

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

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Volume 6 | Issue 6

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2023

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# E-Commerce Trends & Strategies

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## ABSTRACT

*The rise of e-commerce, driven by increased technology reliance, offers several benefits such as accessibility, global reach, cost-efficiency, market expansion, and sustainability. It is crucial for businesses, customers, and society as it reduces geographical barriers. Emerging trends in e-commerce include mobile commerce, live stream shopping, user-generated content, social commerce, omnichannel customer experience, voice shopping, flexible payments, and inflation impact. To succeed, businesses need strategies like learning from previous campaigns, personalizing online shopping experiences, proactive engagement, strategic up-selling, gamifying seasonal promotions, split/bucket testing, interactive ads, re-targeting, sales-focused support, automated FAQs, prioritizing a mobile-first approach, and gathering meaningful data. In India, e-commerce is acquiring momentum as technology adoption evolves, driving economic growth and market development. The future of e-commerce depends on adaptability to technological advancements and businesses' ability to use data for informed decision-making.*

**Keywords:** E-commerce, gamifying, Market Expansion, Sustainability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the current era due to people's increased reliance on technology, many facets of human life and endeavors have undergone a swift and severe transformation in the last few years. These modifications might endure and experience new modifications in the future.

Numerous definitions of "online commerce" or "e-commerce" exist, all of which roughly convey the same meaning.

### (A) Meaning & definitions

The word "E-business" is currently applicable in a variety of settings. First off, e-business could be a component of an enterprise management plan that uses tools to boost an organization's competitiveness. In this situation, businesses might carry out a portion of their operations online or employ technology to enhance internal or external information flow. Second, e-business is a business model where a company conducts most of its operations online and keeps traditional

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customer service and "physical" market presence to a minimum.

***“The phrase "e-business" refers to a manner of managing a business that uses IT communication, mostly Internet applications.”***

A business management strategy utilizing IT communication, mostly Internet applications is referred to do "e-business." Sending papers, exchanging data with a manufacturer, distributor, and business partner, gaining new clients, capturing markets, and holding teleconferences. Everything that helps in minimizing the time with the help of technology and the internet comes under e-business. Consumers also like to save time that’s why e-commerce is growing very rapidly. As consumers use online paths for shopping Flipkart, Amazon, eBay, and Myntra are those applications that are fulfilling the needs of customers with the help of e-business. Chaffey, D. (2007) Pandey, U. S., & Shukla, S. (2007)

- E-commerce is the delivery of information, products, services, or payments by telephone, computer, or other automated media.
- E-commerce is the use of the internet and the web to conduct business transactions and exchange information among organizations and individuals. This includes acts like purchasing and reselling goods, offering services, and managing transactions electronically.
- E-commerce involves buying and selling products or services using the internet and also the transfer of money and data to execute these transactions.

## **II. SIGNIFICANCE OF E-COMMERCE**

- **Accessibility:** It gives customers an easy way to get products and services from anywhere, at any time. This increases accessibility.
- **Global Reach:** E-commerce enables companies to reach a global audience, thereby extending the reach of their clientele beyond national borders.
- **Cost-Efficiency:** Operating a business online can be an appealing alternative because it frequently has cheaper overhead costs than operating a physical store.
- **Greater Rivalry:** As a result of greater rivalry brought on by e-commerce, businesses are now required to innovate and enhance their goods and services.
- **Market Expansion:** Through e-commerce platforms, small enterprises can enter new markets and compete with larger ones.
- **Reduced Geographical Barriers:** By eliminating the requirement for physical

storefronts, businesses are free to concentrate on providing high-quality products and excellent customer service.

- **Lower Entry Barriers:** Compared to opening a traditional brick-and-mortar store, starting an e-commerce firm is frequently easier and less expensive.
- **Sustainability:** E-commerce can lessen the environmental impact of traditional retail, including travel and operating physical stores. Saurabh, P. U. & S. (2007).

