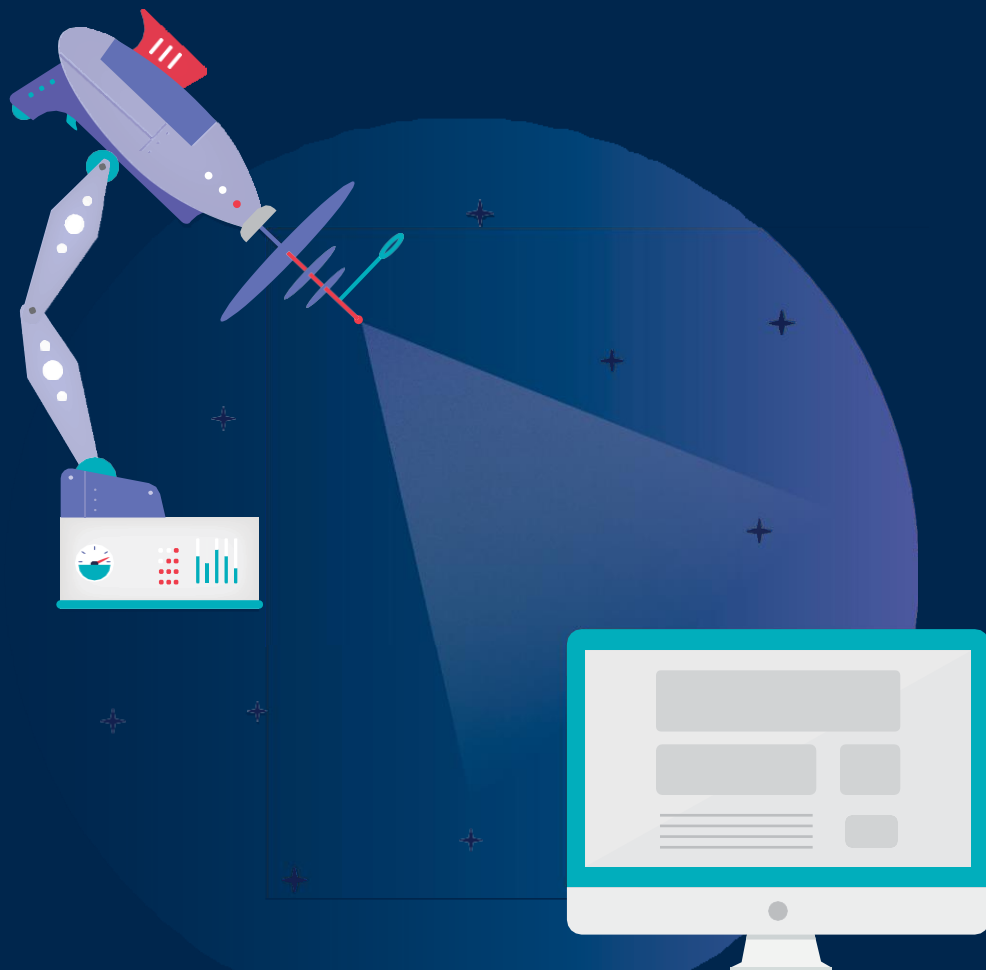


Growth Strategies For Successful E-Commerce Brands



Contents

03 Ceetech 1.0

Growth Strategies for Successful E-commerce Brands

04 Phase 1: Establish a Minimum Viable Product

What is a Minimum Viable Product?

Key Pitfall: Over- Engineering Wastes Time and Money

10 Phase 2: Scale Up Your Business

Growth Strategies for Successful E-commerce Brands

Key Pitfall: Over- Engineering Wastes Time and Money

How do I convert f first time buyers/increase the total number of customers?

How do I get people to buy more? (Increase AOV)

How do I get people to come back and buy again?
(Increase CLTV)

Key Pitfall: Sticking With a Limited Platform Too Long

21 Phase 3: Lead the Industry

How do you truly stand out from your competitors,
instead of just keeping up?

Key Pitfall: Believing That Something Is “Impossible”

27 Moving Forward

Growth Strategies for Successful Ecommerce Brands

How do you grow an ecommerce business without runaway IT costs and endless development wormholes?

WE'VE GOT THE ANSWER.

Digitization has made it possible for all businesses to scale up efficiency, reach, and ROI... if they can avoid the quicksand of over-engineered solutions and underdeveloped ecommerce.

