# END-TO-END (E2E) ECOMMERCE FOR SMARTER PEOPLE

*Essentials for creating an exceptional online customer experience*

**E2E** *x* **ECOMMERCE**

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# Introduction to E2E eCommerce

*Everything that is necessary to make your online presence known and highly functional...a truly outstanding experience for customers – is End-to-End eCommerce.*

You are a newly minted internet entrepreneur or executive in an organization, tasked with developing strategies to market your product, service, or charity online, or perhaps expand your current eCommerce operation. You want to create a beautiful, intuitive website and implement innovative strategies tailored to your specific online marketing and selling needs. It starts with a design, a stream-of-thought that gives a voice and a look and feel to introduce or expand your reach to the digital masses. The design becomes a reality first through a creative process, graphics and a website user-experience that gets people talking about you. Making that design and creativity come to life with a useable and streamlined public web interface happens by way of talented developers; you know, those guys you see coding away in the corner at Starbucks®. There's so much more going on behind the cyber scenes than most would realize, such as (1) the Internet server to-be, (2) accommodating the scaling required for growth, (3) cyber-security, (4) payment gateways and transaction processing requirements, (5) PCI compliance and fraud prevention, (6) search engine optimization (SEO), and (7) marketing of all types—including viral social media, eMail and customer behaviors, print, radio, television, and much more that goes into making your mark in the digital arena. What about preparing for customer care, order fulfillment, returns and exchange handling, and warehousing? The list goes on and on. Everything that's necessary to make your online presence known and highly functional—a truly outstanding experience for customers—is End-to-End eCommerce.

# Your Online Presence

*Well-known eCommerce names like Radial (formerly eBay Enterprise), PFSweb, YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP, and VITAL BGS, Sizzle Factor, or RUGGED COMMERCE. They've all been providing what you need since the dawn of the Internet.*

It is essential to employ best practices to create exemplary, even award-winning methods to achieve stellar results.

You make all of this happen by building from scratch, and acquiring the talent and expertise from an eCommerce partner, co-sourcer or full-service outsourcer. You can start from the ground-up, but doing so will likely be a costly approach (unless you have assembled a team of professionals from the get-go); the alternative is to secure your brain-share from well-known E2E eCommerce providers like Radial (formerly eBay Enterprise), PFSweb, YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP, and VITAL BGS, Sizzle Factor or RUGGED COMMERCE. They've all been providing what you need since the dawn of the Internet—since eCommerce became eCommerce. They create flowing and positive user experiences through a wide range of services in order to help retailers, charities, government agencies, startups, and virtually every trade and market out there.

# Strategy for a Sleek eCommerce Site

*You want all the bells and whistles if you're going to make an impact in a sea of competing eCommerce sites; opt for features such as social media connections, product recommendations, dynamic product customization, detailed product descriptions, flash sales, mobile commerce, eSpots, filters, and more.*

eCommerce has many advantages over traditional face-to-face commerce. It gives the consumer more choices and customized options by tying design, production time, and orders more closely to product delivery. It allows consumers to find and buy what they want as quickly and easily as possible, without having to physically search for products from store-to-store. Just as companies go to great lengths to ensure the best in-store experiences for customers, and encourage sales in an inviting, rather than invasive manner; the same goes for eCommerce. A substantial amount of work goes into not only creating a beautiful and efficiently functioning site, but getting it to run exactly as planned, and with as few hiccups as possible.

You want all the bells and whistles if you're going to make an impact in a sea of competing eCommerce sites; opt for features such as social media connections, product recommendations, dynamic product customization, detailed product descriptions, flash sales, mobile commerce, eSpots, filters, reviews, and more. Keywords are an essential component of SEO, making sure search engines have the information they need to properly index your site's meta and page content. Leveraging the right words and making sure they lend to your prominence; frequency and density is a must if you want visibility, and to boost your presence on search engines.

