

Prepackaged Shopping Cart Software: Upgrade your Site

No matter what you decide to sell online, you will most likely need shopping cart software to make your site user friendly and easy to purchase from. Allowing your customers to add the items that they'd like to purchase and check out right from your site makes purchasing much easier for the internet consumer and will help increase your sales. Ensuring the safety of your customer's information and giving them piece of mind will make them want to return to your web store. Choosing the right shopping cart software can be a chore, however.

There are many different shopping cart software packages available, ranging from reasonable to extremely expensive in price. They all do the same thing, though, and this can make it hard to choose between products. There are many pre-packaged applications on the market today, so spare yourself the time and frustration of having one created, or trying to write one yourself.

Prepackaged shopping carts also have the advantage of having all of the kinks worked out by earlier customers. Most are ready to be added to your website and will function perfectly right away. No ironing out the "bugs" and no mistakes with your customer's orders!

First, determine what capacity you'll need. How many orders per day or per hour do you hope to achieve. Plan for expansion and growth, but don't invest in a ridiculously large cart for a small website. There are reasonable applications that can handle your sales volume just as well.

Will you need to calculate sales tax and shipping charges? Make sure that the software you choose can accommodate these needs. Also, make sure that the shopping cart software you choose offers a wide variety of payment options. Mastercard, Visa, American Express, Paypal and e-checks are all available. Decide which you want to use and look for appropriate software. Remember, the goal is to make it as easy as possible for your customer to buy from you. Offer whatever payment methods you are comfortable with, but give your customer choices.

Make sure that the payments are processed in real time. This is where the credit card or account is authorized immediately. This will reduce the chances of you shipping items to a customer whose card is later declined. With today's payment processing systems, this is easy to afford and an absolute must.

Finally, consider a shopping cart with some added features. Some can be programmed to offer additional items that may be of interest to your customer during checkout. For example, a customer who has just purchased a new set of cookware from your site may be offered a matching utensil set designed for use with the cookware's coating. Or, the customer may receive a coupon for their next purchase.

You may even want to have an auto responder that asks the customer if they want to join your newsletter and be notified of specials. This can bring repeat business to your site and increase sales.

Whatever shopping cart software you choose, investigate the customer service record of the company you're buying from. Any downtime translates directly into lost revenue, so you'll want them to be ready to help you 24/7 if your cart software stops working.

Consider a prepackaged shopping cart software program for your online site or web store. You'll be surprised how the convenience and safety of your new software improves your sales, and your online image.

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