Cee Tech Consultancy have helped hundreds of enterprise businesses use Emerging technology to grow large-scale ecommerce. In this action-oriented white paper, **we distill our core insights into a step-by-step plan for scaling every kind of business, while identifying the common pitfalls which many companies fall into.**

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Build Your Foundation

How to establish your Minimum Viable Product



Grow Your Audience

How to attract new customers to your store



Increase Your ROI

How to use ecommerce features to drive AOV and CLTV



Surpass Your Competition

How to develop industry-leading ecommerce content



P H A S E 1

Establish a Minimum Viable Product

Even if you already have an ecommerce business, it's important to start every discussion of scaling with the foundational concept of the **Minimum Viable Product.**

PHASE 1

What is a Minimum Viable Product?

In an ecommerce context, the MVP refers to your ecommerce website, and the basic working functions of how you present your products, organize your inventory, take & fulfill orders, and process payments.

A rudimentary ecommerce website is essentially a “proof of concept” that an individual business is capable of selling its products online, in addition to or instead of any existing sales channels like physical stores, external distributors, or marketplaces.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE CORE FEATURES THAT ALL ECOMMERCE BUSINESSES NEED IN ORDER TO QUALIFY AS AN MVP.



CORE FEATURES:



The principal usability and functionality of a working ecommerce site.

1 Mobile-Responsive Design

The ecommerce website must respond to the size of the device that it is viewed upon. **Over 50% of all internet traffic is via smartphone or tablet** — fewer are using desktop/laptop to view web pages, and the design of your store should support every type of browsing habit.

Action: Make it easy for your shoppers — Especially new customers — to interact with your brand and products via easy-to-implement responsive templates.

2 Product Catalog

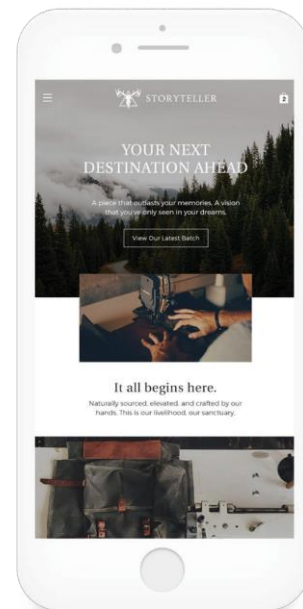
Customers must be able to **easily find and navigate through all of your products**.

Action: Existing traditional businesses which already have thousands of products should begin online sales with a somewhat narrow scope. To prove that you have a viable on-line business model, launch your storefront with a minimal number of products which are easy to shop & search.

3 Basket

Your site must employ a virtual shopping cart which **allows users to add and save multiple items for purchase during their shopping experience**.

Action: Implement a simple-to-use cart page wherein customers can add products, adjust quantities, and then complete transactions for multiple items at once.



4 Shipping Calculation

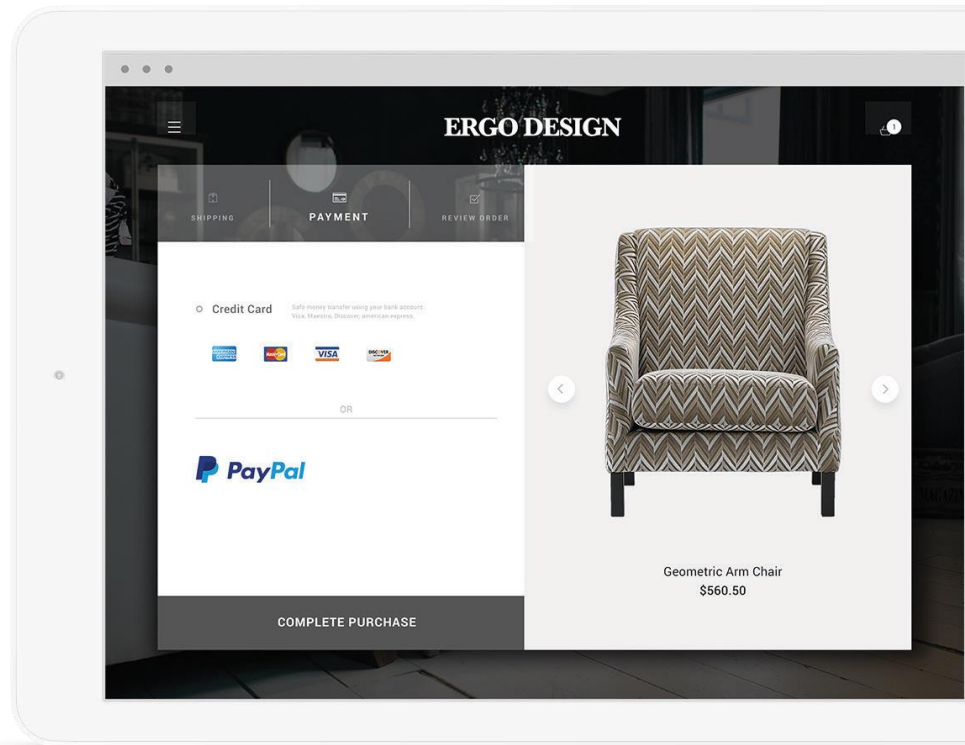
You must **provide accurate shipping estimates** for every order which reflect product size/amount, destination, and customer preferences.

