

As a branded manufacturer, you're probably always trying to find new ways to boost your presence online. The e-commerce industry is constantly growing, with competition getting more intense every day. Rest assured, brands have many opportunities and tools to get involved in the e-commerce game and see major results. Want to boost your e-commerce profile? Try these five tips to get started.

1. SELL DIRECT FOR FULL BRAND CONTROL

With 93% of brands being sold everyday (one way or another), going direct to consumers seems like an obvious choice – after all, you are the product source.¹ But for many brands, the thought of e-commerce is still daunting. However with over 50% of all consumers now preferring online shopping regardless of where they started their buying journey, brands can't overlook e-commerce any longer.² Selling direct gives you full brand control and can create a direct relationship with your customers, who visit you for authority and authenticity, with 70% of consumers agreeing that a brand's website is the most trusted source for content.³ Offer a fully optimised, easy-to-use website that includes large images and product videos, guides, FAQs (or reviews), a clear path to purchase (easy checkout, indication to closest stores or Where to Buy feature) and unique offering – this is the time to make it as seamless as possible for your customer.

2. WORK WITH RETAILERS, AUTHORISED RESELLERS AND MARKETPLACES

Working with e-commerce retailers, or partnering with authorised resellers and marketplaces offers an array of opportunities when it comes to marketing, selling and shipping your products. The massive convergence of channels (marketplaces such as Amazon also acting as a first-party seller, and retailers like Tesco becoming marketplaces to name a few) can sometimes be confusing and maybe even a little chaotic for brands trying to formulate a strategy, but the gain from selling through retailers, resellers and marketplaces certainly makes up for it. With 55% of consumers starting their buyer journey on Amazon, and 28% starting on Google, not getting involved with Amazon or Google now means missing out on millions of potential customers.⁴

3. UTILISE CUSTOMER DATA THROUGH ONLINE CHANNELS

Selling online opens your company up to masses of rich customer data. Fully utilise this to learn about your customer's journey and identify how customers are moving through the path to purchase. Get really granular with your point-of-sale analysis. Sometimes this data comes from retail partners, sometimes through third-party data providers. Wherever you can get it, data can help you refine your campaigns throughout the sales funnel. Working with retailers and building programmes to share real consumer insights (including shared analytics, not just profits) can help you tailor your offering online and acquire more customers.

4. STAY AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION

Thanks to real-time intelligence and product data pulled from your online channels, you can now closely adapt your offering to your customers' demand. Take a look at product assortment, pricing, retailers and competitors for better guidance. Track assortment and pricing for each of your online retailers, get to know who is selling your brand on marketplaces and find your competitors. Stay on top of your product categories, so you're always know when a new brand crops up.

1 https://go.channeladvisor.com/NA-Ecommerce-Branded-Manufacturers-Suppliers-Report-REP-Main-LP.html?channel=Blog_Post&cid=701F000000nH2X

2 https://go.channeladvisor.com/NA-Ecommerce-Branded-Manufacturers-Suppliers-Report-REP-Main-LP.html?channel=Blog_Post&cid=701F000000nH2X

3 <http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/niensenglobal/se/docs/Global%20Trust%20in%20Advertising%20Report%20September%202015.pdf>

4 <https://www.recode.net/2016/9/27/13078526/amazon-online-shopping-product-search-engine>

5. ADAPT PRODUCT INFORMATION AND POLICIES TO MARKET REALITIES

By working with retailers and sellers, you can develop and more tightly manage messaging, pricing and other policies related to your product. Online pricing affects brand perception so keep an eye on the prices set by your retailers. If you're selling direct your pricing will invariably set the tone and communicate the value of your products to customers. When you're setting your content policies and information, cultivate relationships with marketplaces and search engines to better understand what they need from you and vice versa: it doesn't have to only come from your retailers.

Building your online presence can have a significant impact on your sales. Need help with your e-commerce activities? This is where ChannelAdvisor steps in, with our cloud-based e-commerce solutions that enable retailers and branded manufacturers to increase global sales. ChannelAdvisor for Brands, including Where to Buy and Product Intelligence, can equip you with more data about your customers' shopping habits, give you insights into your product listings across online channels, and help you establish a clear path to purchase for interested shoppers. To discuss these options, contact the ukteam@channeladvisor.com or subscribe to our newsletter for the very latest e-commerce news delivered direct to your inbox.