



E-COMMERCE MARKETING GUIDE

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THE E-COMMERCE INDUSTRY

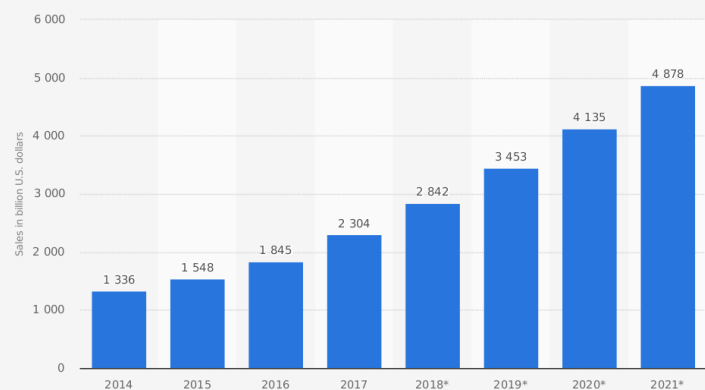
With increased penetration of internet usage, the online e-commerce industry has grown rapidly. As per statistics given by eMarketer 2018 report, the e-commerce sales will continue to grow in 2018 from USD 2.3 trillion in 2017 and will increase to over USD 4.87 trillion by 2021.

This increase in the sales growth is mainly due to online shopping. However, online shopping varies by region. The mobile devices, especially smartphones, are a big contributing factor to increase in sales. As smartphones reach older generations, and remote areas, the users of online shopping are increasing.

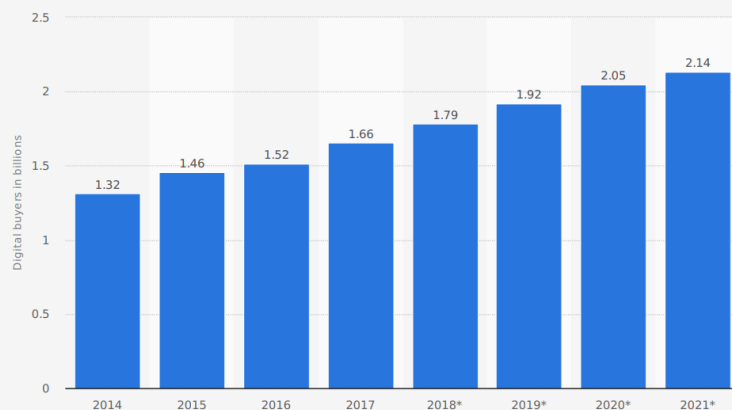
By 2021, 2.14 billion people are expected to buy goods and services online. When we look at Figure 2, we see the figures increase incrementally. With the right form of marketing and advertisement, this increase will give a boost to the e-commerce industry.

The boost or the increase in online shopping can also be accredited to competitive prices, convenience, and the right marketing.

Retail e-commerce sales worldwide from 2014 to 2021 (in billion U.S. dollars)



Number of digital buyers worldwide from 2014 to 2021 (in billions)



Over last few years, increase in smartphone sales in developing countries are majorly contributing to the numbers. Africa and Southern Asia are a big market for smartphones, as penetration rate increases. With that in mind, this is the perfect time to enter the e-commerce market.

So, if you are an existing e-commerce seller, or you are hoping to enter the market soon, this guide is for you. This guide is aimed at new and existing e-commerce sellers, looking for a quick understanding of how best to market yourself to reach a wider audience, on a bigger scale, and increase your returns.

HOW DO YOU BEGIN?

E-Commerce, as a business, has evolved from the idea of facilitating services to the customers. The customer is key and to know their requirement is crucial for any E-Commerce business. With that in mind, it is imperative to get a good understanding of your customers and the industry in the early stages of starting your store, or even better – before you start.

Industry Analysis

Major existing e-commerce players have identified the market and now they are living among the customers' day-to-day life. When you are starting a business online, you should identify the good and bad of the industry. A good way to do this is through SWOT Analysis.

SWOT Analysis is used to know about factors that shape the industry. It helps understand the internal as well as external factors. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats. Strengths and

Weaknesses are internal factors that takes a look at what your store is doing right or wrong, whereas Opportunities and Threats are external factors that look at possible ways to expand or things to look out for.

S

Qualities that your organization stands for.
What separates you from the competitors.
Resources such as skilled manpower.
Tangible assets like capital, technology, etc.