Action: Implement real-time integration with a provider such as USPS ® or FedEx ® to provide an exact total for actual shipping costs at the time of checkout, including flat rates and free shipping offers. This conversion driver also allows businesses to better calculate overall product pricing for Max profitability.

5 Secure Checkout

Customers should be given a range of safe payment options **via major payment gateways, such as PayPal, ApplePay, or traditional credit card purchase.**

Action: Use a payment provider which protects your customers' data, to prevent liability against fraud or other issues. Trust and credibility symbols like SSL certificates can bolster customer confidence in making purchases from your site.



KEY - PITFALL

—

Over-Engineering Wastes Time and Money

A very common hazard for new ecommerce businesses is over-engineering web stores and workflows prematurely.

Ambitious store owners attempt to build out “dream versions” of their total online business before audience size, sales volume, or scale of operations have adequately developed — leading to expensive false starts, failed implementations, and abandoned builds.

Q: Is \$250,000 too much to spend on launching a new ecommerce site?

A: It is if you are over-ambitious and unprepared, before you have a proof of concept.

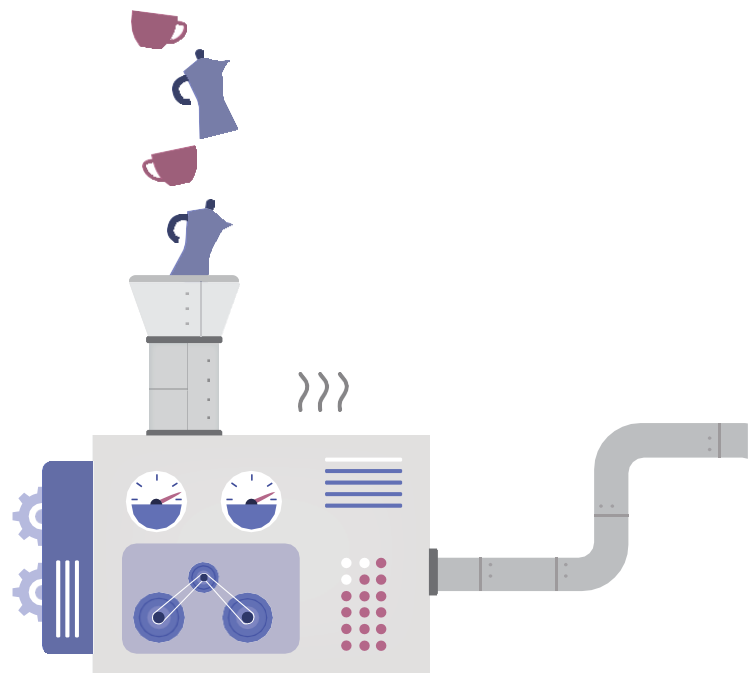
For your first ecommerce store, are you trying to accommodate...?

- > *Too many product lines*
- > *Too many divisions*
- > *Multiple micro-sites*
- > *Design, development, agency, and IT man-hours overkill*

Make sure you are taking a pragmatic approach to growing your business. **If you are building a new ecommerce Solution, start with a simple and effective Minimum Viable Product model, then scale over time.**



Action: A quick-to-market theme-based store as a foundation/proof of concept is a simple way to get a footing in online sales, building confidence in processes, software, and partners.



P H A S E 2

Scaling Up

Once you have established a viable ecommerce storefront on your own URL, with basic product catalog organization, user-friendly checkout, and safe payments, you've got the basis for adding traffic and revenue.

PHASE 2

Action plan for growing audience and revenue.

You can meet and exceed your new sales initiatives if you remember one thing: the growth of your business relies upon how you interact with your customer.

