



E-COMMERCE

“Remember, every ‘mistake’ your customer makes, it’s not because they’re stupid. It’s because your website sucks.”

Peep Laja, founder of ConversionXL

1. E-commerce Discussion

1. What are some of the most significant developments in the history of e-commerce?
2. What are some of the most successful e-commerce sites? How did they become so successful?
3. Does your company sell its products or services online? How is this business different to traditional forms of selling?
4. How has your experience of online shopping been? Do you any favourite sites? Do you have confidence in these sites? Is there anything that you would never buy online?
5. How can companies ensure a good customer experience on their website?
6. How can companies ensure customers trust their website?
7. How can companies minimise return costs when selling online?
8. What are the advantages of selling in a traditional shop compared to online?

2. E-commerce Vocabulary

- **brick-and-mortar shop/store** (noun) – *a traditional physical shop on main street (AmE)/the high street (BrE) that people visit to make purchases.*
- **(web) traffic** (noun) – *the number of visitors that a website receives.*
- **to ship** (verb), **shipping** (noun, adjective) – *the activity of delivering products from a company to its customers.*
- **wishlist** (noun) – *a list that some websites allow a customer to create based on what they want to buy in the future.*
- **(online) review** (noun) – *an online opinion about a product, service or company from a customer.*
- **chatbot** (noun) – *a computer program that communicates with humans based on typical questions.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. **Brick-and-mortar shops** in city centres across the country have closed down due to the effect of online shopping and out-of-city shopping centres.
2. **Chatbots** can save a company a lot of money, but they can also lose money by providing an impersonal service that can be off-putting to a lot of customers.
3. Companies need to design strategies to direct **(web) traffic** to their website; otherwise, nobody will buy their products.
4. I have no money until payday, so I added the products to my **wishlist** so I remember to buy them when I get paid.
5. We **ship** our products to customers all around the world.
6. You can't trust product **reviews** from sites that also make money advertising those products.

E-commerce vocabulary comprehension questions

1. How has online shopping affected brick-and-mortar shops?
2. How can businesses direct more traffic to its site?
3. What are some problems that can happen when shipping products to the customer?
4. What are the advantages of letting a customer create a wishlist?
5. Where would you look to find online reviews of a product?
6. Have you ever spoken to a chatbot? How was it?

3. Video: The King of E-commerce

You are going to watch a video by Bloomberg called "How Jeff Bezos Became the King of E-Commerce."

Watch the video here: <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/business-english-conversation-lesson-plan-ecommerce/>

Watch the video and after, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you think of Amazon? Do you use the site? Do you like the company? What business areas is it involved in? How did Amazon become so successful?
2. What do you think of Jeff Bezos' motto 'never settle'?
3. Do you agree with Amazon's core value that the customer is first, and everything else is secondary?
4. Do you think Amazon's decision to purchase the grocery store Whole Foods was a good idea? Why or why not?
5. Is Amazon the most important company in the world? Which companies are its rivals?
6. Amazon has already entered the streaming market and has set its sights on entering the advertising and health care markets. What other business sectors do you think Amazon will try to enter in the future?

4. E-commerce Conversation Questions

1. Can a business survive these days if it has no online presence to sell its products or services?
2. Do most people in your country shop online? If not, when do you expect online shopping to become the norm?
3. What problems might a company face when selling online? How about customers?
4. Has online shopping damaged competition? Why or why not?
5. How will technology and automation improve shipping in the future?
6. Will manufacturers begin to bypass retailers and sell their products directly to the customers? What effect would this have on the market?
7. Will there be a time in the future when you predict that online shops will have completely replaced traditional brick-and-mortar shops? Why or why not? Which shops will continue to exist on the high street in the future?
8. What purpose could brick-and-mortar shops serve in the future if everyone buys online?

5. E-commerce Writing Task

Your CEO has decided that it's time for the company to focus on e-commerce and has asked you to write a report to help. Write a short report outlining what the company needs to keep in mind to provide a good service and experience to the customers, as well as anticipating some of the problems that might be faced and how to deal with them.