### III. BENEFITS OF E-COMMERCE FOR ENTERPRISES, CUSTOMERS & SOCIETY

Enterprises	Customers	Society
Cheaper than traditional business, and reduces time for any business organization with the customer.	E-commerce enables customers to engage with one another, share ideas, and contrast experiences.	E-commerce makes it possible for more people to work from home and travel less for shopping, which reduces traffic and air pollution.
E-commerce broadens the market to a national and global scale	Customers can conduct business via e-commerce from practically anywhere, 24 hours a day, throughout the year.	Through e-commerce, people in remote areas can make use of goods and services that are otherwise unavailable to them. This includes chances to pursue careers and graduate from college.
Paper-based information creation, processing, distribution, storage, and retrieval costs are reduced by e-commerce.	E-commerce gives buyers additional options because they may choose from a wide variety of products and sellers.	E-commerce makes it possible to supply public services, such as health care, education, and the provision of social services by the government, at a lower cost or with higher quality.
The capacity to establish highly specialized businesses.	E-commerce sometimes enables speedy delivery, particularly for digitized goods.	The start-up expenses related to starting the business are significantly reduced by e-commerce. Unlike building or renting a real retail location, all need for an online store is a functioning website or social

		network.
E-commerce shortens the time between capital expenditure and the reception of goods and services.	Instead of taking days or weeks to get information, the customer can do it in a matter of seconds.	E-commerce makes it possible for consumers to access the goods and services they require at any time, which improves society's productivity and efficiency.
E-commerce projects lead to the reengineering of company processes.	E-commerce encourages competition, resulting in significant reductions.	Small businesses can reach a wider audience of clients through e-commerce than they can with a physical store. Even selling to customers outside of the country or the Caribbean can be accomplished through e-commerce.

Kalakota, R., & Whinston, A. B. (1997) (Source- <https://mailchimp.com/resources/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-ecommerce/>)

#### IV. TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES WITH E-COMMERCE

- One of the drawbacks of electronic commerce is the absence of system security, dependability, standards, and communication protocols.
- The communications bandwidth is insufficient.
- The methods used to design software are evolving quickly.
- It can be challenging to combine software and the internet with some databases for applications that are already in use.
- Some software for electronic commerce may not work without a certain network or may not work with certain operating systems or other parts.

#### V. TRENDS IN E-COMMERCE

E-commerce is developing swiftly, and it's crucial to keep up with the most recent trends in online shopping to increase sales and conversion rates over time. In today's society, a lot is happening in the e-commerce industry. Society is depending moreover on digital platforms, with people always on their phones, and at the same time, there is a recurrence in physical stores now that COVID is finally kind of over. In this section, the researchers share the biggest e-

commerce trends for 2023 and what the future of retail looks like. (Attar et al., 2022) (Miljenović & Beriša, 2022)

### **(A) Mobile Commerce**

Mobile shopping has become the new norm in today's era, with people carrying their phones 24/7, and people are becoming more and more accustomed to shopping from their phones. With the increasing time mobile retail sales are growing very fast in India. Here are a few ways can prepare and take advantage of this trend.

#### ***How to prepare for mobile commerce in today's era:***

- Web Design and User Experience (UX):

Ensure that any interaction with the brand is easy and delightful on mobile. This includes website design and email design. To go above and beyond, create an awesome and super easy app.

- Checkout Process:

Provide a quick checkout option for mobile shoppers. Make it simple to fill the cart and pay with just one click.

- Push Notifications:

If an app is available, don't forget about push notifications. It's a very easy way to keep customers engaged and remind them about the brand. For example, send them a special offer or remind them about an abandoned cart.

### **(B) Live stream shopping**

Livestream shopping is a form of online buying in which customers can see real-time videos of products being used and then make purchases. According to Forbes, livestream shopping is about to explode. For those seeking great ideas for creating and promoting livestream shopping, it's worth noting beauty brands. Influencers and brands alike stream makeup tutorials, hair design tips, skincare routines, and much more. However, livestream shopping is not just for beauty brands; other categories that have found success with this channel include fashion and apparel, fresh food, electronics, and home decor. Here are some tech platforms that make livestream shopping possible. Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Amazon Live for selling on Amazon. There are many others, such as Shopsy, ShipShops, PopShop Live, and Network.

