A 7-STEP GUIDE TO YOUR ROASTERY WEBSITE

Building your Roastery Website with Cropster

We know building a website can be overwhelming. Between managing teams, ensuring product consistency, and even roasting coffee, there's a lot on your plate.

That's why we've created this **seven-step guide** with a **checklist** to support you through every phase of **website development**.

You will learn how to...

- **Organize** your product catalog for an enjoyable shopping experience

- **Streamline** your inventory management using unique SKUs

- **Manage payments**, shipping, and taxes effectively for operational efficiency, and compliance

- **Select** the right E-Commerce platform based on experience and budget

- **Structure** your website with clear planning to save time and ensure quality

- **Expedite** the process by outsourcing tasks like web design and marketing

- **Connect** Cropster Commerce for optimal efficiency

Disclaimer: This document was researched in April 2024.
Prices, features and available solutions are subject to change.

Table of Contents

Step One: Structure Your Product Catalog

1

Creating a great **product catalog** with different options, attractive bundles, and easy subscriptions is key to **improving your store** and making shopping fun for your customers.

1. PRODUCT VARIATIONS

Start by **evaluating** product variations tailored to your **customer needs**. For retail customers, offer smaller package sizes in addition to bulk options for all customer needs. Roasters have seen a 15% increase in sales after adding 5 lb bag options to retail and an additional 5% after adding 2 lb bags. Another key consideration is the variety of grind sizes you can provide; however, ensure that your team can meet the demands of offering different grind sizes beyond whole beans.

2. PRODUCT BUNDLES

Thoughtfully integrate **product bundles** into your sales strategy. Curate **holiday bundles** that combine complementary products, such as coffee beans with a stylish mug or artisanal coffee syrups. Alternatively, create regional bundles or **sample collections** that transport your customers on a sensory journey from the comfort of their homes.
These bundles not only encourage exploration but also offer value and **convenience** as they expand their coffee preferences.

3. SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Consider the **convenience** and **consistency** that subscription services bring to your

customers. Allow them to subscribe to **regular deliveries** of their favorite coffee blends or curated selections. You can offer a roaster's choice subscription to encourage trying new coffees and help move inventory. Set the frequency of subscriptions to weekly for single-origin beans or monthly for seasonal blends to ensure customers never run out of their beloved brew.

4. USER-FRIENDLY CATALOG SETUP

Make sure your product catalog is **user-friendly**. Implement clear navigation and detailed descriptions with enticing visuals to guide customers seamlessly through the journey. By focusing on every facet of the **shopping experience**, you create a catalog that exceeds customer expectations, fostering **loyalty** and **satisfaction**.

Step Two: Implement Stock Keeping Units (SKUs)

Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) are more than just codes of numbers and letters; they are essential for **efficient inventory management**, enabling roasters to keep operations organized.

By assigning unique SKUs to each coffee origin and packaging variant (e.g., SO-RN-250G-WB for a 250g whole bean bag of Single Origin Rwandan Nyampinga), roasters can **streamline inventory tracking**, ensuring each bag of beans is **accurately accounted** for.

1. STREAMLINED INVENTORY TRACKING

Assigning unique SKUs to your products allows you to streamline your **inventory tracking process** significantly. This precision ensures that every bag of beans is accounted for, whether you are fulfilling retail or wholesale orders. Remember, since you will be pulling products from the same inventory, SKUs can remain **consistent** across retail and wholesale orders.

2. OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Although creating SKUs might seem tedious initially, it greatly **enhances operational efficiency**. Proper SKUs help manage inventory better and instill confidence in customers and wholesale partners who rely on timely and consistent **quality shipments**.

3. VALUABLE INSIGHTS

SKUs also provide coffee roasters with valuable insights into **sales performance** and product preferences. By analyzing SKU-specific data, roasters can identify trends, forecast demand, and refine their offerings to match evolving consumer tastes. Whether it's pinpointing best-selling blends or anticipating seasonal demand changes, SKUs are invaluable tools for **strategic decision-making**.

USE our SKU generator and set up YOUR SKUs TODAY.

Step Three: Select an E-Commerce Platform

With numerous **E-Commerce platforms** to choose from, selecting the right one can feel like navigating a labyrinth. But fear not! Below is our **guide** of thinking through the decision.

1. DEFINE YOUR LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE

- Do you have **experience** in customizing and managing online stores?