W

Identifying areas where your organization lacks.
Understanding of areas where competitor has an edge.
Check for any resource limitation/allocation problems.

O

Understanding the market opportunities
Emerging demands for your products/services.
Identifying consumers/companies, their brand value, etc.
Press/media coverage.

T

Emerging competition.
Changing business dynamics.
Falling demand for your product/services.
Negative representation in press/media.

Customer Know-How

After a good understanding of the industry, the next step is to know and find your customers. This includes a lot of research, targeting specific demographics based on customer segmentation.

Customer Segmentation is a process of dividing your target audience into smaller groups, to better address needs of each specific group, and hence improve the response to what you are trying to sell. Developing customer segments gives a valuable way of understanding customers' behaviors and guides more cost-effective marketing strategies. You can read a little more about how ways to segment your audience on this [Ecommerce Wiki post](#).

Store Setup

After a deep understanding of the e-commerce industry, and knowing your customers, it is time to setup your online store. This process can be difficult because



of all the different ways to go about it. You can setup your own e-commerce website through Shopify, BigCommerce, WooCommerce, or all the different e-commerce hosting services available. Additionally, you can sell through online marketplaces such as Amazon, eBay, Etsy, Flipkart, AliExpress, and so on.

Based on the research done on target audience, products to sell, features needed, tentative size of business, and other factors you choose to look at, you can decide which of these selling platforms work best for you.

GENERAL E-COMMERCE MARKETING TIPS

With your store setup and running, the real task is getting people to the website, and getting people to purchase from you. E-Commerce websites need advanced marketing strategies, as this forms one of the best source for diverting traffic to the website.

There are hundreds of ways to market your website, your product, specific features, and so much more. It is a quest to know, discover, and understand as many marketing methods as you can. It is almost impossible to implement them all, but the smart thing to do is to implement a select few and reap benefits from it. So, there should be a list of marketing channels that you want to use. Selection of these channels depends on your goals and budgets, and these marketing techniques can be short-term or long-term.

Here we discuss just a few of these marketing tips.

[Search Engine Optimisation \(SEO\)](#)

Major e-commerce traffic comes from search engines like Google and Yahoo.

Therefore, it is quite important for the e-commerce website to have a high ranking on search engines. A high ranking for a website means they appear quite high in the search, for the right keywords. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the way to do that.

SEO happens in two parts: On-Page and Off-Page. On-Page SEO is about being featured for the right keywords in search engines. On-Page SEO takes into account the content on your website,



HTML titles and tags, category names, product names and tags, and so on. Off-Page SEO is about being featured higher up the pages, on search engines. This can be done through factors such as blogs, link building, social media posts, etc.

So, beyond the content you make, it is important to have a good understanding of the keywords that directs people to your website – and how you can manipulate that. Few right keywords have the potential to drive huge traffic to the website.

[Keyword Tool Dominator](#) and [Google Keyword Planner](#) are great tools to study and play around with keywords to improve your SEO. The idea behind keyword lead SEO is to reach niche audience through long tail search traffic.

[This article](#) by Backlinko on E-Commerce SEO is an exhaustive and must-do read for e-commerce sellers looking to focus on SEO.

Content Strategy

Content strategy, as a continuation of SEO strategy, deals with increasing the reputation of your website through relevant, and important content posted on the site. For an e-commerce store there are multiple ways to do that. For a traditional website, a general content strategy is to add blog posts or forum to discuss. Though blog posts and forum are a strong approach to content marketing, e-commerce has a wider scope.

E-Commerce websites can, beyond steady blog posts, incorporate ratings and reviews into its content strategy. It sounds straightforward and it is. The impact of such a minor change is humongous.

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Yes, always	-	8%	18%	19%
Yes, if I believe the reviews are authentic	22%	31%	27%	25%
Yes, for some types of businesses, no for others	34%	22%	19%	20%
Yes, if there are multiple customer reviews to read	26%	19%	20%	20%
No, I am often skeptical about online reviews	-	-	12%	13%
No, I don't trust reviews at all	17%	20%	4%	3%

According to a [2017 BrightLocal survey](#), over 85% of consumers trust online review as much as personal recommendations.

With an impact like that, a ratings and review sections are a must have. The added bonus to this is the fact that even these reviews are treated as content that gets crawled by Google and other search engines, to increase the rating of your website. Beyond reviews and ratings too, there are other parts that e-commerce websites can include to their content strategy. This includes a strong and personal About Us section, FAQ pages, influencer posts, tutorial videos, social media and so much more.

