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So...You Want To Sell Your Own Products

Every year thousands of people try to make a living with a home based business. The advantages are clear: working in the comfort of your own home; no commuting; no impatient bosses expecting you to work overtime. The list goes on but essentially all these advantages give the home business owner one big return: more time with your family.

Many different home based business models exist today but more often than not the majority of online business owners are selling a product. Now, these might be physical products that are manufactured and shipped to you or they may be digital products, such as ebooks, which are downloaded upon payment. Selling a product that you have created allows you to collect 100% of the profits whereas selling other people's products as an affiliate can yield up to 50% + profit, depending on the affiliate program structure.



No matter which type of product you want to offer, having a secure way for people to order online is vital to your business success. Even though ordering items online is quick and saves gas money, there are so many stories of fraud that many people are leery of the process. Customers worry if someone will steal their credit card number but business owners who accept personal checks also worry about bank fees for bounced checks.

Identity stealing is another big worry among online shoppers. To ship out physical products, buyers must enter their personal information. That coupled with their credit card number and any unscrupulous thief can have a field day making false charges on this buyer's credit card.

The solution to making these type of transactions secure is to add a shopping cart that offers security during the ordering process. When you use a secure shopping cart, the data is encrypted so it can't be stolen. It shows up in your sales and shipping reports but it can't be hijacked over a wireless internet connection.

Savvy customers know to look for a url beginning with <https://> or a lock icon in their browser window. These are two easy signs that a website has secure online ordering. These savvy customers will most likely make a purchase just knowing there's no chance of having their personal information stolen.

At this point you might be saying, "But I don't have \$100 every month to pay for a secure shopping cart," or "That's what I use PayPal for". Rest assured, there are shopping cart options that fall in between the free and very expensive ranges.

While PayPal is certainly a good *temporary* option for product sellers who want to test the market with their product – and it's enticing because it's free – investing in a paid shopping cart is really the best move for your business. If you have big dreams for your company and have large sales goals for your product, you want your very own secure shopping cart for many reasons:

- More personalized customer service – if a customer has a dispute, going through the PayPal ranks can take many weeks. By this point the customer is frustrated that he doesn't have his product and you're frustrated because you haven't gotten your money.
- More professional-looking "Buy Now" graphics – yes, PayPal offers graphics but anyone who's the least bit internet savvy knows PayPal is a free service, which can negatively impact the look of your site and your company's reputation.
- A built-in way to correspond with your customers – PayPal will log a temporary record of who bought your product but does not offer an autoresponder, which records your customer's email address so you can correspond with them in the future about sales and new products you offer.
- A customizable affiliate program – once you deem your product a success, you can enlist affiliates to act as your sales team to sell your product for a commission. PayPal does not offer any kind of affiliate program to keep track of this virtual sales team.

These are just a few of the reasons each successful product seller needs a shopping cart.

Who Needs a Shopping Cart? YOU Do!

Mothers are the biggest group of people who try to earn a living by working at home. They don't have to worry about daycare costs and they can volunteer at school or easily care for a sick child because they have a flexible schedule.

Do a simple Google search for the term "work at home moms" and you'll discover over 5,640,000 websites dedicated to this target market. There's no doubt that this trend is growing!

But this work at home mom (or WAHM) market is also the one that gets hit with the most scams. Unscrupulous people prey on the moms who are starting out, who so

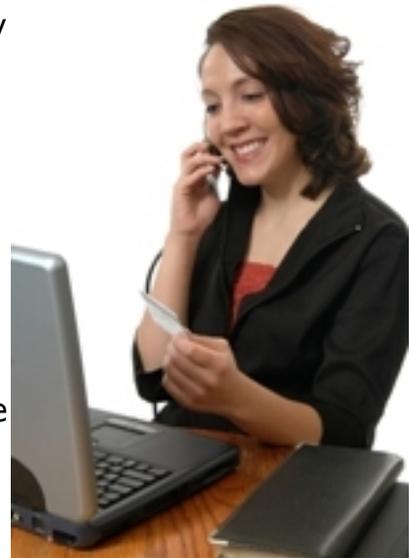


desperately want to sell their own products that they will invest in a fraudulent program or who will be convinced they need to spend hundreds of dollars each month on a shopping cart with lots of bells and whistles.

