

Reading 2

Skills:

- Details

Getting started: What are some negative aspects of certain Colombian online stores you have visited?

LAUNCHING YOUR OWN E-COMMERCE BUSINESS: 10 DOS AND DON'TS



Like everything else these days, business also has gone online. The traditional ways of doing business are slowly losing their charm and the next generation of aspiring entrepreneurs are jumping on the new wave of online business – because if done correctly, adding an ‘e’ to your commerce can take your business to a whole new level. However, taking your business online is trickier than you’ve imagined. It takes time, patience and durability to go through different obstacles and run a successful e-commerce. If you’ve decided you want to leave your mark in this digital economy, then these 10 basic dos and don’ts can help you a great deal.

1. Do give your time to make your site look good

The number of entrepreneurs testing their luck in the digital world is too high, so giving your business a pleasing professional look is a must if you want to stand out among millions of people who are playing the same game. In an ideal world the content should matter more than the cover, but when the competition is too high, little things decide the tie and the design of your site is one of these little things. If you don't have any idea about design, website builders are great tools to help you with this task

2. Don't just assume people will find your site

Do good things, sell unique products, and people will find your business one way or another. This concept of business might work in a Disney world utopia but unfortunately, it does not work in real world anymore. The internet is simply too big for a random viewer to magically find your site. You should work on planning ways to get more direct traffic. Social media reach can aid your business a great deal in terms of publicity. Good **SEO** also helps public reaching via **search engines**.

3. Do work on building a concrete platform

Having the correct features planned and doing the risk analysis always helps. It's tempting to be courageous and just go out on the battlefield, but you have to make sure you have chosen your weapons and prepared a decent backup plan. Some mistakes are costly to fix, so make sure you do the best you can to prevent them from happening. You have to take care of technical issues like finding the right hosting solution, managing the scalability and security of your website along with other non-technical issues such as customer support and market penetration right from the beginning.

4. Don't waste your time trying to sustain the company by yourself

You are founder, marketer and leader of your business. So basically, you are a one-person band. But if you're spending your entire day trying to bring everything into balance, then you have to realize this is an idea that's not worth pursuing. If you want to launch a successful ecommerce business, then you should be able to hire the right people to help you and your company grow.

5. Do set budget aside for tests and trials

The hardest thing for an entrepreneur to do is admit their product is really not that great. Though you might passionately like the idea you've created, there is no guarantee that it will work. If you wait months or even years to find out the actual performance of your product, it might just be too late. Do

surveys, sell samples before going mainstream, and test your product carefully before you decide to invest your time and energy on it.

6. Don't forget about growing and innovating

It's easy to be quickly overwhelmed with your efforts. It's good if people of certain demographics are giving you good reviews, but you can always paint a bigger picture. There are always spaces in the market which need to be filled, and there's always room to innovate something new. If after a while your star products are not selling that well anymore, it's time to come up with something fresh and different.

7. Do listen to your customers

E-commerce implies receiving all kinds of comments about your business. Reacting on every single one of them is nothing more than a waste of time, but you should definitely acknowledge their opinions. Your customers help you point out fragilities that you otherwise would have ignored. Evaluate their suggestion and work for a remedy. If you listen to your customers, it also develops a bond of loyalty and trust.

8. Don't inaccurately measure your success

E-commerce is not rocket science. It has its carnival and its droughts. Compare year-over-year, not quarter-over-quarter, as ecommerce is highly seasonal. Comparing your July traffic to your June data does not give a clear picture of your progress. You should set aside a statistically accurate interval and compare your metrics. Compare July to July, winter to winter or year to year if you want an accurate report of your progress.

9. Do your best to efficiently manage email lists

If you have designed a fantastic site, then growing your email list as soon as you launch an ecommerce is a must. It's one of the best ways to boost traffic later on. Add email lists as a key-performance indicator when you're measuring success. If you ignore this part, you might find yourself falling deep into a rabbit hole trying to pay your way out through advertising or sponsored content.

10. Don't give up quickly

It's easy for entrepreneurs to get frustrated if their idea does not work, but many of them fail to realize that it often takes time and patience to gradually test out an idea, or to understand that success does not come overnight. If you believe you truly have a million-dollar idea, then you should be willing to risk anything for it. You should not quickly leave a project because it's not working well for the time being, because it just takes a lot of hard work. It all implies making a big effort, and who knows – you might even get lucky!

**Adapted from <https://www.lifehack.org/404510/10-dos-and-donts-of-launching-your-own-e-commerce-business>*

Read the following ideas. Write D if they have to do with dos or N if they have to do with don'ts. Then, write the number of the section where that topic is developed.

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|--|-------|
| 1. Believing your main products will always be best sellers. | _____ |
| 2. Being alone in this process. | _____ |
| 3. Sending emails to customers to try to expand your business. | _____ |
| 4. Thinking that having a great product implies many people visiting your website. | _____ |
| 5. Creating a marketing plan. | _____ |
| 6. Losing your faith in your idea. | _____ |
| 7. Comparing your sales in February with your sales over Christmas. | _____ |
| 8. Paying attention to the appearance of your website. | _____ |
| 9. Obtaining a good hosting plan that can make your customers feel safe and satisfied. | _____ |
| 10. Considering your customers' feedback. | _____ |

What do you think?

Have you ever thought about opening your own online store? What kind of store would it be?