**(C) Users are the new content creators**

Consumers are embracing user-generated content. Most Indian consumers spend more time watching user-generated video content online than they do watching TV shows and movies. UGC (User-generated content) has become a significant time filler, as we all find the stream of algorithm-fueled personalized videos irresistible. Remember, the marketer needs to be where their audience is, knowing that the audience is already watching reels and short videos. Ways to integrate the brand into those-

**Use UGC for the brand:**

- Do it yourself
- Work with influencers
- Incentivize customers

**(D) Social commerce**

It is similar to, but different from what we have been talking about so far. It is capitalized with the same trend. People spend more and more time on their phones and social media. Social commerce is when users can buy products they see on social media without leaving the app. For example, if they liked a recent post on Instagram, they're able to buy it and complete the checkout right then and there on Instagram.

- Instagram launched the shopping tab as a way for its users to explore new products.
- Facebook pushes retailers to use its built-in storefront.
- Pinterest uses buyable pins to promote items for sale.

If a brand is already growing on the social media channels mentioned above, it is to be assured that investing in building of storefront on their platforms. Modern shoppers love convenience, and if they can buy something during their mid-afternoon scroll, they will.

**(E) Omnichannel customer experience**

Omni-channel, another significant e-commerce trend, is when a single brand has many potential touch-points with consumers, including in-store interactions, website visits, mobile shopping, social shopping, and phone calls. A customer might encounter the brand through all these channels before making a purchase. Their experience needs to be consistent throughout, yet tailored to the nuances of each outlet. That's what omnichannel retail is all about.

Most shoppers expect to be able to easily transition between platforms and devices when making a purchase, and it's their job to make that possible. So, make sure to spend time ensuring

a consistent user experience across all channels where the brand is present.

### **(F) Voice shopping**

"Hey Siri, show me the latest sneaker collection from Adidas." A larger number of people interact with voice-activated digital assistants every day. As younger consumers continue to play a more significant role in making purchasing decisions, voice commerce will only grow. Making orders as simple as telling a smart speaker what they want eliminates the friction of typing, scrolling, comparing, choosing, and adding to the cart. Simply ask, and shall receive. As it's so convenient, voice commerce is expected to exceed in upcoming years. It's a great chance to seize this opportunity.

### **(G) Flexible payments**

The biggest reason people abandon shopping carts is the difficult checkout process. Specifically, if it's too complicated for shoppers to make a payment, they won't go through the trouble, and they will simply find a store where buying is easy. Sometimes, pulling out the card and typing the number is too challenging. Therefore, offering various convenient payment options is a significant trend now.

### **Top payment option in 2023-**

- Mobile wallets
- Making a payment directly in the social media app
- Buy now and pay later solutions like Amazon Pay Later and Flipkart Pay Later

### **(H) The effect of inflation**

"The pandemic year has been significant, to say the least, and one thing we all shared was soaring inflation, which is likely to have a lasting impact into 2023. Budgets are tight, and shoppers are mindful of their purchases. How can they mitigate consumer anxieties? One way is by offering flexible return policies and budget-friendly options.

### **(I) Ease of return policy**

Do they think a flexible return policy is bad for business? If so, think again. Yes, returns can be costly, but shoppers will return products regardless of whether they make it easy. A strict or complicated process won't stop them from returning their products, but it will stop them from returning them.

Generally, shoppers check the return policy before buying online, meaning a bad policy may keep them from buying at all. The maximum number of customers will purchase from a brand



again if their return policy is easy.

Another good way to serve shoppers with tight budgets is to add budget-friendly options. They can consider creating bundles of products and selling them at a discount, or even launch a new product line that is more budget-friendly.

### **(J) AR/VR**

Technologies like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) can be leveraged to create engaging shopping experiences. While VR provides an entirely artificial experience, AR enables users to overlay digital information onto the actual world. Although AR/VR is still in its infancy, this technology has the power to completely transform the e-commerce industry.