[Conversion Rate Optimisation \(CRO\)](#)

Before we go into external marketing strategies such as social media and e-mail marketing, there's another internal strategy that works on improving the conversion rate of the website.

Conversion rate optimisation is a process of getting website visitors to do what you want them to do – things like add products to cart, or read a blog post, or view your best rated products, and so on. It requires understanding of how visitors access the website and what is the likely content they access, and what are the possible hindrances for them in taking certain actions, like buying something in the cart.

A good way to go about increasing your conversion rate is through constant A/B testing different elements of the website. This includes changing layouts, and push-notification styles, and button colors, till you find the best combination that provides optimum solution.

Of course, this process shouldn't be random. It is important to have a reason for each change. Hence, knowing where your customers are clicking, how much time they spend on each page, what feature they interact with, at what point did they

abandon the card, are all important metrics. These metrics need to be recorded and studied.

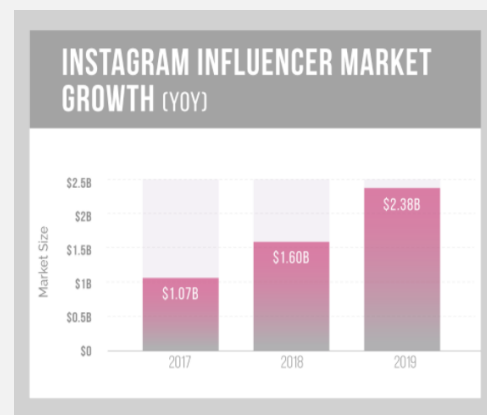
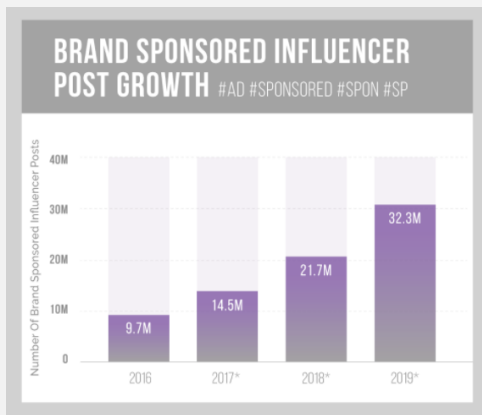
[Social Media Marketing](#)

A part of Content Strategy is a social media strategy, but social media marketing functions at a whole different level. For e-commerce websites, social media marketing is not only a way to maintain a social presence but also to sell more products and provide additional services to customers. Apart from that, there's also the additional benefit of getting deeper insights into customers through the social media connect.

For e-commerce sellers, there's a wider scope for social media marketing, as they can also target hyper-focused social media platforms like Pinterest, Tumblr, and YouTube alongside Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

All these different platforms serve similar but parallel purposes. Facebook can be used for targeted ads to direct your target audience to your website and let them find their liking by themselves. YouTube can be used to develop a goodwill for your brand through how-to videos and specialized content that your consumers would appreciate.

Instagram and Pinterest on the other hand can be used to get people interested in specific products you are selling, attracted through images and short directive – like immediate sale. Tumblr can be used to sell your story and why you are in the market. Give your history, have a purpose, and show people how you fulfill that purpose. Lastly, Twitter is used a lot to address specific queries, complaints, compliments, and manage direct communication with individual customers.



Instagram is also great with influencer marketing. Promotional review posts by the right influencers can not only increase your sales, it can also increase your brand value, through association with the right influencer. Influencers can also be invited to post on your blog, or do a tie-up video with, to increase reach. It should be noted though, that influencer marketing can be expensive and requires lot of research to set up right connections in the right way.

[E-Mail Marketing](#)

Before social media marketing, influencer marketing, and nuanced SEO was a thing, e-mail marketing is what worked. Over the years, e-mail marketing still hasn't lost the impact it had years back.

Strategy to a good e-mail marketing campaign starts with trying to get an e-mail as soon as possible, without pushing away the potential shopper. If you want a potential

shopper to give you their e-mail address even before they purchase from you, you have to provide an incentive for them to do so. Which is why, a prevailing method to get e-mails is to provide a discount code or free shipping coupon, in exchange for providing an e-mail and signing up for further e-mail correspondence.