Moms and small business owners also start their businesses on modest budgets and are generally very careful not to spend money they don't have yet. They are the ones who rely on the free shopping carts and free autoresponder services which are very limiting because they're not as secure and upgrading to the better paid services in the future can often be difficult when trying to export your current contacts from the free version.

Small businesses everywhere need to be smart with their money but also know when to invest in a program that can grow with their business. Even if you have just one product to sell, invest in a shopping cart that offers:

- Secure ordering – as mentioned earlier, customers will feel more at ease buying from a secure site, knowing their credit card information is encrypted and safe
- Multiple payment options – don't let your customer leave without purchasing just because you don't accept the one credit card they carry. People who dislike credit cards might opt for PayPal so offering multiple options will increase your chances of making a sale.
- Multiple product and pricing options – don't let the shopping cart manufacturer tell you how many products you can offer! Choose a cart that allows you to add as many of your products as you like and offer different pricing options, such as a flat fee, subscription, or installments.
- Autoresponder – how will you reconnect with your current customers in another 6 months? An autoresponder feature will automatically record your customers' email addresses so you can keep them informed of new products or sales, which might make them a repeat customer.
- Excellent customer service – even if you know your way around the computer pretty well, inevitably you'll have a question or experience some sort of problem. Rather than wondering if your support ticket is floating around in cyberworld, knowing your support team will help you quickly is comforting.



If you're going to dream about working from home, you might as well dream big! Finding a shopping cart that offers features you can use in the near future is a smart move.

I've Been In Your Shoes...

Internet marketing has certainly changed a lot in the 11 years since I began working online! Even though I had experience in the corporate IT world, the amount of information on the internet was astounding and often difficult to sort through.

I've been in your shoes, trying to sort my way through all the internet marketing information, comparing all the various shopping carts on the market, and trying to decide which program was best for my business. Do I really need to build a list? How can I afford this high monthly payment? As difficult as that journey was for me, even though I had the technical background, I began to realize just how puzzled other women must be who are just starting their businesses. My innate desire to help other women kicked in and led me to co-found WahmCart, a feature-rich shopping cart designed for work at home moms and small businesses to use easily at an affordable price.

As a woman with a strong desire to succeed, I take my work very seriously and do my best to inform other women of their business choices. That's why I'm very active in networking forums and contribute to many different business podcasts. Seeing other women struggle with the same questions I asked all those years ago is heart wrenching, especially knowing how desperate some women are to make owning a business a reality.

A true test of character and success is how long has a person worked in their chosen field. I've been an internet entrepreneur for over 11 years and don't plan on retiring anytime soon! Some self-proclaimed "gurus" only care about making the sale and then they disappear to enjoy their millions. I care more about helping women become successful with their businesses. In my role as a business coach, the only way I can succeed is for my clients to succeed.

If you're a true "do-it-yourselfer," then feel free to browse all 5 million work at home mom websites that appear in your Google search and try to decipher what information you need to sell your products. I would argue with you, however, that to become truly successful is to realize how valuable your time is and to invest that time wisely.

Since I have been in your shoes and already walked this journey, why not use me as your personal guide?

Success Is Within Your Reach



How long have you been dreaming of a way to quit your corporate job so you can work from home? Do your kids miss you? Are you constantly late for family dinners? Missing too many soccer games?

Women have many different reasons for wanting to work from home but only you can take the steps to make that dream become a reality. Sure, it might be a little scary at first and before you quit that job maybe you can test the waters by selling your products part time.

If you can dream about creating products and selling them from home, then you can make it happen. Here is a short checklist for making your online business dream come true:

- Do your product and market research – who will buy your product? Do these people *want* to buy your product? How much will your supplies cost?
- Set up your website – convey a professional image by hiring a designer, or at the very least, hire a professional to design your header and graphics. Amateurish sites that look “homemade” won’t give you as many sales.
- Choose a shopping cart program and become familiar with it – upload product photos, add prices, figure out how to link the cart to your website.
- Test your checkout system – actually place an order from your website and be sure the ordering process is smooth with no broken links or error pages. Your customers will be most satisfied if their transaction is error-free.