HERE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PRACTICAL QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS DURING THIS GROWTH PHASE:



How do I drive more traffic to my site?



**How do I convert first time buyers/
Increase total number of customers?**



**How do I get people to buy more?
(Increase AOV)**



How do I get people to come back and buy again? (Increase CLTV)

PHASE 2

How do I drive more traffic to my site?

“Traffic” refers simply to the number of people who visit your website.

For many businesses, designing and launching an ecommerce site gets the bulk of attention and resources. However, unless you take specific, focused steps to invite engagement once the site is live, you will have a hard time growing your audience in a highly competitive economy.

START BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER, BUILDING YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY AROUND WHO YOUR TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC IS AND HOW THEY COMMUNICATE.



TYPES OF MEDIA

Traditional Media

Billboards, Newspapers, Magazines, Direct Mail



Organic Digital Media

Organic Traffic, SEO, Social Media



Paid Digital Media

Google AdWords, Facebook Ads



Digital Media 2.0

Influencer Advertising, Podcast Sponsorships



1 **Traditional Media:** Billboards, Newspapers, Magazines, Direct Mail

“Physical” advertising may sound Old-fashioned, however it’s still very Effective for reaching broad audiences.

Action: Place your URL prominently on all conventional media to invite traffic to your store.

2 **Organic Digital Media:** Organic Traffic, SEO, Social Media Direct Mail

Natural traffic drawn by great content on your site or social media doesn’t require any ad spend, but it does take time to develop.

Action: Nurture organic interest with SEO best practices on-site and entertaining, informative, hash-tagged content on

3 **Paid Digital Media:** Google AdWords, Facebook Ads

Paid ads allow your business to deliver highly targeted content to specific audiences who may be interested in your products. This is a common area for overspending with little return, so budget cautiously.

Action: Target your spend to the most receptive groups - results (for better or worse) will tend to appear quickly.

4 **Digital Media 2.0:** Influencer Advertising, Podcast Sponsorships

Sponsored content within another content producer’s blog, podcast, or Instagram are outstanding niche-specific tools for reaching the right audience.

Action: Influencer content such as guest blogs and advertorials are a big and growing market for every business size.

PHASE 2

How do I convert first time buyers/increase the total number of customers?

Increase your customer base by applying these classic incentives to a new digital audience.

1 Offer Discounts

There is no greater stimulus to conversions than discounts and sales. When it comes to first time buyers, a “welcome” enticement such as a percentage discount or 2 for 1 offer can be the deciding factor which convinces a customer to convert on your site vs. your competition.

Action: If you don't have a natural reason to run a sale promotion on your products, invent one. **Seasonal/holiday discounts, clearance sales, new inventory sales, and discounts in exchange for social media participation** are all excellent tools for stoking desire and inspiring a purchase.

