

*“Set up your online coffee business easily!”*

# HOW TO SETUP AN ONLINE COFFEE BUSINESS



## A Quick Guide To Getting Started

- \* What You Need to Get Going
- \* Your Website Options
- \* Choosing Your Shopping Cart
- \* How to Market Your Website



**“The Easiest Way to Start Your  
Online Coffee Business!”**

**\*Instantly Delivered Digitally**

# **How To Start an Online Coffee Business**

**Your Brief Guide to  
Developing an Online Store**



**By  
Coffee Shop Startups**



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## **Congratulations!**

You've just taken the very first step in starting your online coffee business.

Like many other successful online coffee entrepreneurs who have come before you they often have started with relatively little skills or experience, and very little funding.

However...

What these online businesses owners did have, was a sincere passion to find the right products, ability to approach the right customer, and obtain a deep willingness to learn the basic "tech stuff".

## What this guide is about:

This basic guide will provide you with everything you need to know to get your online coffee business started.

## Why an Online Coffee Business?

Every year more consumers buy online. Meanwhile the risk of starting up a physical store, hiring several employees, and being responsible for other fixed and variable costs, is often too high for someone just starting out.

*Starting an online coffee business can help you:*

- Develop your brand
- Find your right customer
- Experiment with different products
- Improve your expertise in the products you are offering
- Avoid the traditional high costs associated with a retail store

*But what if you want a retail store or coffee shop?*

Great! Having a full-café or retail coffee operation can always be in your future. By starting an online coffee business, you are actually taking a powerful **first step** to realizing any bigger (and more expensive) dreams.

The benefit of starting an online coffee shop or web-based coffee store is that you can start with relatively little money. Additionally, you can minimize yourself to excessive risk.

Another benefit is that you can pay as you go for the needed investment such as a website, promotion channels, and products (inventory) that you intend to sell to your customers. In other words, an online coffee business can grow as you grow!



## **The Myth of Starting an Online Business**

There are plenty of things to scare you away from anything that is meaningful. This includes starting an online coffee business.

Let's just take a moment to address just a few myths about starting an online business that may or may not be hovering over you.

**Myth #1: You need to be a computer genius.**

**False.** You don't need to know everything about computers to get started online. In fact, if you know how to open a Facebook profile page, send emails, and order on Amazon, most likely you have the skills to set up your online business.

## **Myth #2: You need to hire an expensive website developer**

**False.** Today, it's easier than ever to create your own website. You have easier, faster, and more affordable options than ever.

## **Myth #3: An online coffee business isn't a real coffee business**

**False:** Online business generate billions every year for their website owners. An online coffee business is just as real as a traditional "brick and mortar" store.



# **A Few Things That You'll Need To Start Your Online Coffee Business**

The truth is that you don't need much to get started on your online coffee business. However, the decision you do make should be thought out thoroughly.

- Your Product(s): Coffee Beans, Coffee Brewing or Roasting Supplies, etc.
- Your Target Market
- Your Domain & Website
- Your Shopping Cart
- Your Creativity
- Take Some Level of Action Today

## **Step 1: Choose Your Product or Line of Products to Sell Online**

To start an online coffee business, you will need a product to sell. Let us assume that you will have a variety of products that you would like to sell online – these may include green coffee beans, freshly roasted beans, espresso machines, coffee grinders, or anything in between.

However, at this point, if you haven't decided on which products you want to sell online, that's okay! Just continue reading along as you will want to know the actual process to move forward with your online coffee business before you jump into anything.

Deciding on your product is important because it impacts who your audience or your intended market is (or will be). Additionally, you may need to work out a way to get a hold of this inventory ahead of time. This means finding your product source.

You can do this through wholesalers, distributors, manufacturers, or you can make your own products. Additionally, you may be able to develop a drop shipping relationship with manufacturers. Whichever route you decide, you will need a product that sells and resonates with your market!

## Some Ideas for Selling

**Not sure what to sell with your online coffee shop? Here are a few ideas:**

- Why not sell your own coffee roast from a single origin coffee bean? Order your green coffee beans from websites like Sweet Maria's, roast them, package them, and sell them.
- Offer gift baskets of small batch, locally roasted coffee by your region's best coffee roasters. You can approach small roasting companies in your area and see if they would sell to you. Of course, you might consider having your website up first.
- Sell new and refurbished coffee equipment or things like rare coffee brewing devices.
- Sell coffee art, coffee signs, coffee pour-over holders, etc.