## **VI. STRATEGIES OF E-COMMERCE (Rosário & Raimundo, 2021)**

- **Learn from previous campaigns:** This e-commerce strategy involves analyzing the results and performance of previous marketing campaigns to gain insights and lessons. By reviewing past successes and failures, businesses can refine their current strategies and improve their approach.
- **Personalize the online shopping experience:** This e-commerce strategy focuses on tailoring the online shopping journey for individual customers. It involves using customer data and preferences to provide unique and customized shopping experiences, making customers feel valued and more likely to convert.
- **Be proactive in the approach:** Being proactive in e-commerce means actively anticipating and addressing customer needs and market trends before they become apparent. It involves staying ahead of customer demands, engaging with customers to offer solutions, and staying updated on industry trends.
- **Up-sell and cross-sell strategically:** This strategy aims to increase the average order value by promoting related or complementary products to customers. It involves using targeted techniques to strategically encourage customers to purchase additional items alongside their primary choices.
- **Gamify e-commerce seasonal promotion:** Gamification in e-commerce involves adding game-like elements to seasonal marketing promotions. It aims to make marketing efforts more engaging and interactive by incorporating elements such as rewards, challenges, or competition, encouraging customers to participate and make purchases.
- **Optimize the e-commerce offers with A/B testing:** A/B testing is a strategy that

involves creating variations of e-commerce offers or content to test and compare their effectiveness. By comparing different versions with real users, businesses can determine which offers or content perform better, allowing for data-driven optimization.

- **Stand out with interactive ads:** This strategy involves creating advertisements that are engaging and interactive, capturing the audience's attention and encouraging active participation. Interactive ads may include features like quizzes, surveys, or interactive content to make the brand and its products more memorable.
- **Re-target and re-arrange the customers:** This strategy entails re-engaging and re-positioning the existing customer base. It may involve segmenting and reorganizing customer groups for more effective targeting, potentially changing the way of approach and interact with different customer segments.
- **Provide sales-focused support:** This strategy emphasizes providing customer support with a primary focus on driving sales. Customer support agents are trained to assist customers in making purchase decisions, answer product-related inquiries, and guide customers through the buying process.
- **Automate FAQs with bots:** Using chatbot and automated systems to handle frequently asked questions (FAQs). Chatbots provide instant responses to common customer queries, enhancing customer service efficiency and freeing up human agents to handle more complex issues.
- **Think mobile-first:** Thinking "mobile-first" means prioritizing mobile devices as the primary platform for e-commerce strategies. It involves designing websites, apps, and content with a focus on providing an excellent user experience for mobile users, given the increasing prevalence of mobile shopping.
- **Gather meaningful data:** This strategy involves collecting and analyzing data that provides valuable insights for decision-making in e-commerce. Businesses aim to accumulate data that offers actionable intelligence and helps in understanding customer behavior, market trends, and performance metrics. The gathered data informs strategic decisions.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Some of the successful e-commerce strategies that have been reviewed by the researcher based on secondary data are as follows:

- **Learn from last year's campaigns:** Undoubtedly, online shopping has become a

regular practice, especially in the aftermath of the significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The global e-commerce market is on a remarkable trajectory.

This undeniable growth underscores the resilience of businesses, which have managed to thrive in the face of challenging circumstances. Given this backdrop, it's a wise choice to leverage the insights and experiences gained from previous years. Utilizing this knowledge as the foundation for the e-commerce strategy during the peak season will likely lead to even greater success.

- **Personalize the online shopping experience:** Personalizing the online shopping experience is a crucial aspect that is often missing in online sales. Nowadays, a larger number of customers are more inclined to purchase a brand that offers a personalized shopping journey. Just as in a physical store where a salesperson can understand what a customer is looking at and gauge their level of interest, brands should strive to provide similar tailored services online.

This is achievable by combining data on visitor behavior with marketing automation, ensuring that each visitor receives a unique and customized experience that aligns with their position in the purchasing journey.

- **Be proactive in the approach:** Just like selling in-store, online customer service should also be proactive, not reactive. This can be achieved by targeting visitors based on their behavior and actions on the website and accordingly approaching them with relevant information.

