?__track=cart-factory/p/xcl/rec/setup_xclick-flow

Search

PayPal - PayPal Website Payments

Select a View Cart Button

Select a button to enable your users to view their carts and check out. (Each of these buttons will have the same functionality.)

 View Cart

 View Cart

 View Cart

 Begin Checkout

Or create a custom button! Just enter the exact URL of any image on your website.

Yes, I would like to create my own custom button

The URL of my button image

?

Customize Your Payment Pages (optional)

Choose a Custom Payment Page Style to match your website and give customers a seamless payment experience. [Learn more.](#)

Primary Page Style : PayPal

Custom Payment Page Style:

Customize Your Buyer's Experience (optional)

Successful Payment URL - This is where your customers will go after they complete their payment. (e.g. www.yourshop.com)

Successful Payment URL:

Payment Data Transfer: Off

Cancel Payment URL - This is where your customers will go if they cancel their payment. (e.g. www.yourshop.com/cancel)

Cancel Payment URL: ?

Miscellaneous (optional)

Would you like your buyers to provide you with their shipping address?

Yes No

Document: Done (2.74 secs)

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 6: More Customization of your Buyer's Experience

Miscellaneous (Optional) This button allows you to request the shipping address of your customer. This is important if you allow your customers to ship to a different address than what is listed on their credit card. You should select 'Yes' for this option.

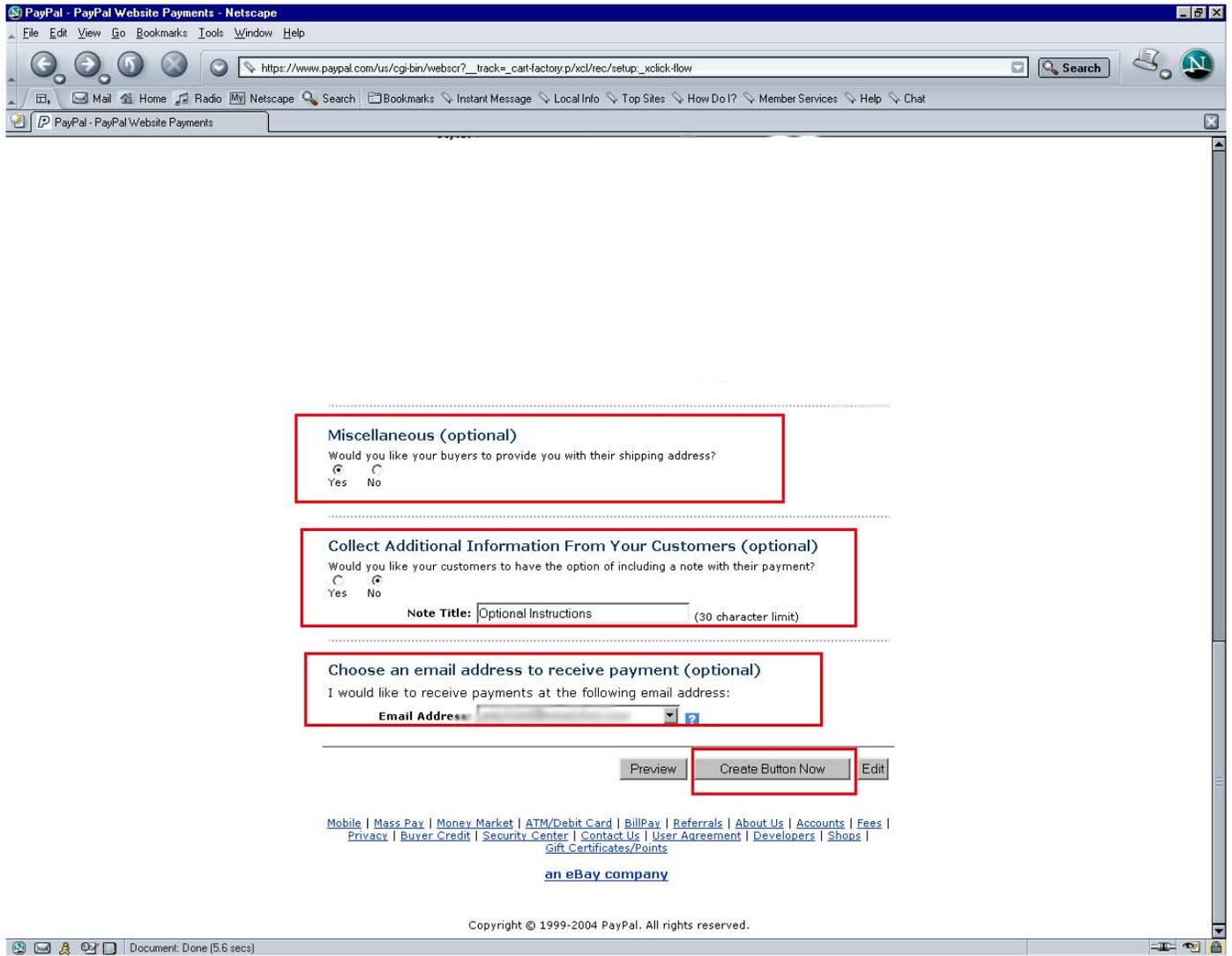
Collect Additional Information From Your Customers (Optional) This tool helps your customer include a note with their payment. This allows the buyer include any instructions or special requests with their purchase.