# Scale, Sell and Fulfill

*Scaling with a focus on order fulfillment allows you to fulfill orders on a same day as ordered basis, and make sure you are prepared for future order growth at the same performance level, staying proactive instead of reactive.*

Let's talk growth-scaling and order fulfillment. Every great site has scaling down pat, lower-to-higher concurrent-use customer load demands. The End-2-End perspective assesses all aspects of the eCommerce marketing, sales, and fulfillment cycle. Scaling with a focus on order fulfillment allows you to fulfill orders on a same-day as ordered basis, and make sure you are prepared for future order growth at the same performance level, staying proactive instead of reactive. In a nutshell, it means keeping consumers from being disappointed when seeing...'We're sorry that we have had to cancel your order. Although we aim to fulfill all orders placed right away, occasionally we sometimes run out of stock.' Good automation, scaling strategy, and tactical execution allow you to automatically and seamlessly connect to payment systems, inventory balances, decrease error, expedite turnaround time, maintain logs, print shipping labels, record sales and more. Automating your online business keeps everything running smoothly, which in turn makes your customers happy and returning to your online store. Who doesn't want customers that give you 5-Star reviews?

Proper scaling strategy eliminates disaster recovery solutions that employ manual processes and are prone to error; rather, you should rely on innovative failover procedures that are automated, and in environments safe from catastrophe. This is extremely important when loss of connectivity or a mass power outage occurs—you've already anticipated and worked the kinks before a diaster might occur.

# Cyber Security

*Cyber security is your greatest form of currency-trust. Effective cyber security measures engender decreased consumer anxiety and increased consumer trust, making them more confident in making purchases online from your store.*

Web performance ties to cyber security, a first priority. In terms of performance, load balancing is a key part of making sure sites have the capacity to offer the highest uptime possible to perform. Content Delivery Networks (CDN's) allow image and other resources to be accessible to users from local server caches, rather than the primary host…perhaps thousands of miles away. This helps to alleviate browsing latency. Cyber security is your greatest form of currency-trust. Sophisticated cyber criminals assume that new online retailers are low-hanging fruit, so if you take proper measures to protect both your business and customer data via thoughtful, applied layers of cyber security, the risks are highly diminished. eCommerce must comply with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS), which sets the credit/debit card and other electronic payment security standards for online retailers. Effective cyber security measures engender decreased consumer anxiety, and increased consumer trust. Substantive security measures make customers more confident in making purchases from your online store.

# Digital Marketing

*Create a 360-degree approach to reaching consumers who will make purchases on your site.*

A full-spectrum marketing approach means consistency across all selling channels, fusing eCommerce and digital marketing so that consumers get clear messaging, and a 360-degree user experience while on your site. Social media marketing is more important now than ever before, as social media platforms have increasingly become the dominant form of communication and interaction for millennials, and the post-millennial Generation Z cohort group. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and other platforms are ubiquitous. These newer commerce portals are means of distributing content and reaching consumers around the world.

# Behavioral and Outreach eMail

*Track consumer trends—what's working and what's not—with statistics and metrics, impressions, hits and sales.*

Behavioral and outreach eMail marketing are two more core components of online marketing; the former tapping into individualized profiles for subscribers to deliver content that is more narrowly tailored to consumers' interests; and the latter utilizing straightforward, purpose-driven approaches to increasing response rates from those eMails. You can also increase web traffic converts through retargeting. Retargeting, also known as remarketing, is a form of online advertising that helps keep a company's brand in front of bounced traffic, after having left the brand's website. An example of effective retargeting is when consumers shop for a pair of shoes on one site, then are served an ad from that same company or brand while browsing through Facebook, or when restarting their internet browser and landing on, say, MSN. You have to track consumer trends  what's working and what's not  with statistics and metrics, impressions, hits and sales date. Supporting media (e.g., YouTube channels, television spots, radio, print, direct mail, and other media-based initiatives), help create a 360-degree approach to reaching consumers who will buy on your site.