**Here's how to achieve this:**

- **Automated Customer Engagement:** Targeting capabilities of marketers to automatically approach website visitors with pop-ups and banners tailored to their specific needs. They can implement this using rule-based workflows or AI targeting, depending on preferences.
- **AI-Powered Assistance:** Harness the power of artificial intelligence to identify potential shoppers, prioritize them, and trigger customized actions to meet their specific requirements. This not only enhances the customer experience but also increases the chances of conversion.
- **Personalized Interaction:** Take the essence of in-person selling and bring it to the online realm through voice and video chat. These tools are invaluable in providing a sales-oriented customer service experience.

By being proactive in the approach, they can provide a more engaging and responsive online

shopping experience, ultimately boosting customer satisfaction and driving sales.

- **Up-sell and cross-sell strategically:** When shoppers have items in their baskets, it presents a valuable opportunity for maximizing sales. Real-time visibility of a shopping cart, combined with a shopper's previous history, opens up various sales and marketing possibilities.

**Here are a few strategies to capitalize on:**

- **Cross-Sell:** As soon as a shopper adds an item to their basket, they can suggest a bundle or package of related items that are frequently purchased together. This can be done through a chat message, enhancing their shopping experience.
- **Up-Sell:** When an item is added to the basket, a pop-up can appear, recommending a newer or premium version of the item at a higher price. This encourages customers to consider an upgraded purchase.
- **Special Offers:** For instance, if a shopper's basket reaches a certain value i.e., closer to the value on which the discount and offers are available the marketers can remind them of exclusive discounts and offers available if they increase their basket's value to that much. This encourages customers to add more items to take advantage of these deals.

*Automate these processes as much as possible, allowing marketers to focus on high-value leads at the right moment and increase their sales effectively.*

- **Gamify e-commerce seasonal promotion:** Believe it or not, today's consumers have a shorter attention span than goldfish. They give brands just about 8 seconds to capture their interest. This means that when preparing the e-commerce strategy for peak seasons, the pressure is on to create campaigns that not only engage but also convert visitors into direct online sales.

Gamifying the online store and crafting interactive, sales-focused campaigns around peak seasons can be the key to achieving the engagement of customer desire. By adding gamification elements, to make the campaigns more interactive, providing that extra nudge to expedite the sales cycle.

The beauty of gamification is that it has the potential to significantly boost conversion rates and increase weekly newsletter subscriptions by up to four times. Moreover, it serves as a fantastic tool to gather more data on the customers. This data can be invaluable for segmenting and

personalizing offerings even further, helping to refine and expand the customer database.

- **Optimize the e-commerce offers with split/bucket testing:** Even with all of the previous data and learnings, marketers can't always expect to hit the nail on the head. Sometimes, the market changes the business goals might evolve, and what worked previously may not be the best solution for the modern era.

That's why split/bucket testing emerges as an indispensable tool, enabling us to gain deeper insights into what resonates with the audience and yield better results. Split/bucket testing isn't limited to email campaigns; it's also a potent method for optimizing the conversion rate of interactions.

Through split/bucket testing, companies have the opportunity to experiment with elements such as pop-ups, live chat, chatbots, or even quizzes and games. It's all about the iterative process of making changes that drive results and improve marketing ROI.

- **Stand out with interactive ads:** For retail businesses, peak sales seasons are among the most competitive times for advertising. To overcome banner blindness and stand out in the crowd, consider promoting the campaigns through paid channels with rich media interactive ads. These ads provide unique experiences, significantly boosting conversion rates.

Interactive ads distinguish themselves from static display ads by encouraging consumers to engage with the content. They often include various forms of media, such as video, images, audio, or animations. Notably, interactive video ads can increase the time consumers spend with the brand's content as compared to non-interactive static ads.

What sets interactive ads apart is their responsiveness to user interactions. They adapt to a user's movements and preferences.

The process of designing and publishing interactive ads becomes effortless, as they seamlessly integrate with advertising platforms like Google Ads. This ensures the brand can captivate the audience and make the most of peak sales seasons.

- **Re-target and re-arrange the customers:** "Re-target and re-arrange the customers" is a strategy that cannot be emphasized enough, echoing the well-known saying "Out of sight, out of mind." In the realm of online sales, capturing a customer's attention in the early stages of their buyer's journey is of paramount importance. An effective method to achieve this is through retargeting relevant content, presenting it to customers on their social media feeds or in search results, based on their prior interactions with the website.

