



xcelacore
Business-Driven Technology

E-COMMERCE BEST PRACTICES

eBook

According to [Statista](#), e-commerce sales accounted for over 19% of retail sales worldwide in 2023, and total retail e-commerce sales are projected to exceed eight trillion dollars by 2027. The e-commerce industry is booming and overflowing with untapped potential and fierce competition. In a world where attention spans are limited and options are abundant, especially during peak shopping times like the holiday season, it's more crucial than ever to meet the ever-changing needs of e-commerce customers with an experience that surpasses industry standards. This eBook covers e-commerce industry best practices that aim to attract new customers, encourage conversion, and win over repeat visitors. By implementing these tactics and features, you can set up your e-commerce site for success, drive revenue, and beat the competition.

UX REALLY MATTERS

A site's UX (user experience) design can distinguish between a successful sale and a quick exit. From first impressions through checkout, any hiccup could send a potential customer running to the competition. The idea is to limit barriers to conversion as much as possible by starting with the basics and acting on customer feedback.

The Right Information In The Right Way

The foundation of any great UX starts with clean, concise copy that communicates the right information at the right time. With short attention spans in mind, promotional copy and product descriptions should get straight to the most pertinent information and convincing selling points. Arguably, even more important, however, are product images. As the saying goes—a picture says a thousand words. Users can glean a lot from photographs. High quality images that clearly show detail, specific features, and that model the product in real life settings or styles can play a crucial role in the customer's consideration. Finally, inclusivity is good for business. Open up your site to visitors of all abilities by implementing accessible features like alternative image text and screen readers for the vision impaired or by enabling easy keyboard navigation for those that may not be able to use a mouse.

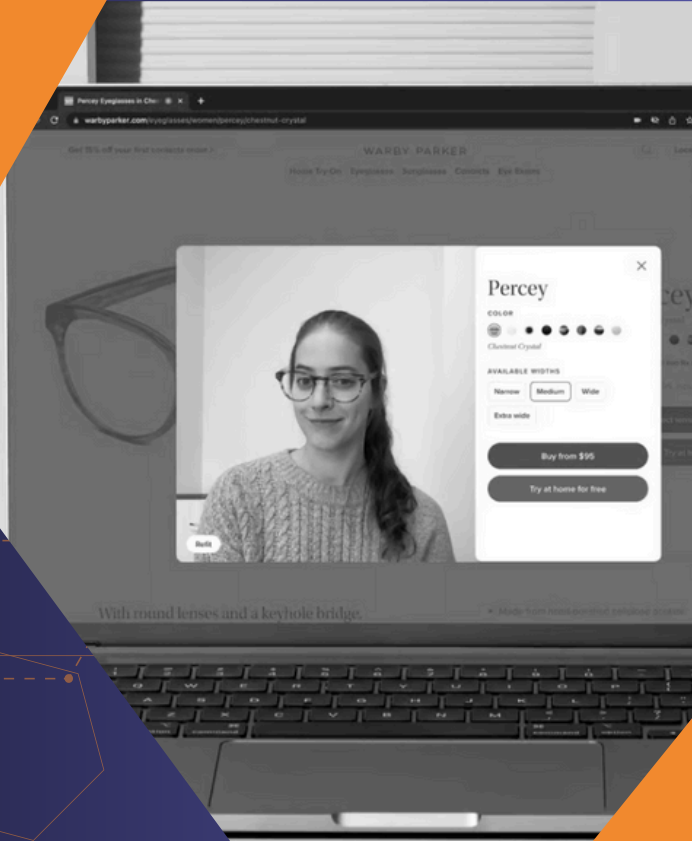
Streamline The Checkout Process

A well designed checkout page should provide a quick, convenient, and painless experience. When prompting customers to login to their account, keep an option for checking out as a guest as any extra steps could act as a deterrence. In addition to limiting checkout forms to as few as possible, features that speed up the process will make a difference. Intelligent technology like address capture will help your customer find the accurate shipping address in just a few keystrokes. This feature can also prevent failed or delayed deliveries. Eliminate the barrier that extra costs may present by removing shipping costs or consider providing free shipping over specific cart values. The more payment options, the better. By accepting credit cards, virtual wallets like Apple Pay, or buy now, pay later payment plans, your site appeals to more customers and their unique payment preferences.

Eliminate Second Thoughts With Interactive Features

The online shopping experience can be littered with doubt. Will this item fit me? How will this piece of furniture look in my space? How will my customizations look on this product? Interactive features that quell these concerns can provide a more enjoyable experience and encourage the customer to convert. Size guides, virtual “see it in your space” capabilities, and user generated content can all help push customers over the finish line.

Retailer Warby Parker takes the guess work out by enabling customers to try on their glasses virtually on mobile or desktop before purchasing.



NAVIGATION IS KEY

Leveraging a well-thought-out and innovative navigation architecture is a step towards winning over customers now and seeing them return in the future. Few things will drive customers away faster than barriers between them and the product they are looking for.

Search

First and foremost, any site's search bar should be easy and obvious for any user to find. Secondly, a successful e-commerce site will be loaded with intelligent search capabilities. Predictive search is a game changer for the user experience. By auto-filling with relevant search terms informed by customer behavior, location, or other customer analytics, the customer receives a more personalized experience and can find a more direct route to the product they seek. Once a customer executes a specific search term, search results should include product images, recommendations, and other related product categories.

Filters

Perhaps a customer doesn't know exactly what they are looking for yet. Well-executed filters will allow them to quickly and efficiently narrow the search. Interactive filters should allow customers to narrow product results by every category imaginable—price range, size, color, style, etc. Furthermore, these filters should be easy to find, easy to use, and optimized for mobile devices.