- Are you comfortable with **coding** or **technical aspects** involved in platform setup/maintenance?

- Have you received any training or **education** related to E-Commerce platforms?

- Are there any specific **features** or **tools** that you prioritize based on your past experience?

- Are you open to learning **new skills** or technologies required by different platforms?

- Do you prefer a platform with a **user-friendly interface** or one that offers more advanced customization options?

2. ASSESS YOUR AVAILABLE TIME

- Time is a crucial factor for busy coffee roasters. Assess how much time you can dedicate to **setting up**, **customizing**, and **maintaining** your E-Commerce platform. If you have team members or hire a webshop consultant, this can expand your bandwidth. If building it yourself, opt for platforms with **intuitive interfaces** that **streamline processes** and minimize time investment without sacrificing functionality.

3. DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

- What is your total **budget** allocated for setting up and maintaining your webshop?

- Are there any ongoing **subscription fees** or maintenance costs associated with the platform or associated plugins?

- Have you factored in **additional expenses** such as website hosting and domain registration?

- Are there any **transaction fees** or **payment processing charges** imposed by the platform or payment gateways (i.e. Stripe, Clover, etc.)?

4. UNDERSTAND DIFFERENCES IN TOP PLATFORMS

- **Compare the top platforms** to choose the right one for your business: Shopify, WooCommerce, Wix, and SquareSpace.

Step Three: Select E-Commerce Platform

Let's compare the top platforms: **Shopify**, **WooCommerce**, **Wix**, and **SquareSpace**.

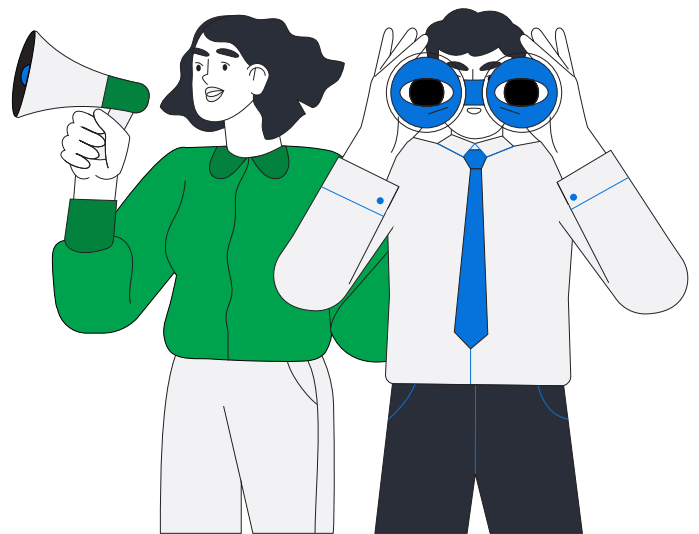|	**Shopify** ——— Plus + 2B2 Platform	**WooCommerce**	**Wix**	**Square-**
Monthly Pricing	$29 for Basic Plan, Advanced plans start at $79 . Starts at $2,500 for 1 year plans	Free (it's a plugin for WordPress)	$23 for Business Basic Plan	$18 for Business Plan
Domain Options	Available for purchase or connect an existing one, depends on plan	Not included	Available for purchase or connect an existing one, depends on plan	Can purchase domain starting at $20 per year
Hosting Options	Included in plans	Not included	Included in plans	Included in plans
Tech. Knowledge Needed	Minimal, user-friendly interface and guided setup	Intermediate to Advanced, especially to customize and manage plugins	Minimal, intuitive drag-and-drop tools with guided setup	Minimal, intuitive drag-and-drop tools
Estimated Time for Set Up	Basic store, set up in a few hours	Basic WP with WC, several days	Basic store, set up in a few hours	Basic store, set up in a few hours
Templates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Payment Gateways	Shopify Payments, Stripe, PayPal & more	PayPal, Stripe, Square, Clover, and more	Wix Payments, Square, PayPal, Stripe, and more	Square, PayPal, Stripe, and more
Shipping Services	Shopify Shipping, Shipstation	WooCommerce, WooCommerce Shipping, Shipstation	Shipstation	Shipstation
Plugins	Subscriptions, Accounting	Subscriptions, Accounting, Shipping	N/A	Subscriptions, Shipping
Recommenda-	Great for tech beginners or high-technological turnover	Good if you have tech. knowledge, want high customization (for branding or B2B/B2C)	Good for beginners, lacks customization control	Great for beginners, if you already use Square in cafes

Squarespace, **Wix** and **Shopify** are more **beginner-friendly** options with all-in-one solutions and straightforward setup processes. **WooCommerce offers more flexibility but requires more technical knowledge** and additional setup time. The choice ultimately depends on your budget, technical proficiency, and customization needs.