# Managed Operations

*Decrease order turnaround time to ensure the fastest delivery possible and utilize track-and-trace technologies that give consumers the full transparency they require in the supply chain.*

Designing and developing beautiful, customer-friendly sites is only half of the challenge. Managed operations is also a core component of End-to-End services, encompassing customer service functions, payment processing, shipping, overall logistics, exchanges, returns and more. Getting orders out the door on time, minimizing order and inventory errors, diminishing operational inefficiencies—these are intrinsic to a digital retailer's success. Automated order fulfillment systems and dynamic workflow adjustments, optimization by order batching and slotting are other means of streamlining logistics, reducing error and fusing accountability and visibility with order accuracy.

Processing returns and exchanges can be an unhappy aspect of eCommerce, or might be turned into opportunities. Every contact with your customers gives you a chance to cross-sell or upsell for more dollars. While some returns are a result of inaccurate fulfillment, customers are increasingly creating 'private dressing rooms' in the comfort of their homes to try on items with the intent of returning most of the original order. If you're requiring minimum purchase threshholds to get free shipping, you will likely have customers that buy more items to get the free shipping, only to return the extra items later. Package delivery denial has also become much more prevalent. This is a practice where customers maintain they haven't received their order, yet the shipping carrier says they have. Although any court would accept the third-party carrier's tracking information as proof of delivery, the credit card companies will not, and that means chargebacks to your merchant

# Fraud | Loss Prevention

*Fraud prevention techniques are constantly evolving. Data breaches within government and large organization databases are reported daily. Tactics must be employed to curb the risk of consumer-driven fraud, and to maintain the highest levels of online security to combat the rapidly changing threat of cybercrime.*

account from these type of dishonest customers, with diminished hope of recovering those funds. These practices have become costly trends in the online shopping realm. Having the right tools to analyze order history and anticipate these type of preference returns will minimize restocking costs. For instance, you can reduce customer dissatisfaction by way of correct sizing charts and product descriptions, thereby preventing returns that are a result of online buying system abusers, and outright fraudulent consumer activity.

Fraud prevention techniques are constantly evolving. Data breaches within government and large organization databases are reported daily. Tactics must be employed to curb the risk of consumer-driven fraud, and to maintain the highest levels of online security to combat the rapidly changing threat of cybercrime. Protecting personal data makes consumers feel more comfortable making purchases.

Today, more than ever, separate eFulfillment warehouses have precedence over traditional warehouses, which are poorly suited to handle the volume and immediacy of orders that consumers demand. Best warehousing practices decrease order turnaround time, and utilize track-and-trace technologies that give consumers the transparency into the order process.

# International Considerations

*You can leverage an End-2-End service's case study portfolio and expertise to find solutions on an international playing field to optimize revenue and profitability.*

Over the last few decades, the world has increasingly become a global marketplace. Higher-speed computers, mobile devices, and new technologies have ushered-in faster and broader connectivity, making it easier than ever before to access goods and services from around the world. A teenager in Florida can buy a shirt located in Tokyo, or a music enthusiast in Italy can purchase vintage records from a St. Louis record store, all with a few clicks of the mouse. To meet the growing needs of this international marketplace, you will need to focus on: (1) international website design and development nuances, (2) regional and/or dialectic customer service, (3) return and exchange logistics, (4) advanced fraud management and protection, (5) legal and regulatory issues, (6) the consumer's view of the shopping cart displaying in their currency (i.e., currency conversion and exchange rates factored into the final cost), (7) language translation, (8) differentiated payment type by country or region, (9) customs duties and internationval taxation, and (10) cross-border shipping issues and other means of optimizing online businesses for global success. You can leverage an End-2-End service's case study portfolio and expertise to find solutions on an international playing field to optimize revenue and profitability.

# VITAL BGS

VITAL BGS is a progressive leader in full-sprectrum End-2-End (E2E) consumer and business eCommerce. The organization enables B2C brands to sell worldwide, while feeling local to global shoppers. The company engages in virtually all vertical markets, and has case studies in nutraceuticals, fashion and apparel, luxury and leather goods, legal services, personal services, and innovative aspects of eGovernment.

vitalbgs.com

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