### **Step 2: Know Your Target Market**

Who are you going to sell to? While many people may be interested in buying coffee, coffee supplies, or other items you intend to sell, the best thing to do is really be specific with who your target market is.

Determine who your customer is. This will help you create your website content in a manner that is better received by those you seek to sell to. So, go and discover your target market, they are waiting for you!

Need more help? If you are not sure just who your target market it is, start small. First, look at your products you wish to sell and determine who they are mostly appealing too. Search online social media for specific products.

Look at the overview of their followers or look at who is commenting on them

Determine where the passion and excitement are coming from. Are there other parallel products that your potential customers are buying? Learning your target market may take some research, but the small investment in time will be worth it!

### **Step 3: What's Your Competition Doing?**

Knowing who your competition is important. Not because you want to "snoop" around and gawk at what they are doing, but because you want to know your market. You want to understand who your competition is because you want to understand the market place in general. You want to know what products are already being offered and what products are missing.

Keep in mind that having others "doing the same thing" is actually not a bad thing. It means that there is a market for your products. Healthy competition means that there is a pool of willing consumers who want to buy.

Offering something different and developing your own competitive advantage within a healthy market place will be important to understand before you decide on: 1) What product(s) to offer 2) How to market to your target audience.

### **Step 4: Buy Your Domain Name**

Your "Domain Name" is your website address or URL. For example, the domain name of our website is CoffeeShopStartUps.com.

If you already have a domain name, you are ahead of the game here, but if you don't yet have one, you will need to buy one through a "Domain Registrar" such as BlueHost.com.

Get your free domain name with [Blue Host here](#).

**A quick note about domain names:** Domain names with (.dot)coms are getting harder and harder to find, so consider getting your domain name as fast as you can.

Even if you want to wait a few months before starting your online business, you might consider getting your website and hosting first.

The domain name you choose is just one way to affirm your brand or future branding efforts, so try to get something as close to your company's name as possible.

Of course, you can use any of the available domain endings currently being offered. Just be sure to continuously remind your customers, which domain ending it is.

Again, check out [Blue Host here](#) for great deals on Domain names.

## **Step 5: Hosting Your Website and a Shopping Cart**

There are two general avenues that you can go with when you set up your website online:

### **Option 1: Your Self-Hosted Website**

The first option is to host your own website (through a service like Blue Host) and then link a third-party shopping cart or use a free WordPress shopping cart plugin.

Either way, this is easier than it sounds! That is exactly what we do here at CoffeeShopStartups.com.

1. Get Your Domain & Hosting With [Blue Host](#)
2. Upload WordPress (Free)
3. Choose Your Theme
4. Create Your Products

**OR...**

## **Option 2: Use Shopify**

You can simply buy a website with a shopping cart together through a full-hosted service like Shopify.

Shopify is an all-in-one hosted website and shopping cart that allows you to create a beautiful look and easy customer experience.

Simply visit [Shopify](#) and Sign Up for Their Free Trial [Here](#).

## **Thoughts on Blue Host & Shopify**

I have tried both ways and I must say that they both have their pluses (+) and minuses (-).

Our website (CoffeeShopStartups.com) is self-hosted through a hosting company. However, your website can be fully hosted through websites like Shopify.

From a convenience factor, it is certainly easier to get your shopping cart, your website, and your hosting service all wrapped up in one monthly package and payment with website hosting services such as Shopify.

This is especially true if you are not sure if your online coffee business will be viable in the long run and you don't want to mess with learning about the "back end administration" and HTML code of your website. In other words, if you just want to sell or even test your products, you might just want to go with Shopify.

Yet, there is nothing wrong with learning how to do-it-yourself! Consider our website, CoffeeShopStartUps.com. As you can see, we own this domain and it is being hosted by a hosting company.

But for our customers to make purchases we have decided to go with a third-party digital product e-commerce platform, Selz.com.

So, if you wanted to purchase our **Coffee Shop Startup Kit**, you will be linked from our website to their secured e-commerce website – and you will make the purchase from their website.

Once the transaction is made, they will pay us. We never deal with credit card information. In our opinion, it is one of the best ways to sell online.