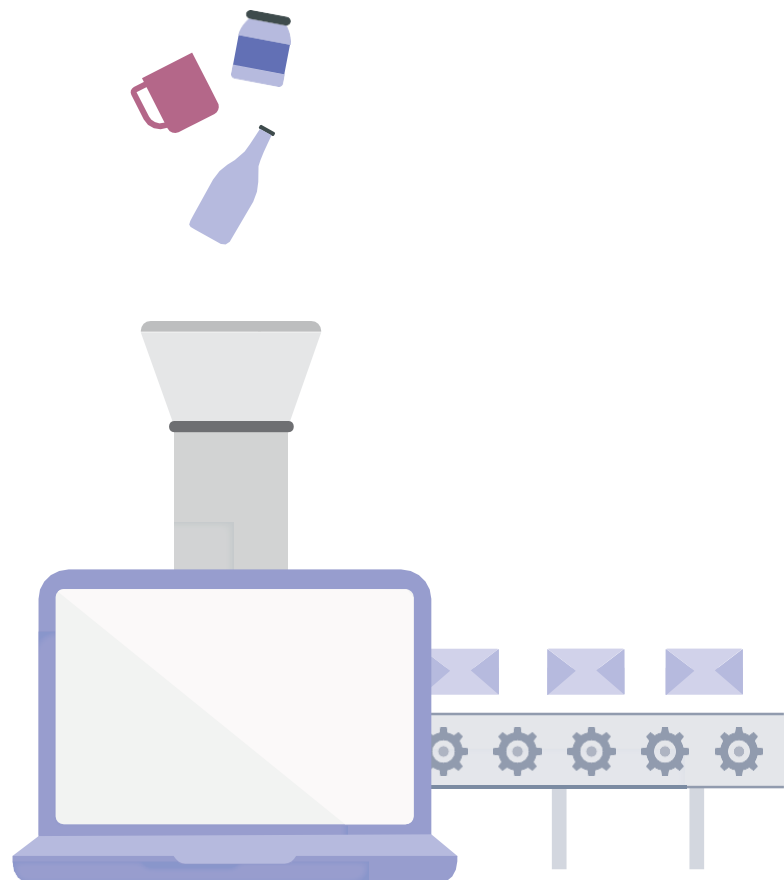


2 Attract Email Subscribers Before Selling

Create an opt-in email newsletter and then invite your site visitors to join. Many businesses offer a 10 or 15% coupon off of purchase in exchange for a user's email address. **Other methods for gathering subscribers include pop-up banners gating entry to the site, sweepstakes, or opt-in account creation at the time of checkout.**

Action: As your list of subscribers grows, your ability to market inexpensively to a highly interested audience increases.

Segment your list based upon purchase history, product preferences, or geography, so you can advertise year-round with relevant content.



PHASE 2

How do I get people to buy more? (Increase AOV)

Average Order Value (AOV) is a common metric which businesses use to measure the effectiveness of their ecommerce content and maintain profitability.

If you can increase AOV, your net acquisition costs drop for each customer. These simple techniques show how the power of (relevant) suggestion can encourage customers to increase the value of every order.

1 Recommended Products

Thoughtfully pair related products based upon browsing history or add-to-carts for each customer. By recommending products that share similar attributes to items your customer has already browsed, you provide a faster, more relevant, and more intuitive shopping experience.

Action: Make additional products easy to add with unique visual cues as a product page side-bar.

2 Product Bundles

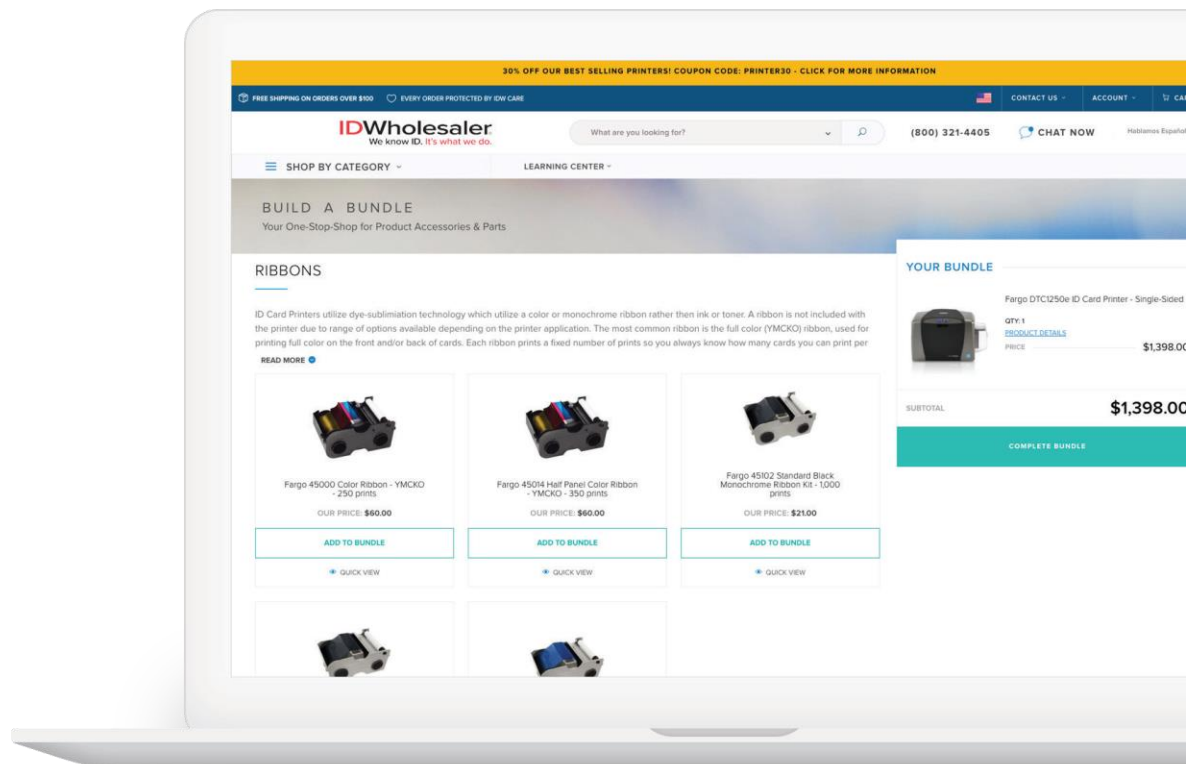
Bundle builders allow customers to self-assemble groupings of components, accessories, and add-ons to an order.