Step Four: Save Time with Helpful Resources

Building an online store is exciting, but it can be time-consuming without proper planning.

- **Utilize Templates and Themes**
  Use **ready-made templates** and themes to quickly design your store. E-commerce platforms provide professionally designed templates that you can personalize. Explore theme marketplaces like *ThemeForest*, *Creative Market*, and *TemplateMonster* for more options.

- **Hiring a Web Designer/Developer**
  Consider hiring a professional if you're not comfortable with **web design** and **development** to speed up the process and achieve a **polished outcome**. Look for skilled web designers or developers, particularly those focusing on e-commerce websites. Platforms such as *Upwork*, *Freelancer*, and *Fiverr* are good places to find freelancers. There are also specialized developers like *Beans* for WooCommerce and *Shopify Partners* for Shopify that cater specifically to the coffee industry. When choosing, review portfolios, examine reviews, and clearly communicate your project needs for better results. There are several other roles you could consider hiring based on your strengths and weakness:

- **Content Writer/Copywriter**: Consider hiring a skilled copywriter to create content that resonates with your target audience (To find, look at *Contently* or *ClearVoice*).

- **Product Photographer**: Product photography plays a crucial role in showcasing your products effectively and enticing customers to make a purchase (To find, look at *Fiverr* or *Freelancer*).

- **Graphic Designer**: Hire a graphic designer to design custom graphics, product images, and branding elements that reflect your brand identity (to find, look at *99designs* or *Dribbble*).

- **SEO Specialist**: Consider hiring an SEO specialist to conduct keyword research, optimize product pages, and implement SEO best practices to drive customers to your shop (To find, look at *Fiverr* or *Freelancer*).

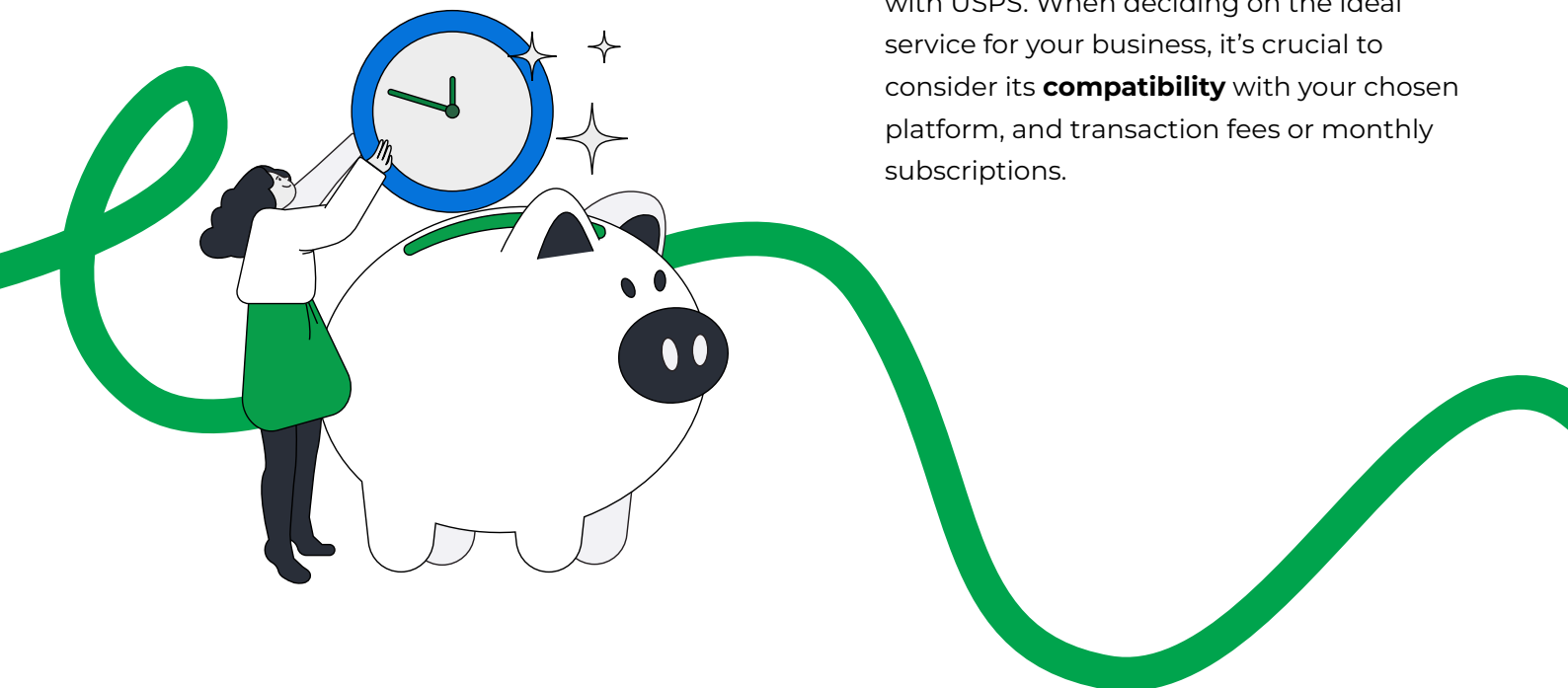# Step Five: Set up Payment Gateways, Shipping Services & Tax Setup

