

Rapid Online Retail Growth Drives Small Business Retailers in 2021



Vox calls 2020, “The year shopping changed forever.” And Forbes says, “consumers will likely maintain the same or perhaps higher levels of online purchasing forevermore.” Indeed, the year of the pandemic and lockdowns has seen remarkable growth of 35% or more in online retail, and it appears likely to stick.

Thus, the pandemic forced many smaller brick-and-mortar merchants online. Shopify, which provides e-commerce software tools to small and mid-sized retailers, has doubled its revenue year over year, a clear indication that many made the move.

The big question is what can small business retailers do in 2021 to prosper? The situation may appear bleak. But, along with the bad news of lockdowns and reduced foot traffic comes the good news of [change and opportunity](#).

In fact, rapid change creates heaps of opportunity. Those small business retailers who look ahead and re-invent their business stand to gain the most.

The Good News

We’ve all heard the bad news. Here’s some good news for small business retailers who may be looking for opportunities scattered among the clouds:

2015 | 2013 | 2012 Microsoft
Partner of the Year

WatchGuard
Six WatchGuard
Partner of the Year

Inc. 500 || **5000**
2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010

hp Partner
of the
Year

ShoreTel Sky
Partner of the Year

More Personalization - Millennials and Gen Z still want to personalize their lifestyles. Retailers who address this need by offering in-store and online options for purchase customization will capture more sales.

Growing Suburbs – Forbes predicts that Millennials traumatized by the pandemic will defect to the suburbs at a faster rate than anticipated. With more freedom and space, they will want to buy homes and vehicles, and customize them as well. Suburban retail locations and online retailers that cater to suburbanites could benefit.

Experiences Craved – Experts say that shoppers will continue to crave in-store shopping experiences. Countering that is the two shopping highs that online shoppers get, when they place the order and when the item arrives. Those who offer memorable and exciting shopping experiences in either channel will profit.

Less Competition - Nearly 10,000 stores in the US have closed permanently this year. That creates more opportunity for those that adapt and survive. Expanding during a downturn could be a smart move, placing you in a position for rapid growth when the economy strengthens.



Online Retail Growth Tips for 2021

You've probably already learned what doesn't work for your surviving small business retail store. Take a few minutes to consider these tips for making 2021 a better year:

Be Online – According to Google, 63% of shopping journeys begin online. Retailers must have an online presence to be noticed. Fortunately, tools like Shopify provide a relatively easy path for small retailers to create their online store. Make sure that the online shopping experience easily carries over to the in-store visit.

Optimize the Experience – According to Statista, search and navigation is the most important site element for online shoppers. Having product ratings and reviews is the second most important.

Be Fast – Customers want a fast and frictionless shopping experience. Give it to them.

Don't Scare Them Off – The Baymard Institute says that having extra costs is the number one reason for shopping cart abandonment. Likewise, forcing a shopper to create an account is the number two reason.

Be Persistent - For most websites, only 2% of web traffic converts on the first visit. Retargeting website visitors makes them 43 percent more likely to buy. [Retargeting](#) is a tool designed to help companies reach users who don't convert right away by keeping your brand in front of them.



Be Efficient – You can't afford to advertise to everyone. Online [digital advertising practices](#) such as retargeting and geofencing enable small businesses to be more effective with scarce ad dollars.

Build a Community with Social Media – Share workout videos, outdoor experiences or whatever your customers might be interested in. Engagement builds loyalty, so talk to your customers to find out what will engage them.

Translate What Works to Virtual – Create online versions of promotions, contests, giveaways, and activities you've used in the past to get people into the store. Be creative with ideas that help customers navigate the new normal.

Work with Online Retail Growth Technology Experts

Recently named the [#1 retailer-focused MSP](#), eMazzanti Technologies has assembled a variety of technology options for retailers. From [POS systems and network infrastructure](#), to PCI compliance and [merchant services](#), we have the tools and the expertise to be your long-term technology partner for success through good times and bad.

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