Action: Custom bundling tools with easy changes for quantity, size, color, etc. provide a more holistic solution for the customer by suggesting essential elements that make the product more usable and effective, in the same way that an in-store salesman might guide the shopping experience.

3 Strategic Upsell

Once your customer has items in the shopping cart, encourage them to add items to their order at the time of the transaction, with visual suggestions for accessories and style variations right on the cart page.

Action: Tag every product with common style and use attributes, then use these groupings to automatically pull SKUs for the upsell module within your ecommerce platform's checkout page.



PHASE 2

How do I get people to come back and buy again? (Increase CLTV)

You want your customers to return to the store again and again to buy more products. This generates brand loyalty, creates an important feedback loop with your business' audience, and lowers overall customer acquisition costs per customer.

What is CLTV? Customer Lifetime Value (CLTV or CLV) is the measure of how much revenue each customer will contribute over the entirety of their relationship with your brand.

CLTV can be generally calculated by multiplying average order value (AOV) by average purchase frequency.

The higher the CLTV per customer, the more money you can afford to spend on acquisition at the beginning of each new customer relationship.

HERE ARE THREE PRACTICAL METHODS TO RAISE EACH CUSTOMER'S NUMBER OF ORDERS OVER TIME.

TYPES OF MEDIA

Email Nurturing

Special Targeted Discounts, and more



Promotions

Holidays, Closeouts, Rewards, and more



Subscriptions

Credit Card or other Billing methods and more



KEY - P I T F A L L

—

Sticking with a Limited Platform Too Long

Ironically, the ecommerce platform itself is often the central limiting factor for businesses in the process of scaling up.

With a number of competing platforms to choose from, frequently with similar marketing claims, figuring out which ecommerce system is fine-tuned to your custom business needs is time-consuming and confusing.

Many businesses outgrow their initial solution and are bluntly informed by their agency or IT department that their current platform “just won’t do” whichever advanced feature is required for scaling. **Important enterprise features like category faceting, price groups, or product bundlers suddenly require a labyrinth of plug-ins or unreasonable coding time to achieve. The result: a very costly crisis.**

The perils of “cookie cutter” ecommerce: poor integration.

Entry level ecommerce platforms are internationally limited in capabilities, so as to offer broad basic functions to the widest range of inexperienced businesses. However, these

beginner platforms do not integrate well with the other essential back-end software you will grow into using, such as an ERP, OMS, or CRM system.

“I know my costs, I know my AOV, I know my traffic, and I’m ready to ratchet up the volume — can my old platform support it?”

Action: Scale your technology fast enough to keep up with demand. Once you’ve proven your concept with the MVP, don’t let limitations of an entry-level ecommerce platform inhibit your growth. Switch to a platform that can scale with your business, to avoid expensive workarounds and advanced feature dead-ends.

P H A S E 3

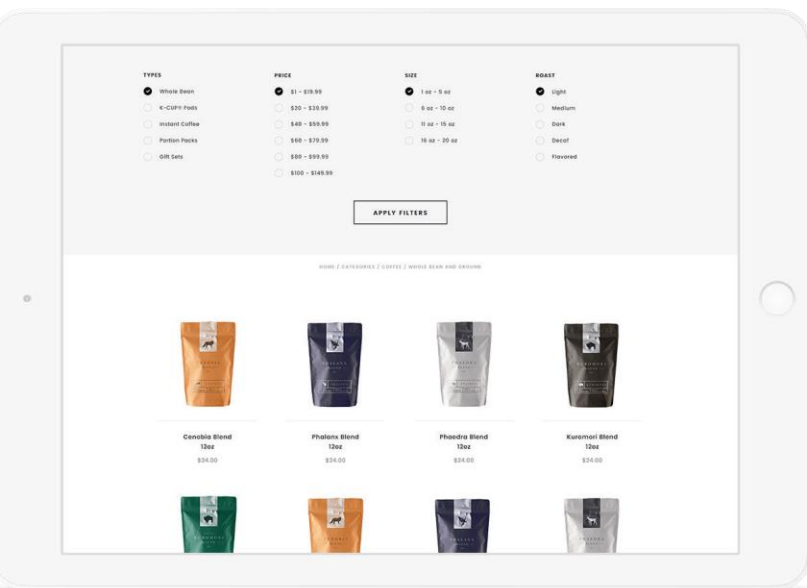
Lead the Industry

Now that you have built a strong foundation and started to employ scaling techniques, it is the right time to add products and categories, increasing the complexity of your ecommerce business.