As you begin **building your online store**, creating the perfect product catalog and designing a stunning website are just the initial steps. Don't overlook the **crucial elements** of payment gateways, shipping services and your tax setup.

1. PAYMENT GATEWAYS

- **PayPal**: PayPal offers customers in the **US** and some **EU** countries the convenience of **purchasing** using credit/debit cards or their PayPal account.

- **Stripe**: Stripe enables customers to pay with **credit/debit cards** and **digital wallets**.

- **Clover**: Clover bridges the **gap** between **POS systems** and **webshops**, allowing customers to use credit/debit cards and mobile wallets.

- **Shopify Payments**: It allows low transaction fees and **effortless integration**.

2. SHIPPING SERVICES

- **Shipstation**: Shipstation effortlessly connects to multiple e-commerce platforms, integrates with over **100** shipping carriers, and streamlines the entire shipping process.

- **Shopify Shipping**: Shopify secures discounted rates from major carriers like UPS, USPS, and DHL.

- **WooCommerce**: WooCommerce allows for the setup of shipping zones, rates, and methods

- **WooCommerce Shipping**: WooCommerce Shipping offers a streamlined process with **real-time rates** and integration with USPS. When deciding on the ideal service for your business, it's crucial to consider its **compatibility** with your chosen platform, and transaction fees or monthly subscriptions.

3. TAX SETUP

When making your webstore, **completing your tax setup** may seem like a daunting task, but with a clear plan, it becomes a manageable process. If this task seems overwhelming, please seek assistance from a **tax professional** or **consultant** to help provide guidance tailored to your specific needs. Here's a concise guide to help you navigate tax setup:

- **Research Tax Regulations**:

  Before diving in, **research the tax laws** pertinent to your roastery. Understand the tax obligations based on your location, products, and sales volume. Knowing the rules upfront saves headaches down the line. Your accountant or tax professional may be able to help you with this task.

- **Select a Tax Calculation Method**:

  Determine whether to apply tax rates based on your **customers' locations** (shipping zones) (This would be different if you are used to working with POS systems, where your tax rates are based on where you are selling ie. retail locations).

- **Gather Tax Information**:

  Compile essential **tax details**, including tax rates for your location and any jurisdictions where you have nexus (economic presence). Utilize online resources or consult with tax professionals to ensure accuracy.

- **Configure Tax Settings in Your E-commerce Platform**:
  Most webstore platforms, such as Shopify or WooCommerce, offer **built-in tax setup** tools. Navigate to the settings menu and input your tax information, including rates and rules for various regions.

- **Define Tax Zones and Rates**:

  Divide your target regions into **tax zones** and assign appropriate tax rates to each. For example, if you sell **internationally**, set up tax zones for different countries and apply respective rates.

- **Test Your Setup**:

  Before launching your webstore, conduct thorough testing to ensure your tax setup functions correctly. Place test orders from different locations to verify that **taxes are calculated accurately** at checkout.

- **Consider Automated Solutions**:

  To streamline tax compliance, consider utilizing automated tax calculation services or integrations. These tools can automatically calculate and apply taxes based on **real-time rates**, **saving time** and **reducing errors**. Some to consider are AvaTax, TaxJar, or WooCommerce Tax.