## **Using WordPress To Launch Your Website**

WordPress is an open source content management system that is getting better and easier to use all the time. It is continually being updated by an army of dedicated volunteers. It's free to use the software. But you will need to install it to your web hosting data base. (But don't worry, this is

actually pretty easy!) If you need help, please see our WordPress installation service at [CoffeeShopStartups.com](http://CoffeeShopStartups.com).

Nearly 1 out of every 5 websites online today is ran through WordPress.org.

As previously mentioned, WordPress.org is free to use once you have your domain name and website hosting service. Website hosting services like Blue Host, offer an easy “one click install” that can get your website launched in minutes.

**Don't' Worry. Chances are you got you got the skills:** I always say that if you are able to open an email account through GMAIL and you know how to use Microsoft Word, you can learn how to use WordPress.org to create your own website.

## Considering the Costs of Your Website

### Costs of a Self-Hosted Website through Blue Host & WordPress.org

- Your Domain Name (\$22-\$25/year with privacy) FREE with [BlueHost](http://BlueHost).
- Your Website Hosting Service (Approximately \$80 per year)
- Your Website Theme (Costs from Free to \$60)
- Your Affiliation with an E-commerce Platform (Small % of each sale)

**Total approximate annual first year cost = \$175**

**(Plus E-commerce fees)**

# VS.

## Using Shopify's All-in-One Package

- Shopify costs = From \$29.00 a month (depending on the plan)
- Website Theme (From \$0 to \$150)
- Various Plugins (Costs also depends on the plugins you may need or want)

**Total annual first year cost = \$348**

## What are the Similarities?

Both WordPress and Shopify can provide you with an unprecedented level of control. You can add as many products as you want and generate website traffic from any number of online or offline sources.

## What's The Difference?

There are a few differences between going with a self-hosted website and using a service like Shopify.

In my opinion, choosing Shopify is very good way to go and may be the most hassle-free route to get your online coffee business running.

The nominal monthly price you do pay for the service may be worth it, as you don't have to spend hours and hours learning computer code.

**Let me explain:** One of biggest drawbacks of doing-it-yourself, is that it may take a long time to learn how to fluently put all these pieces together.

Such pieces include your themes, your shopping cart, your plugins, and your HTML code.

If you choose to go with WordPress.org, you will have to learn some HTML code at some point, and may need to hire a web developer to help you iron out a few bugs with your website etc.

\*Again, it is NOT necessary to hire someone, but you will be spending many, many nights trying to figure out the slight complexities to making your website and store the way you want it to look and feel.

Learning the "back end" of your website will take time, skill, and will sap your energy from your real business objectives, which is selling coffee related items!

However, if you have the time, the passion, and the curiosity, then you will be able to save a lot of money down the road.

A second possible drawback is that unless you get a premium plugin (like Woo Commerce - which can cost you an additional \$69-\$129), your customers to be taken offline to a third party platform to make their purchase.

While we use our own self-hosted website, we skip the plugin altogether and use Selz.com.

[Selz.com](https://www.selz.com) is an excellent third-party platform that handles the transactions.

**Consider this:** Whichever route you do decide to choose, your shopping cart should be able to securely process PayPal and credit cards.

### **Quick Side Note: What is a “Website theme”?**

You may have already heard about website “themes”. A website theme is the “skin” that covers your WordPress code with a specific style, look, and feel.

Specifically, your theme is a bunch of computer code written and packed into a nice Zip file package that provides you with a specific "look and feel" of your website.

For example, a baking website will perhaps have a different theme than a corporate-based website.

Many independent website developers and companies sell their own themes. Each theme is different, so it's worth checking out a few of them.

ThemeForest.net has thousands of potential themes that could determine the style of your blog.

### **A quick review of where we are in this guide:**

1. We've discussed domain and website hosting
2. You'll need to upload WordPress
3. You'll need to choose your website theme



# The Easier Alternative?

## Using Shopify (or Something Similar)

If you decide to move forward from an e-commerce plan or platform like Shopify, you can simply purchase basic monthly plan – and everything will be hosted for you. In addition, you will be able easily develop your website, configure your shopping cart, and start selling right away.

The positives is that you will be able get this done all pretty quickly. Shopify allows you to buy and upload a theme (or style of your website) and additional applications pretty easily.