PHASE 3

How do you truly stand out from your competitors, instead of just keeping up?

You want your customers to see your business as the authority in your industry. This applies to aesthetic excellence, product quality/selection, and total caliber of shopping experience with your brand.



HERE ARE THE TWO PRIME FACETS OF AN INDUSTRY-LEADING ECOMMERCE BRAND:

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Custom Site Features

Product builders/configurators, bundling & visualizers



Industry Leading Content

Blogs, tips sections, videos, learning centers, etc.



1 Custom Site Features

Many companies can get a functioning website launched, but not many offer a highly unique user experience that is customized to the type of product and the way that customers like to shop for it.

Product builders/configurators — offer product-specific tools which allow customers to understand & select specs, setting your brand apart from competitors as a detail-oriented authority.

Bundling — prompt the assembling of related products or product components into a custom order to be hand-built at the time of fulfillment.

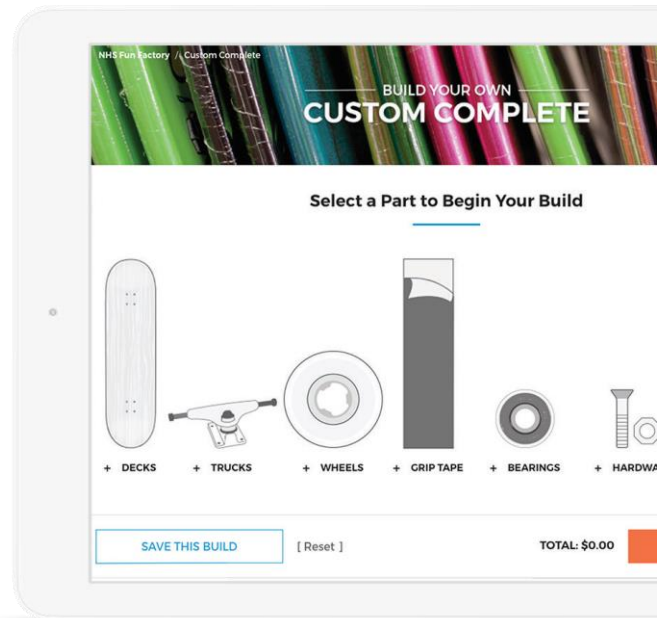
Visualizers — allow the customer to experience your products in a real-world setting, or show them what a personalized, custom order will look like before it's manufactured.

You can't get these features in cookie cutter or open source platforms, nor in marketplaces. Mega-marketplaces like Amazon are

Simply not able to offer a highly specialized degree of product configuration, bundling of elements, or visualization.

Individual businesses know their customers, know their demographic, and can help customers navigate the shopping experience in a compelling and truly relevant way.

Action: Advanced ecommerce platforms can support purpose-built features which offer these kinds of unique and effective sales tools.



