

You have an
ecommerce business.

Now what?



LOOKING TO TURN YOUR WEB STORE INTO AN ONLINE EMPIRE?

The first step often means making the leap from ecommerce as a hobby to ecommerce as a business.

Case Study

★ “So then it’s decided. We are quitting our day jobs and making our online store our full-time business.” This was the leap-of-faith decision that Laura and Will Land made in 2003. They knew they had a desirable product and could see the rise of ecommerce on the horizon, but they had only been working on the ecommerce business part time and weren’t sure it would take off the way they needed it to. Despite their fears, they dove in and focused 100% of their time on making their business, Empire Case, a success.

This is the moment-of-truth decision that so many thousands of hopeful ecommerce storeowners take: the transition from working part time on a hobby to making ecommerce their full-time, bread-winning business.

A recent study revealed there are more than **102,728** ecommerce stores making more than **\$12,000** per year in income.¹ And these are just the listed ones – this does not include the mom-and-pop shops that may not have

been considered in the recent U.S. Census Bureau report. Unfortunately, most of these new ecommerce stores will fail within their first year of business.

But that statistic did not stop Laura and Will. They decided their story would be one of success and set off to create a business that would last using a few key tools (that we will look at in just a moment) to help them along the way.

This eBook is not a get-rich-quick guide (trust us – we wish we found one that worked!) but rather a practical guide to help you realistically achieve the results you want from your ecommerce store.

Use the tools in this toolkit to transform your ecommerce store into an empire by growing sales, engaging customers and creating loyalty. Through following the story of Will and Laura Land, and many other ecommerce successes, we will tackle the biggest issues and give you a plan of action for your ecommerce business.



71% of shoppers believe they'll get a better deal online than in stores.²




MOBILITY


BECOME A MOBILE MOGUL

Optimize to Sell

Everyone is looking for the next best thing in mobile. From jewelry that functions as a phone to sweatbands that work as Bluetooth earphones, it is rare that people are ever away from their mobile devices. Mobile devices now account for a quarter of all Internet traffic and **102 billion** apps have been downloaded.³

 Even scarier – by the end of 2013 there were more mobile devices on Earth than people!⁴

Mobile is altering the very nature of how people shop and will remain a key driver in the ecommerce world. In fact, shoppers who use mobile devices actually buy MORE than users on desktops or laptops.⁵

This is exactly what Empire Case counted on.  As a business based solely on the idea people love, and need, their mobile devices, they figured that having a mobile optimized site was essential.

Empire Case is an ecommerce business that sells anything and everything someone may need for their mobile devices: cases, cables, mounts and accessories. When they made the dive in 2003 to sell full time, they decided to adopt the idea that “If we’re not changing, we’re dying”. Because of this they saw the opportunity to optimize their site for mobile early on and saw impressive results.

When shoppers have a mobile device on them 24/7, why wait to be in front of a computer to purchase? As the ecommerce store owner, it’s your job to bring the people what they want, where they want it. Sound overwhelming? Not when it could become your biggest moneymaker.

Did you know more than **44%** of customers use a mobile device to look for deals and **90%** use mobile for pre-shopping activities? So – it’s time to be sure your store is optimized for the new age of mobile.

NIKEiD is a fantastic example of success in creating an authentic mobile experience. They ran with the idea of mobile (pun intended) and developed a responsive design that provided an interactive experience for their customers.

From the growing ecommerce stores like Empire Case to the global brands like Nike, here is some important advice on becoming a “Mobile Mogul”:

OPTIMIZE FOR MOBILE

This is a no-brainer. Black Friday saw sales increase **186.54%** on smartphones in 2013. But there’s a little caveat to this pretty story: this number was for mobile-optimized sites. In fact, Econsultancy found that non-user-friendly mobile sites actually hurt brands and often drive traffic to competitors hosting better mobile sites.