Choose and email address to receive payment (Optional) This is the email address where you receive notification that someone has purchased an item from your store. A little trick that I do is to create a separate email account for this notification. On this account, I have set up an autoresponder that sends an email back to the customer, letting him or her know that I have received payment and that I am processing their order.

Create Button Now Once you have completed all the options on this page, you click on the Create Button Now tab to go to the final page....

Important Note: With the **Add More Options** page, you only need to complete the past three steps once during each session. So, if you are creating shopping cart buttons for a whole bunch of products, you can skip this step after doing it the first time.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience



How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Step 7: Add the Buttons to your Website

On this last page you are shown the codes for the shopping cart buttons. The codes will allow your visitors to purchase items from your online store.

Copy your custom HTML Code Inside this box is the code for the “Add to Cart” button. All you need to do is copy this code and insert it into your web page under the applicable product.

View cart button Inside this box is the code the “View Cart” button. Copy this code and insert it next to your “Add to Cart” button.

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

The screenshot shows the PayPal website interface in a Netscape browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL: `https://www.paypal.com/us/cgi-bin/webscr?__track=xclick-flow/p/xc/req/setup-2_xclick-factory-submit`. The page title is "PayPal - PayPal Website Payments - Netscape". The main navigation bar includes links for "My Account", "Send Money", "Request Money", "Merchant Tools", and "Auction Tools".

Add a button to your website

Copy your custom HTML code

The HTML code below contains your "Add to Cart" button. Copy the code and paste it into onto your webpage. When your customers press the buttons they will be taken to a webpage listing the items they have added to their cart.

Add to Cart Button code

```
<form target="paypal"
action="https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/we
method="post">
<input type="image"
src="https://www.paypal.com/en_US/i/btn/x
border="0" name="submit" alt="Make
```

View Cart Button

The HTML code below contains your "View Cart" button. Copy the code and paste it onto your webpage. When your customers press the button, they will be taken to a webpage listing the items they will purchase from you.

"View Cart Button" Code:
(Copy and paste this HTML code onto your website)

```
<form target="paypal"
action="https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/we
method="post">
<input type="hidden" name="cmd"
value="_cart">
<input type="hidden" name="business"
```

Paste the HTML code onto your website or into your email

Go to Your Website: In your files, go to the HTML code for the web page where you want the payment button to appear. You can do this by using a text editor or your HTML editor.

Paste the HTML code above into your website's HTML code next to the item you wish to sell. Now view your web page and you should see the payment button for buyers to click and pay!

Note: The PayPal Shopping Cart was updated on 5/15/2002. If your website uses buttons generated both before and after 5/15/2002, your buyers may see two pop-up windows. Both windows will show all of the items in the PayPal Shopping Cart, but

How I Built an Internet Business with No Computer Experience

Congratulations!

After completing these 7 easy steps, you have created your first shopping cart button. All you need to do is duplicate these steps for each of your items.

Creating a **PayPal** shopping cart system is fairly easy to do. After going through the steps a few times, you should be able to do it without any help from a tutorial.

If you ever have any problems with any of the steps, **PayPal** has a support system that is extremely helpful. In no time, they should be able to resolve any issues that you might have.

Good luck and hope this information has helped you....