Step Six: Optimally Maintain Your Store

Managing an E-Commerce store requires careful attention to various aspects to ensure its success. From **inventory management** to **marketing**, here are some essential **strategies** to effectively manage your online shop:

1. **Optimized Inventory Management**: Keeping the right **inventory balance** is key for your E-Commerce store. Make sure not to run out of stock to avoid missing out on sales and keeping your customers happy. Use **inventory management software** to keep an eye on stock levels and forecast demand. Take regular **inventory checks** to identify slow-moving items and use that data to improve your product offerings.

2. **Streamlined Order Fulfillment**: Smooth order fulfillment is essential for a great customer experience. Set up **efficient processes** for quickly picking, packing, and shipping orders. Give customers choices for shipping and keep them updated with tracking details.

Track fulfillment metrics like order processing time, accuracy, returns, and customer satisfaction to find ways to improve and make operations more efficient.

3. **Customer-Focused Approach**: Make customer service a **top priority** to nurture trust and loyalty with your customers. **Respond promptly** to inquiries and resolve issues with care and efficiency. Gather and review customer feedback to pinpoint areas for enhancement and elevate the overall shopping journey.

4. **Effective Marketing Strategies**: Set up a robust **marketing plan** to draw in new customers and encourage repeat business. Use various channels like social media, email marketing, SEO, and paid ads to reach your target audience. Consider **outsourcing content creation** using user-generated content to showcase your products and engage potential customers.

7 Step Seven: Connect Your Store to Cropster Commerce

Congratulations on completing your webshop!

Boost the efficiency of your production processes by adding Cropster Commerce to your tech toolkit.

Cropster Commerce can help your business with:

1. Increased **efficiency** in production and fulfillment processes
2. Organized order **fulfillment tasks**
3. Effective coffee **inventory management**
4. Improved **communication** across teams
5. **Flexibility** for both roast-to-order and roast-to-inventory production styles

SCAN

Ready to take your business to the next level?
Scan the QR code above and earn more about how Commerce can speed up your workflows

Checklist

Transform your online presence and boost your coffee business with our expert guidance.
This checklist is designed to empower you with the knowledge and tools you need to
 succeed in the digital realm.

- [ ] Create product list (Best in a spreadsheet)
- [ ] Consider what copy (words) will be included on product pages
- [ ] Description
- [ ] Tasting notes
- [ ] Price
- [ ] Take (or coordinate with a photographer) product photos
- [ ] Make SKUs for products and their variations
- [ ] Complete platform brainstorm
- [ ] Select the platform that matches your companies needs
- [ ] Obtain your hosting and domain
- [ ] Select template and theme (or work with a web/graphic designer)
- [ ] Reach out to your tax professional for tax rates (This may take a while so it's good to get started early)
- [ ] Map out your navigation and different pages (examples below)
- [ ] Different product pages
- [ ] Upload/Add product info
- [ ] Wholesale intro and sign-in (Depending how you have your wholesale program set up, this can be a log-in or pitch page or both!)
- [ ] About
- [ ] Write copy (Story, Mission, Values, etc)
- [ ] Select any photos
- [ ] Careers
- [ ] Write copy (Company Values, Mission, etc.)

Checklist

- [ ] Select any photos

- [ ] Select and set up or add your payment gateways

- [ ] Place in "test" mode so you don't charge yourself

- [ ] Select and set up or add your shipping service

- [ ] Set up tax rates at this time

- [ ] (If you have) Select and set up or add your accounting program

- [ ] (If you have) Select and set up or add your email marketing service

- [ ] If you don't have this, edit communications within the checkout area (usually there is "Thank you" and "Confirmation" emails)

- [ ] Make sure someone on your team is receiving order confirmation emails

- [ ] Add any other plugins you may want (This could include subscription or wholesale plugins)

- [ ] Test sending orders through

- [ ] How do the product pages look?

- [ ] How was the checkout process?

- [ ] Did anyone from your team receive a confirmation email?

- [ ] How does the invoice look?

- [ ] Is your website speaking to your accounting and shipping services?

- [ ] If applicable, test retail purchases and wholesale purchases

- [ ] For wholesale

- [ ] Does the log in work?

- [ ] Make sure if you have custom product lists or prices for your customers that they cannot be seen by other users.

- [ ] Pour yourself a celebratory cup of coffee and put your payment gateway in "active mode." **You're done!**