Navigation Features

Navigation architecture is a science that requires a deep understanding of how the customer operates. While it may seem straightforward, finding the right structure can be quite complicated. A good starting point is establishing parent and subcategories. For example, a furniture e-commerce website's parent categories may consist of rooms in a home—living room, bedroom, bathroom. In contrast, subcategories may consist of furniture types—nightstands and side tables, chairs, storage and organization. Another crucial component is enabling the customer to find their way around seamlessly. Breadcrumb navigation allows customers to click back to the exact parent and subcategories that led to their current destination. This feature can be especially useful and necessary on sites with a large and diverse product selection. Finally, it is also crucial to understand what a customer might be looking for aside from products. The footer menu at the bottom of your site is an important piece to the navigation puzzle. This space can point the customer to the return policy, FAQ, brick and mortar store locators, and more.

Nike's site capitalizes on a minimalist and efficient navigation architecture complete with parent and subcategories, breadcrumb navigation, and thorough filters.

Lifestyle / Shoes

Womens Lifestyle Shoes (328)

Pick Up Today

Air Force 1
Air Max
Nike Dunk
Blazer
Jordan

Sale & Offers

- Extra 20% Off
Select Styles
- Sale

Gender (1)

Color

Shop by Price

Size



Just In
Nike Cortez Vintage
Suede
Shoes
3 Colors
\$100

Nike
Wo
18 C
\$11

THE POWER OF PERSONALIZATION

The modern consumer doesn't just appreciate a more personalized experience, they expect it. Providing a more personalized e-commerce user experience will lead to more conversions, happier customers, and an edge over the competition. Offering recommendations tailored to a customer's behavior is key. Personalized product recommendations can start on the PDP (product-display page) with suggested similar or companion products. Following up abandoned carts, abandoned searches, and completed purchases with personalized recommendations via email or SMS marketing can reel the customer back in. E-commerce sites can also further personalize the shopping experience by offering interactive tools that narrow down customer preferences. For example, a quiz or questionnaire may be an engaging tool that can lead to more personalized recommendations for the customer.

[Revivalrugs.com](https://www.revivalrugs.com) puts personalization in the customer's hands by offering a quiz that culminates in personalized product recommendations based on color preferences, size restraints, budget, and more.

Rug Quiz

Choosing a rug is like buying art – you may not know where to begin. We're here to help! Take this quiz for personalized rug recommendations.

1:04 pm

Hi! Ready to get started?



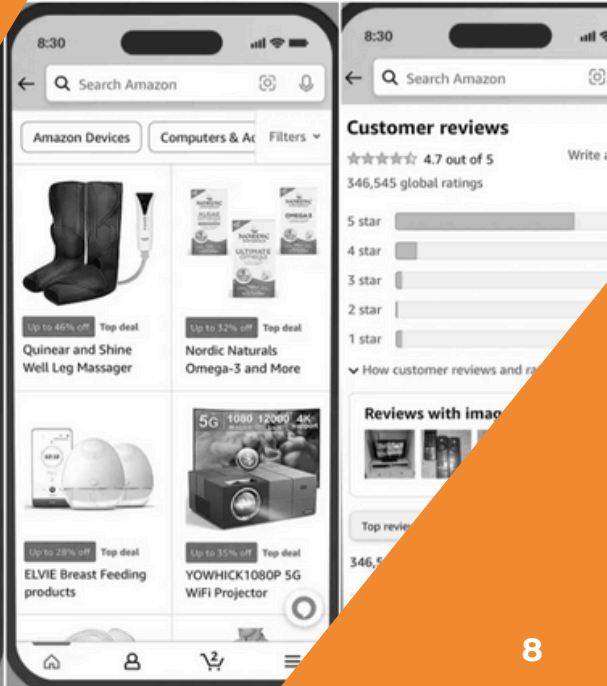
What room are you buying a rug for?



PRIORITIZE EFFICIENCY AND MOBILE OPTIMIZATION

Backend efficiency is paramount in the e-commerce industry. Slow load or processing times do not bode well for customer retention. The same goes for the ease of transition to the mobile experience. With more online purchases being made on mobile devices than ever before, the experience should be just as efficient as it is on a desktop device. Mobile UX should be taken literally. Ergonomic, thumb-oriented layouts and designs should be implemented for best results. Similarly, screen size should be considered. Smaller screens present new challenges in finding the right balance of white space, text and image size, and the right amount of content. The enablement of quick-touch saving or favoriting items, “quick shop” cart adds, product ratings, and other touch interactions keep customers engaged and on their way to the checkout page. Keeping the checkout process streamlined remains just as important and mobile friendly payment options like Apple Pay should be considered. A mobile app accompanying an e-commerce site can often see great success. Users can easily access their accounts on their mobile devices, refer back to saved items, and receive personalized push notifications marketing certain offers or product restocks.

Amazon’s mobile app expertly combines well designed mobile navigation, mobile-friendly features, and quick touch interactions that lead to more conversions.



Meeting customer expectations for convenience, ease of use, and personalization is the baseline for increasing revenue. An e-commerce site that fails to meet these expectations and standards will fail to succeed. If attracting customers to your site is like climbing a mountain, motivating them to convert is more akin to climbing Everest, considering 2024's average cart abandonment rate remains at 70.19%. Meeting the industry's best practices is required to beat out the competition and win new and repeat customers over.

Contact Xcelacore today to work with our seasoned e-commerce experts to build and optimize your new top-tier e-commerce platform.