**Let's review what we've got so far:**

**Option #1: SHOPIFY (Recommended)** To quickly and efficiently open up your online coffee business, pick a website and shopping cart plan on Shopify.

You will be able to choose your own template (some are free and others cost about \$100 to \$150).

The free theme that comes with your Shopify plan also works great too! The great thing about going this route, aside from being able to start selling right away, is that you don't have to know any computer language or fiddle with much of the <computer code>, which many people have to do when they launch a self-hosted plan.

Learn more at Shopify and get their free trial [here](#).

**Option #2: SELF-HOSTED WEBSITE (Also Recommended)** Use your own domain name and shared hosting service (like Blue Host) with a website theme that supports a shopping cart (Selz.com) that you can use with PayPal.

The reason we recommend with reservations because while it will save you money, it requires you to set it up. But don't worry, it's not so hard.

Check out the video we created to help you set up your WordPress Website with [Blue Host Here](#).



#### **Step 4: Online Marketing and Getting the Word Out**

Once you've got your store up and running. Now it's time to promote your store. Websites, books, and other online resources can go into much more detail than I can here, but it is important for me to mention your promotion as it is vitally important to your success.

Your marketing campaign can begin at any time, even long before you spend your first dime on your store.

**Consider the following ways to promote your online coffee store:**

- Engage in Social Media
- Develop Your Email List
- Meet new people in person
- Create Business Cards
- Paid Internet Ads via Facebook, Pinterest, or Instagram
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

## **Social Media**

If you use Facebook or Pinterest, you already know the power of having an active social media account. We recommend that once you get your website up and running, you start one or two social media accounts specifically for your business.

That means, you will be separating your personal accounts from your business accounts. Trust me on this one. You don't want your potential customers knowing about your personal life. Rather the focus should be on your business solutions.

We realize that we have plenty of social media options to choose from. We don't believe it's necessary to be everywhere on social media. We think it's more important to see more substantive activity on one or two platforms, than very little on many different ones.

## **Your Email List**

Your email list is a powerful online communication tool. It is also an effective way to generate more sales.

Invest early in learning about how to use email for your marketing and outreach efforts.

Today, use [MailChimp](#) to send out our emails.

## **The Power of In-Person Communication**

There is a lot of emphasis on reaching people online. Certainly, you can scale your efforts online and reach countless more people. However, we think that many online business owners completely overlook the power of meeting face-to-face with potential customers.

Whether it's simply running into someone at a grocery store and striking up a conversation about your business or giving talks to potential customers, in-person communication is another powerful method of selling that shouldn't be overlooked.

## **Paid Online Advertisements**

Paid online advertisements are a great way to generate early traffic as you wait for your natural organic traffic to gain traction.

We recommend, however that before you start your advertisement campaign, consider giving your visitors something to land to. In other words, consider making your website content and products appealing to the visitors who actually visit your website – whether through advertisements or through organic traffic.

## **Search Engine Optimization**

There are millions of web pages going online every week. Your website is one of many competing for the attention of interested viewers. How does Google (or other search engines) determine which website is most relevant for people searching for your products?

Search engines like Google have secret (and not so secret) algorithms for determining the best websites.

There are a few things that will help you be found by others. These SEO techniques can be a powerful step in gaining the amount of relevant traffic that you need to get conversions.

1. Generate great content for your visitors.
2. Your website should be mobile friendly

3. Your website should be fast
4. Never duplicate website content (or steal content from other websites)
5. Give your visitors reasons to click through to other pages on your website

By offering relevant content and great products, people will begin to share and link to your website. These natural links will help you develop a higher ranking in Google search.

### **Step 5: Taking Action Today**

Sometimes you just *gotta* do it! Keep in mind that you will be tweaking and adjusting as you go. Don't let being "perfect" stop you.

Generate value for your customer wherever you can. Use your coffee expertise along the way to generate value for your customers.

Additionally, keep in mind that at first, you should consider having minimal inventory. It doesn't make sense to buy a boat load of coffee to just sit there while you figure out your new online business.

Remember, there will be a learning curve but if you move forward in a steady fashion, you'll be in a better position to make a profit.

## **How To Start an Online Coffee Business Resources:**

 [Blue Host \(Free Domain with your Hosting Plan\)](#)

 [Selz.com Shopping Cart \(Used with Blue Host\)](#)

 [Shopify \(Recommended\)](#)