After the technical issues are addressed and working well, it’s up to you to advertise, market, and produce your products.

If you’re already an experienced product seller, evaluate how automated your website is at the moment. Are the ordering and fulfillment processes smooth from start to finish? For digital products, how quickly is the download link sent out? Is there any lag time between a customer paying for the order and receiving the download link? If the answer is yes, then you’re leaving your client waiting and wondering if he’s been ripped off.

If you have any problems with the way your shopping cart currently works, then it’s time to upgrade to a system that is flawless. Not only will your customers be happy but you’ll have peace of mind knowing you won’t wake up to a myriad of angry emails because of messed up

orders.

Next, consider the effort and money spent on having multiple services – such as shopping cart, autoresponder, affiliate management and tracking solutions – all with different providers. Not only does this make organizing your business difficult but it also costs you more money in the long run.

Ecommerce technology has improved so much during these last years that you don't have to pay \$20 - \$100 per month for each service you need. Shopping carts specifically aimed at small businesses are significantly less money but come packed with these important business features all in one place. Now with just a click of a button you can analyze your statistics for sales or affiliates without having to spend precious time logging into multiple programs.

One of your main purposes in working from home is to save yourself time, right? So now is the time to evaluate how your ecommerce plan works for you and make the necessary changes to improve its functionality.

Evaluate Your Business Now to Ensure Future Success



Prior to opening your doors for business you should have a written business plan. This plan is very much like a road map, leading you past certain landmarks – or goals – on the road to success. A business plan answers standard questions about the purpose of your business, your role in the business, how you will finance your business and how you will market and advertise your business.

But just like on any journey, you might get detoured along your way, which may lead to changing your plan – or map. A business plan is meant to change and grow as your business changes and grows over time. There's nothing wrong with this so long as your ultimate goal is still in focus.

Any time you see changes in your market or in your business, take time to evaluate how your business is running and make the necessary changes to keep up with the trends. Here are some questions to ask when analyzing your business for both new and experienced product sellers:

- Your Target Market – Have there been any changes in your target market? Are you still targeting the same market as last year? Does your market have a new problem that your product can fix? Is there still a need for your product in this particular market?

- Your Product – How much do the supplies cost? How much is your market willing to pay? What's your profit margin on each product? Can you modify your product to solve a different need in your target market? Is there a way to make your product better?
- Your Time – Is your shopping cart easy to use or does it cause you headaches when adding new products? What other programs do you use to automate the ordering and fulfillment processes? How can the automated process be improved? Can you afford to upgrade to a paid ecommerce service that includes multiple features? Do you have an affiliate program so others can sell the product for you?
- Your Goals – What was your goal when you first started your business? Is that goal different today? Do you set weekly or monthly sales goals? What steps can you take in either marketing, advertising, or product manufacturing to help you reach your goals? Do you hold yourself accountable if you miss one of your goals?

Even the most successful and richest of business people analyze whether their business practices are helping to make them money. Sometimes only a few tweaks are necessary to make things run more smoothly; other times they have to admit their ideas were wrong and a whole new plan is needed to reinvent the company. No matter the size of your business, you can only improve your clarity, focus, and ultimately sales by evaluating how to make your business better.

Your Next Steps: Take Action

While evaluating your business and how it runs is important, equally as important is taking those action steps needed to make it even better. Don't just sit there, staring at your goals and daydreaming about your success; use that paper as a guide and start making one small change to your business NOW.

Also essential to your business success is actually making sales, which requires people to find you on the internet and make a purchase. Keep in mind that the "Build it and they will come," quote from Field of Dreams is NOT accurate when speaking about getting traffic to your website.

Below is a short checklist to help guide you through your next action steps. These steps are aimed at bringing traffic – or customers – to your website so you can make sales.