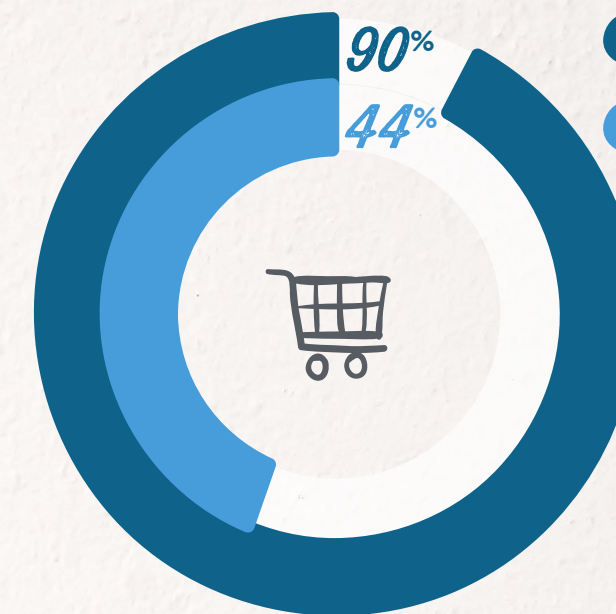
A responsive design is a great way to avoid losing your customers to those competitors. When optimizing you need to remember to:

- 1 Be sure your design is consistent across all devices: same style, colors, content flow, etc.
- 2 Track what pages consumers view most, then be sure this content is at the forefront of your mobile layout

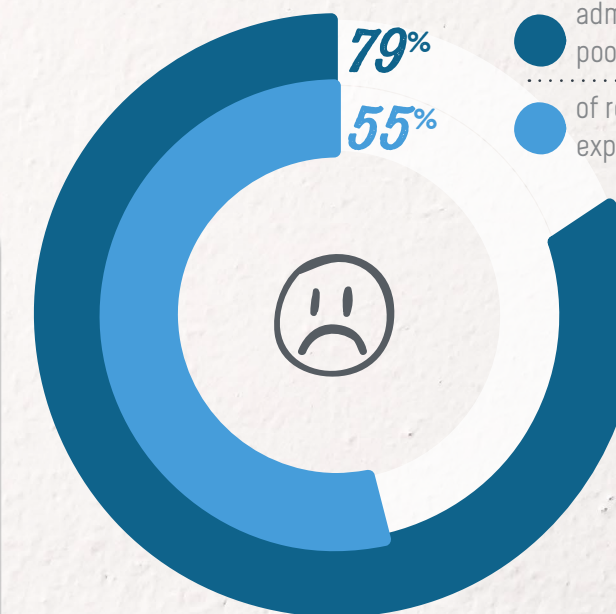
3 Give easy, direct access to checkout and avoid having to scroll or zoom in to see your web page.

4 Get an app for that: having a well-designed app can make your store the go-to site for mobile shopping needs.

Already optimized your site? Great job, but you’re not out of the woods yet! Accepting mobile payments and establishing “click to buy” experiences will become standard practice in the years and months to come. Be on the lookout for new trends with mobile so you stay ahead of the curve and in front of competition.



- of customers use their mobile device for pre-shopping activities
- of customers use their mobile device to look for deals⁶



- admit to turning to a competitor after a poor mobile experience⁷
- of respondents claim that a bad mobile experience hurts their opinion of a brand⁷

 **Key Mobile Tip:** More mobile traffic (**65%**) comes from Apple products than Android and others combined.⁸

Takeaway: Not sure where to start? Then focus on optimizing your site for Apple first and others later.

PERSONALIZATION

MAKE IT PERSONAL

The Relationship Between Ecommerce & Email

Almost everyone is familiar with (and probably has been subjected to) the old-school approach to email marketing — the classic email newsletter. The messaging and content in this newsletter isn't customized for your customers; it's the same to everyone in your entire database and honestly, just feels stale. It's the quick and dirty way to stay in front of your audience, but is it the most effective?

I'm not saying we should scrap old email marketing all together, (in fact, it is still the most effective way to reach your customers) but you may need to revamp how you are doing it.⁹ The more modern and effective alternative to the batch-and-blast newsletter is personalized email campaigns. You may be thinking: "Sending more personalized messages is great in theory, but how do we KNOW what our customer wants to read?"

Getting your ecommerce data into your email marketing platform is easy — (we will chat more about that later... Now, Connect the Dots if you're the type to skip ahead) it's what you do with it once it's there that will set your store up for even more success. Once your data is in your email marketing platform, you can slice and dice your customer metrics based on products purchased, category, spend amount, frequency of buying, male or female and many other valuable data points that your ecommerce store collects. Getting your customer segmented allows you to send targeted email campaigns to up-sell, cross-sell and share relevant coupons.