After getting consent to send e-mails, it is important to know that bulk e-mails and non-curated content is the fastest way to alienate your clients and get them to unsubscribe from your mailer list. Sending best deals, relevant product suggestions, special updates, and cart abandonment e-mails are some of the relevant e-mails that interest your subscribers. So, make sure you set up the right e-mail marketing plan and make the best of your subscribers.

[This guide](#) by Shopify is a good place to start.

[Loyalty & Reward Points](#)

Through all counts, it is known that getting previous buyers to buy again from you is less expensive than getting a new customer or a visitor. So, to incentivise people to keep purchasing from you, a marketing technique – awarding loyalty points for repeat purchase and awarding rewards for special tasks such as sharing posts on social media – should be applied. These points can be reimbursed against services provided by you.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SHOPIFY

Often the first name mentioned when discussing e-commerce platforms, Shopify currently hosts over 600,000 online stores, and has powered over \$40 Billion worth of sale! Running on Ruby on Rails framework, Shopify aims to simplify the overall idea of a business by providing all the necessary tools and supplementary functions on just a single platform.

Shopify lets you create a fully customisable online store with the help of thousands of templates, and you can build your brand with your own domain name. It is a turn-key solution, which meets your needs from end to end. You can sell your items from other sources like Pinterest, Tumblr as well through your page. Shopify also comes with a variety of price plans to select, with different features. It charges a small fee per transaction, unless you use Shopify's in-house payment gateway.

Some of the key tips to keep in mind to leverage Shopify's features are as follows:

[Productivity Tools](#)

Productivity Tools is an entire section under Shopify that helps with taking care of basic admin tasks of Shopify. This includes importing orders or putting tags on products to better manage them or taking bulk actions like fulfilling multiple orders together.

There's also an entire section on free tools, under productivity tools. These tools help with setting up the store from the basics, to some pretty advanced features. There are tools for basic tasks such as logo, business name, and slogan generator, all the way to business loan and profit margin calculator. Start [here](#) to learn more.

Customer Engagement

Shopify has an extensive system in place to ensure that you fully maximise the customer base you build through your store. Customers can create an account on the site with you, allowing them to save their details, and you get a database of customers straightaway.

You can also filter customers to look at whether they accept e-mail marketing and to look up dates when they abandoned carts. To set this feature, go to Settings>Checkout>Customer Accounts. This isn't a compulsory feature, so you can choose if you wish to keep this active or not, based on your customer behaviour patterns.

Shopify POS

For e-commerce sellers who might be selling products in-person, at trade shows, markets, fairs, or pop-up shops, as an added way to sell, it is difficult to track people who interact with the company at these places. Shopify POS (Point of Sale) makes it easy to do that.

Shopify POS syncs with your primary Shopify store to keep a track of your inventory, adds products to cart, allows purchase through different methods, and records customer

details like name, e-mail, and other contact details. Shopify POS works best with iPad, but there's compatibility with iPhone and other Android devices too.



The basic features of Shopify POS are available with every Shopify Plan, with no extra cost. There's also a premium retail package that allows connecting to retail hardware like receipt printer, or barcode scanner.

More details on Shopify POS can be acquired [here](#).

[Microdata Usage](#)

Google uses structured data of your site to determine the snippet content for that site's organic search results. This information is not seen by the viewer of a page but is used by web crawlers to determine the content of a page. Shopify uses microdata collected through the site that gives search engines better visibility of your store and products. This in turn will put your store in a better position vis-à-vis the competition. It's usually added throughout the code alongside the HTML code used to present the related element on the screen.

[Apps and Plug-ins](#)

Shopify has a wide range of plug-ins in their app store that allow you to redefine your usage of the basic templates. Of course, such a wide range of options can be daunting, but a little research will go a long way in helping you out. Apps such as [Sumo](#) boosts your marketing by sending out e-mails and newsletters to your clients, while an app like [MaxTraffic Exit Offers](#) helps you capture your abandoning customers by generating coupon and voucher codes or free shipping notifications for them. An app like [Referral Candy](#) can help start a chain of customer referrals by generating loyalty discounts for you too. With apps for every need, using these plug-ins as per your budget can boost your sales significantly.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR BIGCOMMERCE

This E-commerce solution usually finds its way into most top-five lists anywhere on the internet, with clients such as Toyota, TravelPro, Martha Steward, Camelbak and Gibson Guitars. It is a hosted e-commerce solution, and you can avail it as a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) product.

