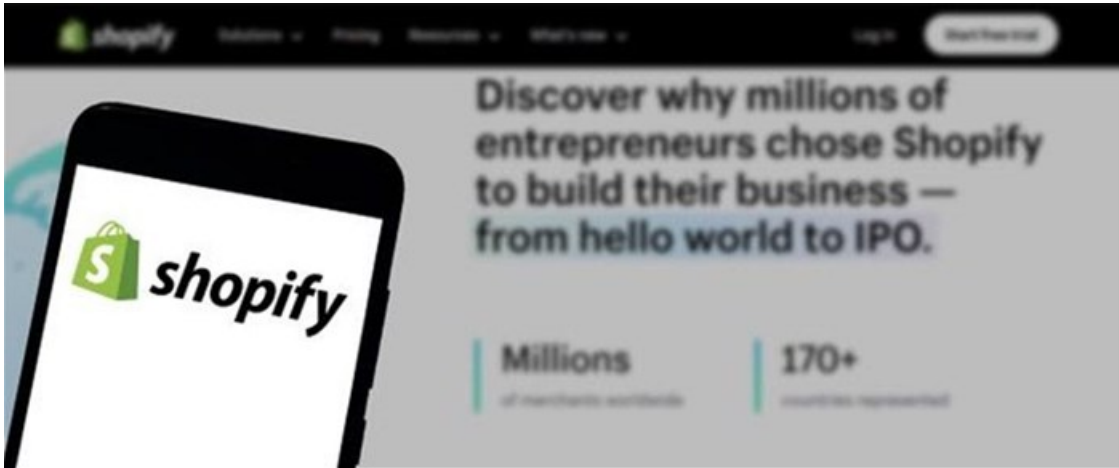


Retailer insights: Why Shopify makes sense

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Whether your e-commerce interests are in the “mom-and-pop” arena or on a more macro scale, you’ll know how relevant an agile, highly functioning sales platform is to your business – and how crucial the right sales funnel development, technical support and payment gateway mechanisms are too. For the average small retailer, juggling the complexities of an online business is a challenge to say the least. Add to that the slew of software variables, updates and intricacies, and it gets even more complicated.



Duncan Colville, partner and lead of the development team at [The Digital Media Collective \(TDMC\)](#), has played an integral role in cementing the digital media specialist agency as one of only 7 active, accredited Shopify Partners in South Africa, a position they have held since 2016. He shares his top six reasons why Shopify works for him and 99% of TDMC’s 120 e-retailers.

1. User-friendly first

“There is an excellent synergy between TDMC and Shopify – at TDMC we are in the business of servicing our customers to the very best of our abilities, and Shopify is committed to being at the forefront of creating a positive customer journey,” says Colville. And although his development team build out custom elements in the more complex levels of the platform, the fact that Shopify is essentially a “plug-and-play” opportunity for e-commerce stores is very positive. “Because Shopify is a hosted platform, they handle all the backend which means less stress for us – and certainly for our customers – around factors like servers and processing hardware, freeing us up to focus on streamlining a better customer journey.”

2. Focus on affordability

“Shopify has a variety of tiers with varying functionalities that increase in complexity the higher up the ladder you go,” says Colville. And while the upper levels of the platform have more advanced analytics and opportunities for coding modifications (for example, to manage complex checkout demands or multiple store environments), even the entry level plan has excellent real-time support as well as analytics and other store integration components at a fair price for what you’re getting. “The support extends to us at TDMC too – when an e-commerce outfit wants to join Shopify Plus, which is the most complex tier with the most functionalities, they are referred to us as one of the 6 active Shopify Experts by the platform itself, which immediately fosters a sense of trust from the get-go.”

3. Reach customers where they are

“Shopify has made it really easy for paid media integration and this is especially true for Meta with whom they have an agnostic relationship – all you have to do is simply link the sales channel, upload and you’re live,” says Colville. This allows marketers to really focus on the paid media side of business promotion without having to fiddle with technical aspects. The other advantage of the platform, he says, is that Shopify themes are mobile responsive, ensuring that your store looks and works well across various devices. “In 2023, they launched Shopify 2.0 with an upgraded customisation component, allowing you to create different journeys for desktop and/or mobile and tablet – it’s a gamechanger for e-commerce operators.”

4. Superb scalability and security

“The beauty of Shopify is that it can grow with your business, and you can easily scale up during busy periods – not one of our Shopify businesses has ever fallen over during a Black Friday or December sales rush,” says Colville. Another positive factor is that they are secure, Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant, and have minimal downtime, providing a reliable shopping experience for customers. “Shopify has a robust built-in fraud prevention and IP address tracking functionality, giving both us and our customers peace of mind.”

5. Troubleshooting and reporting

Live chat, e-mail and phone support are all available to shop owners, and as a vendor you also have full access to your store’s analytics and all aspects of the sales journey. “As a Shopify Partner, we are able to access client dashboards, allowing us to work directly with code in a store or to publish Shopify-approved apps according to specific needs or functions,” says Colville. Since TDMC is a recognised Partner, the development team has access to consultants to fast-track queries and tackle more complex challenges. This, coupled with the fact that all official Partners have early access to new features and beta testing, is good news for e-tailers in the TDMC stable.

6. Payment options

Shopify supports multiple payment gateways giving customers choice and streamlining payment processes for both customer and e-tailer. “Payment gateways are bound by strict failure rulesets and knowing that Shopify has a world-class checkout function is a big plus for us. We see far fewer payment failures on the platform thanks to the fact that the back-end integration is managed by them. As South Africa heads towards better payment integration norms, Shopify sites will become even more well-equipped and customer-centric,” says Colville.

Shopify has cemented its position as a pivotal cornerstone in the landscape of e-commerce, facilitating seamless online storefront creation, innovative marketing solutions, and robust payment processing capabilities. “Shopify is regarded as one of the top five ranking e-commerce platforms in the world and is the largest in the United States. We are proud to be part of a handful of trusted Shopify Experts, with the relevant expertise and know-how to maximise our customers’ and their customers’ user journeys,” says Colville.

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