

Your Guide to Selling Online with WooCommerce

These days, retailers can't afford to not sell online. You need to get your products where your customers are, and that's on their screens. But getting into eCommerce is no small feat, and finding the right software to power your store is an important decision.

There are a ton of pre-built solutions that can help you quickly get your online store built, operational and selling products. While they range in price, features offered and overall power, the platform that's right for you will depend on your existing setup, immediate needs and the future you envision for your store.

The [eCommerce experts at Fruition](#) recommend WooCommerce for businesses that are already using WordPress to power their websites and are ready to start selling on their own online marketplace. Learn if, how and why WooCommerce might be the right eCommerce solution for your business.

What is WooCommerce?

WooCommerce is a free, open-source eCommerce solution that's built on top of WordPress. It's technically a WordPress plug-in, originally released in 2011 to add eCommerce capabilities directly to a WordPress website.

Since its original release, [WooCommerce has evolved significantly](#), and now offers all the features you'd expect from a robust eCommerce platform. In fact, [21% of eCommerce stores](#) today are powered by WooCommerce.

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Who uses WooCommerce?

From small businesses to large retailers, all kinds of businesses all over the world use WooCommerce to sell their products and services on their WordPress websites.

As far as eCommerce platforms go, WooCommerce is relatively low cost, highly customizable, and quick and easy to set up, making it the go-to solution for stores that need to get up and running fast. And because it's so user friendly, it's a great choice for business owners that don't have a lot (or any) of CMS, coding or web development expertise.

WAIT, WHAT'S WORDPRESS?

WordPress is the most widely-used content management system (CMS) in the world, currently powering nearly 50% of websites large and small. WordPress is really what you make of it, in that it can do a lot of impressive things with the right widgets, plugins and add-ons.

WHAT'S A CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM?

A CMS is a tool that helps users create, manage and modify a website without having to write the website code from scratch (or even know how to code in the first place).

In general, WooCommerce is an ideal [eCommerce](#) solution for clients that already have a WordPress website and want to launch a small to medium online store on a budget (one that sells 10s to 1,000s of products). Whether your business is established or brand new, one person or a large team, WooCommerce could be a great fit for selling your product online.

What makes WooCommerce a great eCommerce solution?

WooCommerce is a great eCommerce solution because it's designed for selling. Right out of the box, it offers all of the features you need to get your online store up and running. And it's totally customizable; with the right extensions from the [WooCommerce Extension Store](#), it can meet just about any eCommerce need you might have.

- ✓ Shipping
- ✓ Payments
- ✓ Inventory management
- ✓ Order management
- ✓ Refunds

Why WooCommerce?

Other reasons you should opt for WooCommerce over other eCommerce platforms include:

IT CAN BE USED TO SELL ANYTHING:

With WooCommerce, you can sell just about any type of product. And the platform is good at handling all types of product configurations for products with multiple sizes, colors, lengths, etc. With WooCommerce powering your eCommerce store, you can sell:

- Physical products
- Digital products
- Downloadable products
- Subscriptions
- Memberships
- And more

IT'S BASICALLY WORDPRESS:

Because WooCommerce was designed for WordPress specifically, it inherits all of its strengths, advantages and capabilities.

IT'S EASY TO USE:

Just like WordPress, WooCommerce is also very user friendly. There's a low learning curve; if you know how to use WordPress, you'll be able to use WooCommerce.

Furthermore, the administrative features are very intuitive, so you should be able to pick up on the best way to manage things very quickly.

IT SUPPORTS 100+ PAYMENT GATEWAYS:

All of the major payment gateways (Authorize.net, PayPal, Stripe, etc.) can be easily integrated with your WooCommerce store, letting you serve more customers with ease and reliability.

IT CAN AUTOMATE SALES TAX:

When you're selling products across the country, taxes can get pretty confusing. Thankfully, WooCommerce can make calculating, charging and tracking sales tax stress-free.

The platform has a number of options to help you [set up and collect taxes](#), without having to manually calculate, set up and track the individual tax rates of various zip codes, states and counties. And with the help of add-ons, it can even [automate tax rates and collections](#), saving you significant amounts of time.

SIMPLIFIES SHIPPING AND FULFILLMENT:

WooCommerce allows for domestic and international shipping, supports many carriers and offers valuable shipping and fulfillment-related functionality, like:

- Configurable **shipping zones** and **shipping classes**
- A feature that calculates shipping rates for multiple carriers (FedEx, USPS, UPS, etc.)
- The ability to establish rules for free shipping, like when customers buy a specific dollar amount or even buy a specific product

IT MAKES IT EASY TO OFFER DISCOUNTS:

You can create coupons for all kinds of scenarios, like customers buying a certain number of products, for BOGO specials, for free shipping or for customers hitting a certain dollar amount in their cart.

