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Five Popular Ways to Start Selling Online

By Anita Campbell

The US ecommerce market brought in more than \$504 billion in revenue last year. And it's expected to grow to more than \$735 billion by 2023.

With so much potential in the market, it's the perfect time for entrepreneurs to get started selling products online. Today's sellers have a ton of options to make this happen. Here are five of the most popular.

Your Own Ecommerce Store

Building an ecommerce store from scratch is the most traditional option. It takes some work to get all of the pieces together. But it also gives you the most control.

With this option, you need to find your own website hosting and domain. Then you need to actually design the layout, add products, and fill it with content. Of course, you can hire a designer or developer to do some of this for you.

When you're done, you'll have your very own site that you can control every aspect of. You have

the freedom to add new products, change content, and fiddle with the back end functionality.

Hosted Ecommerce Platforms

Hosted ecommerce platforms differ from dedicated ecommerce sites because the majority of the work that goes into creating the site is already done for you. Basically, this SaaS offering gives you all the functionality of your own ecommerce site. But you don't have as much control over the details.

Shopify, BigCommerce, and Big Cartel are all examples of this. Each one allows you to quickly set up a storefront from a select set of options. Often, you can choose from themes and templates. And some even offer further customization options. They also give you instructions for adding products, photos, and other content to the site.

To your customers, this type of site might appear very similar to an ecommerce site that you set up on your own. But if you have very specific design or back-end preferences, they might not be available. Additionally, this type of site is often easier or less expensive to get up and running.



But they usually charge monthly fees that may exceed basic hosting fees over time.

Marketplace Sites

Marketplace sites include things like Etsy, eBay,

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Many bidding opportunities are available:

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If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Outreach Coordinator: Julia.Omanoff@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

NORTHEAST EVENTS FOR YOUR BUSINESS



Mohawk Valley Small Business Development

Center (SBDC) Open House Thursday, February 6, 2020, 9:00 am-3:00 pm Mohawk Valley SBDC at the thINCubator, 326 Broad Street, Utica, NY

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Mohawk Valley SBDC

Contact: Zach Steffen, 315-731-5884,

zsteffen@mvcc.edu Fee: Free; registration required

Our business advisors will be on hand to introduce you to our services and answer questions on the following topics and more: small business startup assistance; business plan development; cost analysis/financial projections; government contracting; identifying sources of capital; marketing/advertising strategy; licensing, HR, insurance, and legal considerations. Stop by

any time between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm. At the conclusion of your visit, you may schedule a free follow-up appointment for more in-depth guidance from our experts. Registration is free and light refreshments will be served.

How to Become a GSA Federal Supply Schedule **Holder and Government Contracting 101** Wednesday, February 12, 2020, 10:00 am-12:30 pm Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. Federal Building, 10 Causeway Street, 1st Floor, Boston, MA

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Contact: Stephen Edmonds, 781-801-3036,

sedmonds@umass.edu

Fee: Free: registration required This free one-day workshop is designed to encourage and support small businesses interested in obtaining a General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Schedule contract to learn more about contracting opportunities, the procurement process, and resources available. Not sure which solicitation applies to your product or service? Refer to GSA's Schedules e-Library website in order to view or download solicitations. Before attending the workshop, please review the GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) Program and the GSA Vendor Tool Box (links available at vsc.gsa.gov). Please direct questions regarding the GSA MAS Program to the GSA MAS Helpdesk by phone at 800-488-3111

or by email at mashelpdesk@gsa.gov. Preventing People Problems: HR Basics for

Small Business Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Baruch College, 55 Lexington Avenue, Suite 2-140, New York, NY Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration,

Midtown Manhattan SBDC Contact: Gernely Almonte, 646-312-4790,

sbdc@baruch.cunv.edu

Fee: Free; registration required

Having employees is exciting, but there are many ways it can go wrong. Join us to learn: what you shouldn't say in a job ad, employees versus independent contractors, paying hourly or salary, employment contracts and offer letters, providing employee benefits, non-competes and non-solicitation agreements, and more! In addition to "best practices," we will discuss federal and New York specific requirements.



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