✨ **Remember, think relationship versus blast email.** You are trying to build a connection with your customer base to set you apart from your competition; use dynamic content to call your customer by name. You already have the customer, make sure they know you value them through your personalized email campaigns.

Personalized email marketing can often be cumbersome, but the most successful ecommerce stores realize that their focus should not be placed solely on gaining first-time buyers but rather to invest in repeat buyers through customer loyalty.



According to Market Metrics, the probability of selling to an existing customer is **60-70%** while selling to a new prospect is just **5-20%**.¹⁰



"77% of marketers see a higher impact on ROI when they leverage purchase history for post-purchase campaigns."
-Econsultancy

👉 Look to history.

You most likely already know a good deal about your prospects and customers from page views, purchase history and time-on-site metrics. Use that data to your advantage! Econsultancy recently released a study that found "77% of marketers see a higher impact on ROI when they leverage purchase history for post-purchase campaigns." Wow, 77% is a lot of marketers who have a had great experience and huge impact on their bottom line just by sending messaging that is personalized to their customer.

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE:



Smartphone
\$99.99



Laptop
\$995.00



Utensil Set
\$49.00



Knife Set
\$38.00



Steak Knife
\$12.95



Brazil Heel
\$129.00



Dotted Bowtie
\$19.95



Canvas Sneakers
\$89.00



Dotted Bowtie
\$19.95

NO MAN LEFT BEHIND

How to Reduce Shopping Cart Abandonment

Ever experienced the feeling of total rejection? Thought so – it’s certainly not the best feeling in the world. Rejection is an all-too-common experience for most — no all — ecommerce storeowners. You watch as a buyer places your item into their cart, your mouth begins to turn up into a smile as you see them click “proceed to checkout,” you know you are just one step away from feeling that sense of satisfaction that comes from selling your product. Then it happens... they abandon the cart and you are left to wonder what you did to make them run.

Was it your timing? Your service? Your checkout experience? All you know is they left and you have to figure out why. Fortunately you are not alone in this; nearly **70%** of online shopping carts are abandoned.¹¹ Yikes!

“You have to follow up or you’ll be missing out on potential long-term customers,” said Laura of Empire Case. There are lots of reasons someone may abandon cart last minute but there are simple things you can do to prevent it or at least follow up.

Empire Case found a large percentage of their customer base actually came from people who may have abandoned cart but decided to return because of a follow-up. “Customers need to know you are available to help,” said Laura. “Often times we find a customer will abandon a cart because they encountered an issue at

checkout (problems with promo code, payment error, etc). We have had tremendous success by simply reaching out with our Customer Service contact information so they can easily get help completing their order.”

SIMPLE WAYS YOU CAN PREVENT AND RESPOND TO ABANDONED CARTS:

1 Shipping costs

44% of online shoppers abandon carts because of high shipping prices and another **22%** abandon their carts because the seller did not mention shipping costs at all.¹² If possible, provide free or flat-rate shipping. This will give your on-the-fence shopper an extra push to finish their purchase. In fact, **93%** of shoppers in a recent survey said that free shipping would encourage them to purchase more products online.

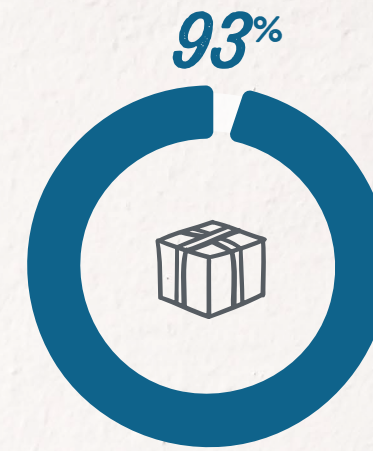
2 Registration

26% of online shoppers abandon cart because of forced registration.¹³ One of the reasons people shop online is for the convenience – so keep your checkout process convenient. A simple, streamlined checkout process is key. Allow users to log in with their existing social media accounts or let them bypass registration and continue as a guest.