The product works wonders for people who don't have in-depth web design training, but for those of you who do, you can tweak the HTML and CSS of your online stores too. The advantage to BigCommerce is that it is an all-in-one solution, with no further need to purchase hosts or themes. You can integrate a lot of apps from within the BigCommerce Ecosystem, which will offer you a variety of additional features.

BigCommerce also works well for businesses at different scales, so whether you're a small business or a Toyota, you will be right at home with BigCommerce.

Some of the best ways to leverage your BigCommerce experience are as follows:

[Integrations](#)

The beauty of BigCommerce is that allows you to integrate your webstore with other social channels and run your sales from that website as well. You can build your website and sync it with Facebook, and you can sell through their website as well. This very functionality is also available for eBay and Google Shopping, and in some cases, Amazon as well. Along with this, BigCommerce also allows you the option to integrate your store with product comparison sites such as [Shopzilla](#), [BizRate](#), [PriceGrabber](#) and more.

This drives up both your sales and traffic with just a one-time effort, which most other platforms do not offer. You can even add a Facebook Like button to your page!

[BigCommerce SEO](#)

BigCommerce has solid SEO capacities, which make it ideal for you to get your products out into the public eye in no time. For each product or product category, you can customise tags, title tags, meta-descriptions and even the URLs. For the advanced user's needs, features such as 301 Redirection and Sitemaps are also offered. These tools ensure that your webstore shows up organically in as many searches relevant to your category as possible, thus bringing you more views every day.

[Review Functionality](#)

One important features of BigCommerce is that it provides an in-built feature for users to review products, while a lot of other e-commerce hosting requires you to work with third party apps to add review functionality.

Users, after they confirm delivery of the product, can leave product reviews on your site. You can read about how to activate this reviews from BigCommerce's support page [here](#).

In the premium plans, you can activate Google Customer Reviews. This lets you collate reviews of your products, and post purchase, it will prompt all users to publish their reviews on Google, if they so wish. The ability to read reviews is a huge positive decision-making force for a lot of e-shoppers, and this is a feature you don't want to miss out on.

Content & E-Mail Marketing

Being a plug-in with WordPress, it is no surprise that BigCommerce comes with a built-in blog. If you have an inbound marketing strategy – if you don't, what are you even doing? – you know how important content is, when reaching out to customers. We have also discussed the importance of content in another section of this Guide.

Along with this blog feature, BigCommerce also allows you to harness the strength of several e-newsletter services, sending out regular content and product recommendations to your customers, making sure that they make many repeat trips to your store. It also has an abandoned cart saver tool, which sends mails to customers who have given up on their choices at the last minute, thus marketing products that are need just that one last push.

Cost

While BigCommerce may seem a bit pricey when compared to other similar platforms, their packages offer an all-inclusive price which allows you to plan for all your services in one go. They offer four plans wherein you can choose what suits your business needs the best. However, do keep in mind that each plan comes with an annual sales limit, and the bigger your business becomes, the more you pay. Each rise comes with an added set of features, so you need to plan so as to ensure that the hike is worth your buck.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR WOOCOMMERCE

One of the more common choices when it comes to choosing a host platform, WooCommerce has become increasingly popular over the years. With a reach across 58 countries, WooCommerce is behind over 28% of all the e-commerce websites all over the world, and they clock in at over 49 Million downloads!

The major advantage of using WooCommerce is that is completely open-source and therefore you can customise every single element on your website. This gives you more freedom than other hosting portals, because the control of every aspect of your online storefront lies in your hands.

It is run using an easy-to-use content management system, WordPress, and hence the lack of coding knowledge will not hold you back from setting up a successful e-commerce website. It is important to note that though the WooCommerce plug-in is free, and there are a host of features, along with over 400 useful extensions, and other plug-ins, not all of them are free. Depending on the requirements of your WooCommerce store, your website budget may vary significantly. It is a smart move to decide on your current and future feature requirements to allocate a budget accordingly.

Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of your WooCommerce experience:

[Speed and Efficiency](#)

No one likes a website that lags or takes forever to load images of the products on sale. Speed and clear management always makes for a better user-experience. [Smart](#)

[Manager for WooCommerce & WPeC](#) is a recommended plug-in that makes for a fast website, with efficient database management too, by harnessing the power of spreadsheets. It helps you view and manage product variation, with the freedom to add or delete multiple products at once. It gives you detailed page-views for products, sales and customers, and works at lightning speed!