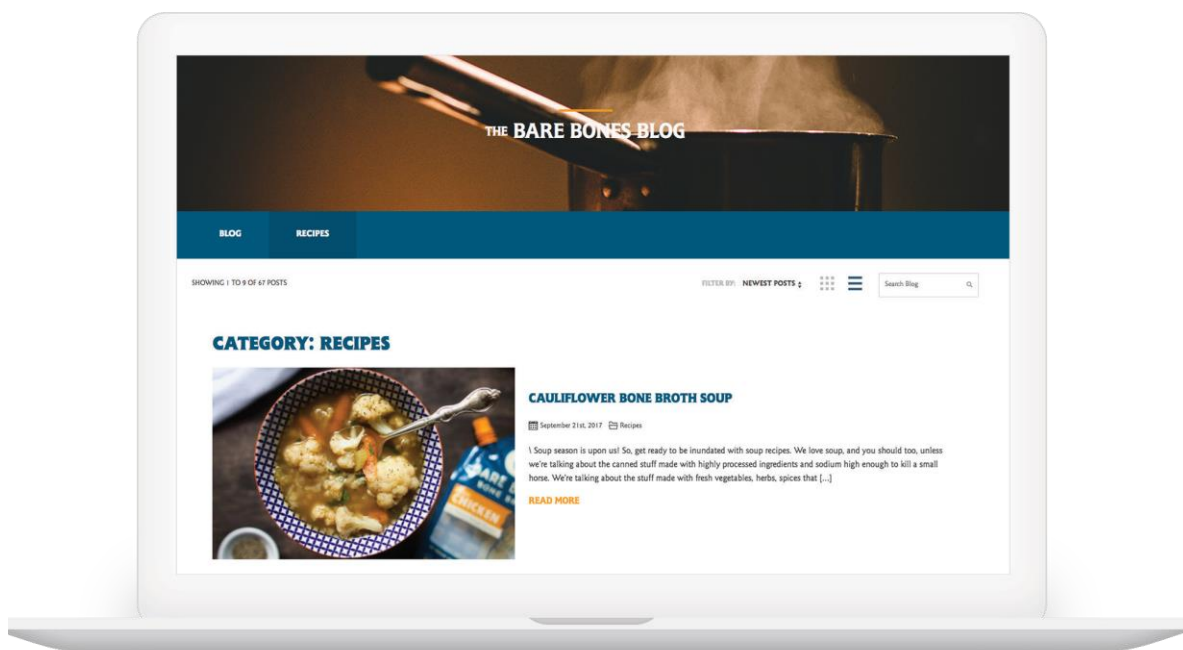
2 Industry Leading Content

Sharing copy and imagery which helps provide a context/usage ideas for your products expands the customer's concept of why they need to incorporate your brand into their lifestyle. **Bold messaging, an assured brand voice, and thoughtfully presented material are essential for competing in a crowded market.**

Good content works on-site, but also serves the dual purpose of attracting traffic via search engines. While SEO best practices are important, always prioritize delivering the best possible high-quality information

across **blogs, tips sections, videos, learning centers, etc.** This ensures results that please Google's algorithms as well as your shoppers' needs.

Action: Use content to bring both new and established audiences to your site, even when they are not ready to purchase today. **The trust and loyalty inspired by excellent content will be an evergreen throughout each customer's journey with your brand.**



KEY - P I T F A L L

—

**Believing that Something
is “Impossible”**

Whether due to internal fears, stagnation/ routine, or the pressures of maintaining the status quo, many businesses self-limit themselves.

Don't be intimidated with the perceived cost and effort involved in re-platforming or building a new site. The rewards for thoughtful, strategic investments always outweigh the costs in the long run.

Do you have a product that is difficult to demonstrate online?

Does your customer have finely-honed tastes and habits which are not adequately served by competing stores?

These are fantastic challenges which position your business to break free from the pack. Crafting innovative solutions for your customer and business as an industry leader can be an incredibly creative component of the adventure of growing a business.



Action: Build innovative new shopping experiences with rock-solid structural integrity — so every new, immersive site element is fully integrated with the mechanics of your site, such as pricing/ fulfillment, etc.

Once you understand you're MVP and start employing excellent scaling practices, leading with authority is where all the fun is — not to mention the potential for dramatic and impactful growth.

Moving Forward

There are no limits for growing businesses. Today, we have the tools and techniques to scale sustainably, by automating key systems and interacting with our audiences in new and more relevant ways. All it takes is imagination and the will to grow.

1 Define Your Phase: MVP, Scaling, or Leading with Authority



First, correctly identify which stage of growth your business is currently at. Do you still need to establish a proof of concept for your e-business? Are you ready to add revenue and grow your audience? Are you positioned to deliver industry-shaping content?

2 Create New Growth Ideas



Make an action plan relative to your current phase, with clear goals and metric benchmarks for success. Take advantage of the latest ecommerce platform features to directly target increases in traffic, AOV, and CLTV.

3 Keep Growing



When you reach the natural growth limit of an existing product line or niche that may be the time to expand into all new categories and reach all new customers.

**KEEP STRIVING TO MOVE FORWARD,
AND LOOK FOR PEERS AND PARTNERS
WHO SHARE YOUR CONFIDENT,
EXPANSIVE VISION FOR THE FUTURE.**

Thank you for exploring ecommerce scaling strategies with us.

For more detailed information and a custom tour of how Ceetech can help you expand the scope of your e-commerce business, please contact us today:

[Talk To A Solutions Architect](#)