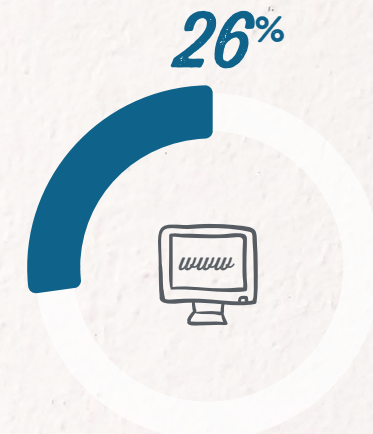
3 Recovery email

90% of leads go cold within the first hour, so email quickly because you could generate some eye-popping revenue.¹⁴ In fact, according to SeeWhy Research, abandoned shopping cart emails generate more than **55%** higher conversion compared to regular email campaigns.¹⁵ Stay at the forefront of their mind though targeted, personalized emails or even provide a coupon or offer free shipping on the item they left behind.

So you’re saying there’s a chance?! Yes – an abandoned shopping cart does not have to be a total loss. It is possible to close the sale with a smart plan of action and recovery email. And remember: be kind, not pushy.



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of online shoppers abandon cart because of **forced registration**.¹³



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WHY PEOPLE ABANDON:



High shipping prices



Forced account registration



Slow loading pages, poor design and “sketchy” checkout experiences



Limited return policies



Added/hidden charges



No contact details



Security concerns with credit card information

CHANNELS

DON'T PUT YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET

Multiple Channels = Multiple Sources of Income

Will and Laura believe wholeheartedly in this age-old adage. In fact, they based their success on it. Too often, ecommerce storeowners dedicate extensive resources to developing the perfect store but have no plan on how they will drive traffic to it. The idea of “if you build it, they will come” is deceiving. Successful stores realize that bringing their products to their customers is far more beneficial than waiting for them to stumble upon you.

“You really have to think of the traffic sites like Amazon.com get, it’s impossible to recreate that type of traffic,” says Laura. Empire Case currently sells on 16 different platforms worldwide and is constantly looking to expand on that.

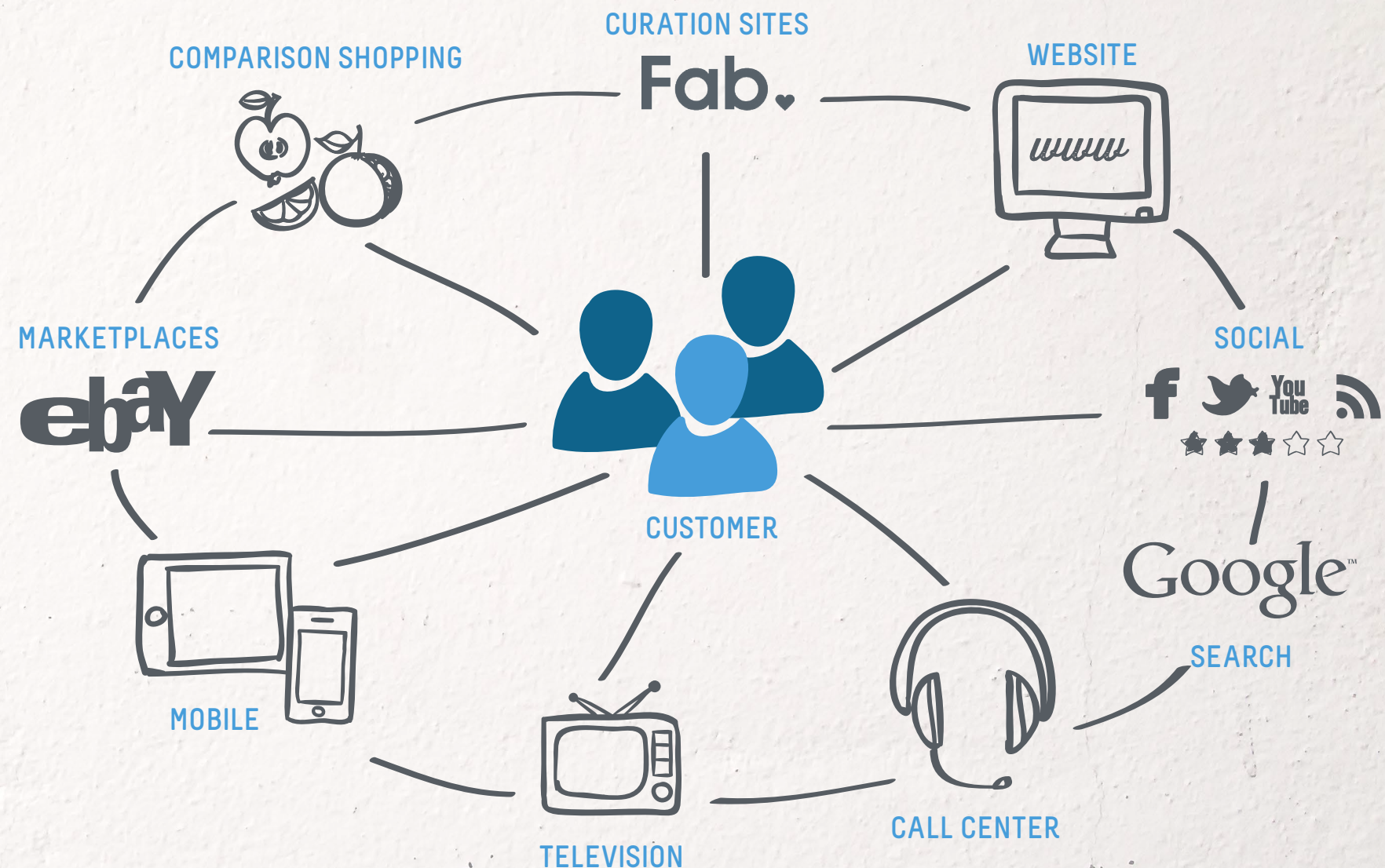
Yes, you end up paying the channel’s fees but overall it is well worth it for the exposure and sales. Every business and product is different but you need to assess where your customers already shop and this may mean some trial and error. If you don’t have the widest possible distribution of your products, you’ll lose opportunities.