This retargeting process often involves the utilization of specific URLs, which is particularly vital in the retail sector, enabling companies to track specific products or product categories that align with a customer's interests.

- **Provide sales-focused support:** With the surge in website traffic during peak sales seasons, inquiries related to promotions, delivery times, and returns are likely to increase significantly. Equipping the customer service team with the right tools is crucial to ensure the website can handle the rush of the sales season.

The support channels play a vital role at various stages of the customer purchasing journey. As mentioned earlier, they serve as excellent opportunities to not only address customer inquiries but also to enhance the overall shopping experience. Leveraging these touch-points can lead to larger basket sizes, effective up-selling, and cross-selling, ultimately reducing shopping cart abandonment. Consider the example of live chat – when properly automated and targeted, it doesn't just offer customers real-time, proactive support, but it can also contribute to improving conversion rates and maximizing online sales.

Ensuring that the support infrastructure is well-prepared for the increased demand during peak sales seasons is a smart strategy for any e-commerce business. It allows marketers to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction and capitalize on sales opportunities that arise during these periods.

- **Automate FAQs with bots:** Running an online store means the sales are active 24/7. However, it's not feasible for the customer service team to be available around the clock. This is where a dedicated FAQ bot becomes invaluable, offering support outside of the team's working hours, and ensuring customer inquiries are addressed even when the support team is resting.

The implementation of an FAQ bot allows to target visitors in need of assistance and provides them with immediate answers. During regular retail opening hours, FAQ bots also play a crucial role in freeing up the team's time and resources. When setting up the FAQ bot, it's essential to include a variety of e-commerce FAQs that can help potential customers navigate the store and make informed decisions.

These FAQs often pertain to:

- Delivery charges or times
- Accepted payment methods
- Product availability

- Duration and terms of ongoing promotions
- Return and refund policies

*The presence of an FAQ bot serves not only to assist customers but also to educate novice shoppers about the checkout process, reassuring them that it's both safe and secure to make a purchase. This, in turn, contributes to the growth of online sales.*

- **Think mobile-first:** Over the past decade, mobile usage has seen a significant surge, with the share of mobile commerce in the overall e-commerce market expected to increase frequently in the coming years. This growth can be attributed to the rapid adoption of new smart devices and the continuous expansion of screen sizes, which have made online browsing and shopping more convenient.

As a result, an increasing number of customers are turning to their smartphones and tablets for their online shopping needs. A staggering larger number of customers will not return to a store that is not optimized for mobile. This highlights the critical importance of ensuring that the e-commerce website is mobile-friendly.

Failing to optimize the e-commerce site for mobile devices can result in a substantial loss of market share for online retailers. Therefore, it's imperative to prioritize a "mobile-first" approach to cater to the growing number of customers who prefer to shop via their mobile devices.

- **Gather meaningful data:** Data is the lifeblood of e-commerce businesses, akin to the importance of gold in a treasure hunt. It plays a pivotal role in enhancing marketing return on investment and evaluating the effectiveness of peak sales season campaigns. This point cannot be emphasized enough.

From scrutinizing the achievements of previous years, tailoring experiences for customers, and conducting split/bucket tests, to optimizing promotional efforts, data is the common thread weaving through these strategies. However, the value of data hinges on its continual examination across the entire life cycle of the campaigns.

Fortunately, in today's digital landscape, data can be accessed and reviewed in real-time through a wide array of analytical tools, ensuring that e-commerce businesses can make informed decisions and stay agile in their approach. (Zott et al., 2000)

In the Indian economy, e-commerce is a new trend that emerged after the country's economic reforms. The current change in the IT industry has been essential for the growth of e-commerce. Several services are provided to distributors who can benefit from e-commerce and can develop

partnerships with reputable manufacturers and connect their businesses online. Nowadays, buying and selling through devices and the Internet has many advantages, including lower costs, faster comparison shopping, better customer service, information retention, and the growth of the knowledge market. Technology adoption in the e-commerce industry often evolves with market developments.

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