[Google Product Feed](#)

Google Shopping is Google's marketplace of sorts to find and compare products. It is powered by Google AdWords and Google Merchant Center. If you want your website products to show up on Google searches for relevant search terms, WooCommerce provides an easy way to do that through its extension – Google Product Feed.

[Google Product Feed](#) is a WooCommerce extension that can generate an

automated feed of the products

sold on your website. This

extension requires you to have

an account on [Google](#)

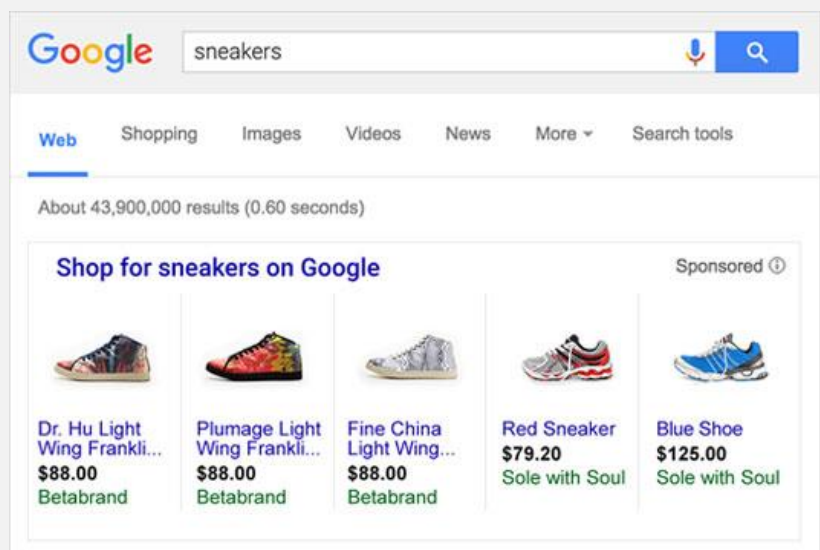
[Merchant Center](#), but nothing

else.

Through this process of setting

up the product feed, you will be generating a lot of direct traffic from Google

searches as your products appear at the top of the page for the right searches.



[Yoast SEO/Yoast WooCommerce SEO](#)

Anyone who wishes to make a name for themselves online, knows that Search Engine Optimisation is an essential building block on your way, generating more traffic and sales for you on an everyday basis. [Yoast SEO](#) is WordPress SEO plug-in since 2008.

Yoast has proved its dominance as the best SEO with WordPress, and it works well with WooCommerce sites too, to improve their SEO. Beyond the Yoast SEO plug-in though, Yoast also came up with a specialized plug-in for WooCommerce called [Yoast WordPress SEO](#). Yoast WordPress SEO greatly improves sharing experience for social media posts on Pinterest by making Pinterest posts appear as product pins that will be considered Rich Pins. The WooCommerce SEO plug-in organizes the sitemap perfectly to exclude irrelevant pointers, and keep the most relevant ones, thus improving SEO significantly.

[Customisations](#)

As stated earlier, you don't need to be a coder to set up your website.

[WooCommerce Customizer](#) is a great plug-in to make intricate customisations without using PHP. You can create engaging and clear text for buttons, labels, placeholder images and much more. It also allows you to add options such as Add to Cart and Add to Wish Lists. You should also ideally use the [WooCommerce Menu Cart](#) to add the cart icon to the website navigation. This will make it easier for a user to shop across different section and keep a tab of their purchases.

ABOUT US

Hi everyone!

Thank you so much for reading our E-Commerce Marketing Guide. We hope that this document has provided you with new and relevant insights and has helped you in some or the other way.

We would like to take this moment to talk a little about ourselves.

We are [DataOne Innovation Labs](#). DataOne is a Business Solutions organization with an aim to build disruptive data analytics solutions to deliver pertinent business intelligence. We started out in 2016, developing customized solutions for organization, and now we are developing our first product – [Shopprr](#).

Shopprr is a Customer Science Platform that provides the often-missing holistic customer view to e-commerce platforms and empowers these platforms to reach out to right customers with right product at right time. Shopprr pulls data from your e-commerce platform (Shopify, BigCommerce, WooCommerce, etc.), merges data from different selling channels, and provides Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning powered analytical solutions such as Behavioural Analytics, AI Driven Marketing Campaign, Profiling, and so on.

If you would like to know more, you can reach out to us: hello@shopprr.ai

The logo for Shopprr, featuring the word "shopprr" in a bold, lowercase, blue sans-serif font.