ChannelAdvisor is a perfect outlet for maintaining and succeeding in multi-channel selling. ChannelAdvisor allows customers to optimize sales across hundreds of channels like Amazon, Google, eBay, Facebook and many others. But even if you do not use ChannelAdvisor, you can still make sure you are offering a variety of engagement points to help increase sales.

★ **HERE'S HOW:**

- 1 Comparison Shopping Engines (CSEs)** – There are hundreds of comparison shopping engines that you can use to drive sales (Google Shopping and TheFind.com) to pay-per-click (Shopping.com, Shopzilla, Nextag).
- 2 Marketplaces** – Most consumers are probably more familiar with marketplaces than your store – at least for now. You can sell on eBay, Amazon, Etsy or any of the many other effective marketplaces. In fact, here is where you can get creative – who is your main buyer and what do they like? Are they fashionistas? Maybe sell on something like Polyvore. Are they enthusiasts? Check out CafePress. Don’t limit yourself to large or small – the wider you go, the more chance you have to sell.
- 3 Have a plan** – Don’t just throw your products anywhere and everywhere. Make sure you have a plan in place to maintain all these different channels. It may be nice to see sales spike but are you ready with warehousing, shipping and customer service to fulfill each order? Be sure you are consistent with your brand, content and prices no matter what channel you sell through.

It all boils down to this: Try to figure out who your customers are and then meet them on the sites they frequent.



INTEGRATION

NOW, CONNECT THE DOTS

How Integration Drives Sales

So now you have a plan for success: You're going to optimize that site, follow up on abandoned carts, use email segmentation to create long-term engagement and even begin selling across multiple channels to increase your reach. Whew! That is exciting — but before you run off and get started on your killer year, lets take a look at how integration can change everything — in a good way.

One thing most ecommerce storeowners can agree with is the need for software. From listing creation to pricing, order management, shipping and email marketing, it seems like everything in ecommerce that started out as a manual process has been simplified by software automation.

★ Empire Case would go as far as saying that you cannot and will not succeed if you don't have great software. It helps you become more efficient and scalable for when your business takes off.

But with all this great software, it is limited if it all exists in silos. You are busy, so busy it is unbelievable how you even find time to sleep — so manually maintaining data across your software is not something you want to or should be doing.