- Find a reliable web host – hosting companies are plentiful on the web but they're not all created equally. Find a host that has multiple packages to suit your needs, the ability to upgrade in the future, excellent customer service, and minimal downtime. After all, if your website is continually down, then you're not selling products, right?

- Start networking – the social media craze has boomed and provides sellers multiple ways to connect with your target market. Networking can even lead to joint venture projects which will increase your exposure even more. These networking relationships are very much like our personal relationship – they are based on give and take from each party. Share information with your networking groups rather than just promoting your product.
- Recruit an affiliate team – in your networking efforts, ask others who reach your target market to test your product and earn a commission for every product they sell. Having a virtual sales team requires having sales materials they can use, such as sample reviews, text ads, or graphics they can put on their own websites. Adding these sales pieces is incredibly simple if you have a shopping cart with affiliate management capabilities, such as [WAHMCart](#).
- Start an email newsletter – or create a report for your customers so you can gather their email addresses for future contact. Not everyone who visits your website will buy that first time yet you don't want to lose touch with that potential customer. By offering a newsletter, report, or some other giveaway, you can gather the email addresses in your autoresponder and let these potential customers know about sales, discount coupons, holiday specials, or new products. Send these clients useful information each week or month to keep your name fresh in their minds.

Getting consistent traffic to your website is a large task and will become part of your everyday tasks. This is just a very small sample of what you can do to draw in traffic and hopefully keep in touch with them. New traffic strategies are developing at a rapid pace so keeping up with the trends and doing some research on your own is a smart use of your time.

Now that you see a sample of what's involved in drawing traffic to your site, can you see the importance of having a professional and reliable shopping cart? For those people who found your site and want your product, having an easy way to checkout and deliver your product will cement their happy shopping experience.

How I Can Help You

During my 11 years as an internet marketer, I've networked with thousands of people, many of them moms who wanted to work from home. The common concern among all these women was the cost of using a shopping cart service.

As an ecommerce expert and business coach, I was touting the benefits of using secure shopping carts yet I quickly came to realize that these solutions were not financially feasible for the women I was speaking to. Sure, some people hike up their credit card balances to pay

for ecommerce services they need but others, generally the small business owners, needed to have a steady income flow before committing to a monthly charge.

That's quite a catch-22 for people who are driven to make their business a success.

For the longest time there were only two categories of shopping carts available: free services or high end, expensive options. So many small business owners would opt for the free services but as I mentioned earlier, there are quite a few limitations. Those services are really meant for one-time purchases rather than supporting your whole ecommerce business.

My business partner and I finally decided that the WAHM market had been ignored for long enough and developed WAHMCart. We wanted to give women business owners the opportunity to have high quality ecommerce solutions at a price they could afford. We saw so much potential in the women we spoke with; all they needed was an affordable tool to reach that success.

Everyday I hear from women who use WAHMCart and they tell of their great successes selling their products. Or they tell us how easy it is to manage their affiliates and contact their customers because those products are built in to WAHMCart.

Occasionally a client will experience a glitch or problem; that's natural – we're all human. But I take great pride in keeping my customers happy and enjoy helping my clients work out their problems. Yes, I have a team who helps resolve technical issues, but there's nothing like that personal touch to keep a client happy. My success is based on your success.

Test WAHMCart for \$1

As you can see, a secure shopping cart is an important feature your website must have in order to be a successful product seller online. Think of the peace of mind you'll gain knowing your customers can easily and safely place their order without worrying about someone hacking your system to steal their information. The reliability and security of your shopping cart can even become a selling point when trying to steer customers away from a competitor.

If you're ready to take the next step to making your business a success, I invite you to test drive WAHMCart for 14 days for only \$1. That's an investment that any WAHM can afford! This allows you two full weeks to play with WAHMCart, to learn its features, upload sample product photos and prices, and to evaluate if this is the right ecommerce solution for your business.

<http://WAHMcart.com>

If you're still uncertain about which shopping cart to use or what features you want for your business, that's alright, too. You can find more answers about shopping carts and ecommerce technology at <http://ShoppingCartFaq.com>

Here's to your ecommerce success!