IT SUPPORTS SEO EFFORTS:

WooCommerce inherits a lot of the great SEO features that come with WordPress. And just like WordPress, you can use SEO Yoast and other eCommerce-specific tools to track sales and conversions and make sure your site is ranking at the top.

THE PLATFORM CAN POWER MARKETPLACES:

With just a couple of add-ons, WooCommerce lets you power robust marketplaces where users can sign up (free or paid) to sell their own goods on your website. You can create rules to have them pay a membership to sell these goods or you can even charge for a percentage of what they sell.

IT ALLOWS FOR WHOLESALE PURCHASING:

With the help of a plug-in, WooCommerce lets you act as a wholesaler, offering reduced prices for bulk purchases for specific customer groups. Not only can the platform's wholesaling capabilities help you serve B2B customers, but also reward loyal B2C customers with a price break.

Types of eCommerce stores WooCommerce can power

Like we said, WooCommerce is what you make of it. WooCommerce can power almost any type of store – you just need to integrate the right extensions. Some kinds of eCommerce stores WooCommerce can power include:

- **Affiliate stores** where you sell external products through your website
- **Auction websites** with dynamic data fields for conditions like buy it now, bid increments, reserve price, etc.
- **Booking websites** for hotels, property and equipment rentals, reservations or services
- **Dropshipping stores** that sell products from a supplier
- **Education-based businesses** where customers purchase, rent and book lessons all through the online store
- **Memberships** that rely on a recurring payment setup, like memberships for gyms, yoga studios, associations
- **Subscriptions** for physical goods (like subscription boxes), access to digital content or subscription-based ecommerce models
- Those that book and sell online or in-person **consultations**
- **Travel or experience-based businesses**
- Virtual stores that sell **digital downloads** like ecourses, stock photos, font packs, music files, designs, wallpapers and more

WooCommerce's weak points

WooCommerce is a great eCommerce platform for many cases and business types, however, it does have its weak points and areas of improvement. Some disadvantages of WooCommerce include:

DASHBOARDS AND REPORTING:

Like most eCommerce systems, the reporting and dashboards that come with WooCommerce can be somewhat limiting. We find this disadvantage across the eCommerce space, most likely due to the fact that different businesses need different dashboards, and there's no universal, or even standard, set of metrics for retailers.

Luckily, there's always a plug-in to compensate for whatever WooCommerce itself lacks. If you want to track more complex things like sales by state or sales by SKU, you can download an extension. But when you start to need this data in a more complex way, you could be looking at some custom [development](#).

PRODUCT MANAGEMENT:

WooCommerce has recently added a much better system for bulk editing your products, however; it's still fairly limited in its capabilities. This is why we generally recommend WordPress and WooCommerce for stores that don't have too many SKUs, as future editing can become very cumbersome.

Future-proof your business with the right eCommerce platform

eCommerce isn't just here to stay, it's now the status quo. Customers expect a quick, convenient and easy-to-navigate online shopping experience, and the right eCommerce platform can help you provide just that.

With WooCommerce powering your online store, you can leverage the diverse capabilities and dynamic nature of WordPress, effectively future-proofing your business so it can adapt and evolve for whatever comes next.

... and the right eCommerce partner

Onboarding a new eCommerce system is a lot of work, and moving from one platform to another is an even larger undertaking. That's why it's important you make the right choice the first time — and have the support of a dedicated eCommerce development team.

Successful eCommerce projects require thorough planning, attentive management and expert execution. When you partner with Fruition, that's exactly what you get.

Why partner with Fruition for your WooCommerce store

Here at Fruition, we have deep experience designing, developing and optimizing eCommerce stores. We regularly help our clients build these sites from scratch; integrate WooCommerce capabilities into their existing WordPress website; and maintain, optimize and add features to existing WooCommerce stores.

Our eCommerce experts can help you make the right decision for your business and get your store where it needs to be: in front of the right customers.

[Contact us](#) today with any eCommerce questions and to learn if WooCommerce is the right fit for your products and services.

References and additional reading:

<https://www.a2hosting.com/blog/self-hosted-vs-hosted-e-commerce-platforms-right/>

<https://www.sitepoint.com/10-things-you-may-not-know-woocommerce-can-do/>

<https://www.modernmarketingpartners.com/types-of-woocommerce-stores/>