Say hello to my little friend: Integration. Your new ecommerce personal assistant. "It is essential that our software can talk," says Laura. "We heavily rely on software and cloud apps and in order for the entire system to work as a whole, we need data passed between each system."

Currently, **83%** think it's important to have mobile access to cloud apps that can not only talk to each other, but give access to integrated business data.¹⁶ Integration plays a huge role in making your

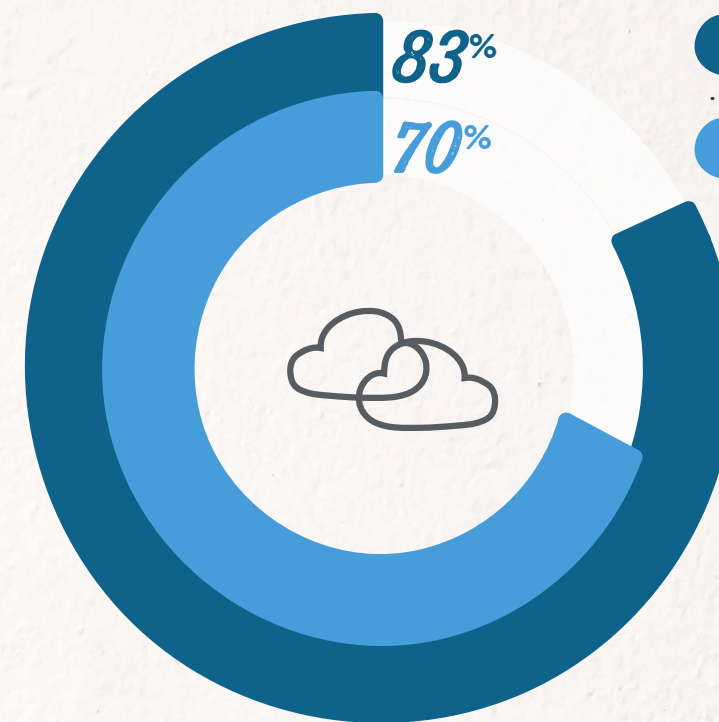
ecommerce business an empire and can help you get more from your time and investments.

Imagine, as soon as someone checks out in your ecommerce store, being able to send them a thank you email with coupon for the next purchase. In fact, a Blue Kangaroo Study said "around 70% of people made use of a coupon or discount from a post-purchase marketing email within in a month of their first purchase."¹⁸ That's **70%** of your customer base that could become a repeat buyer with a simple thank you email.

Empire Case feels strongly about this: "In order to successfully market, we need to be able to pull order data from our shopping cart software into our email marketing software and from there we can create email campaigns that speak to customers about what they really care about," said Laura.

Exactly. When your data is flowing seamlessly back and forth between your cloud apps, you can remove the painstaking process of manual data entry and create an automated system that works constantly behind the scenes. Because that is the goal isn't it? Create a business that is not 100% dependent on our presence. Integration can help you do just that. From running more segmented and personalized emails, offering promos and following up on abandoned carts or recent purchases, integration enables your business to grow and scale without the added costs and hassles.

Integration companies like us (shameless plug) have a mission to help you run a more effective business through integration.



- of execs want mobile access to integrated cloud apps that can share integrated business data.¹⁶
- of execs say they are ready to integrate systems in the next 12-36 months.¹⁷



THE END

Until next time...

There is so much more that goes into running a successful ecommerce business, but what we covered today are top tips we found in speaking to some amazing ecommerce stores.

As Laura and Will know all too well, ecommerce is a difficult yet rewarding venture to take on. From creating jobs to providing products to people across the world — we know you all (ecommerce business people) help make the world turn!

ABOUT KEVY

Kevy is a plug-and-play integration platform that enables companies to throw out the exhausting traditional integration model and start sharing data between systems in minutes, without writing a line of code. Kevy's integrations allow companies to get the most out of their investments and data through simple, powerful integrations so you can focus on your core business, instead of integration. Ready to start seeing all the benefits that come with aligning your sales and marketing toolkits? Contact Kevy at sales@kevy.com to learn more about integrating your ecommerce and other cloud app systems in minutes.

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