



SUCCESS GUIDE

for Shop Owners



Introduction

Dear Shop Owner,

As the heads of Spreadshirt's Partner Team, we – Thomas and Carolin – focus the majority of our efforts on ideas and innovations that support the success of our sellers. Our expertise has been strictly applied to the technical development of both SpreadShops and the User Area in order to further develop and perfect them from a user's point of view. It is our aim to represent our partners' diverse needs in the development of a sustainable long-term strategy of success. It is our goal to always take in all of our findings concerning our Shop Owners and put them to good use.

This guide will provide you with inspiration and give you strategic knowledge on selling. It is designed for novices and experienced Shop Owners alike, providing basic information as well as valuable strategic information. The structure is designed along the lines of the classic "marketing mix" and is tailored to the specific needs of Shop Owners. We've set out to give to you useful food for thought and strategies that you can easily implement to help you reach your individual goals.

Hakuna Matata!

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1.

STRATEGY & SELF-ORGA NIZATION

1.1. SpreadShop – Your Marketing Channel

It always starts with an idea; but how can this idea be marketed? The decision to start a SpreadShop should go hand-in-hand with creating your own marketing channel. The Shop brings together your brand or existing website with the services of Spreadshirt in order to help spread your ideas.

A good idea pays off; however, selling also implies the need to continuously improve your Shop and its presence. If you already have a theme, an established brand or dedicated followers on *Facebook*, *Instagram*, etc. you can use your SpreadShop to monetize your idea. Don't go overboard sounding like a marketeer, sending subtle and fun messages will go a long way in making your Shop look palatable.

Starting from scratch and developing a brand or idea with a stand-alone Shop will require some hard work. It's not impossible, but you need to put an appropriate marketing strategy and prioritization of concepts in place first.

The art of successful shop keeping can be summarized by getting your ideas and brand before the eyes of the highest possible number of visitors. Those who already cater to their own community can build on existing topics. If your Shop embodies the start to your business model, the focus needs to be on building a community and brand first. And this is what we can help with in the following chapters.

1.2. Marketplace, SpreadShop or Both?

At first sight, both channels may look equally suitable to achieve your sales goals. However, they are fundamentally different in terms of target groups and function. The Marketplace is visited by Spreadshirt customers who primarily look for hot topics and customizable products (for example, birthday designs, sayings, symbols, animals).



Ask yourself the following question:
How likely is it that fans will find your designs in your Shop instead of on Spreadshirt's Marketplace?

The Marketplace is not ideally suited to represent your brand. Your designs are in direct competition with other designs of the same search category. If your designs hold an appeal in terms of what's been discussed above (regardless of your brand identity), then you should use the Marketplace in order to achieve your sales goals.

To build and maintain your own brand, the SpreadShop is the more appropriate tool. The possibilities of personalization and the option to integrate your Shop with your website will increase the presence and recognition of your brand directly with your target audience.

The SpreadShop helps you to:

- Support your corporate identity
- Place your products in a targeted way
- Address your target audience

1.3. Everyone Starts Small

Your time has come! The concept of your Shop is set up and ready to go and your personalized products look great. From now on it's all about rolling up your sleeves and tackling the mission ahead. You need to get the word out that your Shop is worth a visit. This is no time to be shy or vain if you're convinced your idea is awesome anyway, right? Tell your friends about your concept, ask them for feedback and possibly for support as well, e.g. when sharing on social media and raising awareness for your Shop.

Now you'll run your first campaign (read more in [chapter 4](#)) and the first orders come in. Is this the beginning of a beautiful business? Well, only if you stay on the ball. Customers' needs who have already bought something bound to be satisfied quickly. This is why it's important to spread the word with your friends, try to acquire new customers and continue doing so continuously.

Here for a few marketing life hacks:

- Discount campaigns offer a sweet incentive to lure new customers into your Shop with current promo campaigns!
- Implore your friends, colleagues and customers to recommend your Shop.
- Get feedback about your Shop and the products offered (What are you missing? What are visitors unsure about?).
- Spreadshirt offers your customers an outstanding service. Use this information to your advantage and let your customers know!

Patience is a virtue, and in the beginning, this means more often than not: try (and fail), watch and learn. During this time, you'll get to know your target audience better and better, and you'll develop a sense of which endeavors are worth your while. Stay confident and don't be shy to get closer to your customers (e.g. through social media campaigning, [chapter 1.7](#)).

Keep an eye on what the competition does for more inspiration.

1.4. E-Commerce Development

Mobile Thinking

E-commerce is no longer only conducted from a clunky desktop computer in your office at home. Today, customers visit online shops on all kinds of devices. “Being mobile” is the decisive factor that distinguishes between success and failure.



Good to know:

Your SpreadShop is completely prepared for mobile devices.

If you don't want to lose potential customers, you should have a website that's mobile ready. Nothing is more frustrating than a site that is only navigable through the zoom function. Text links in font size 9 are virtually guaranteed to generate a high bounce rate.



More and more visitors use mobile devices when they go shopping online, but most checkouts are still completed on a computer.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Those who have not yet engaged in search engine optimization, should consider doing so once the Shop has been set up. Research on current and relevant keywords should be part of your daily routine in order to help your Shop and brand off the ground. It all begins with the selection of tags, a good description and an applicable title.



A professional piece of advice:

The SpreadShop itself cannot replace a Content Management System (CMS), but the available JavaScript interface allows you to tie into such a system.

Googles AdWords Keyword Tool is extremely helpful for finding the top search terms of the month. The tool also shows related items and provides information on how competitive relevant keywords are. You should bear in mind that the higher the competition for a keyword is, the lower the chance for it to stand out and be found.

- Try to describe the concept of your Shop in keywords
- Word your text as specifically as possible, as customers do specific keyword searches for products
- Use the product name of your top sellers as a keyword, such as: “happy birthday t-shirt”, “cross fit sweatpants” or “basketball sports jersey”
- Avoid all too common words like “cool”, “funny” or “T”
- Research the ranking of these keywords using the *Google's AdWords Keyword Tools*, *Google Insights* or other programs

SEO is never finished, and there are always ways to improve. It pays to follow a few selected online marketing blogs from time to time and to learn from their SEO strategies in order to improve your Shop's Google-ability.

Social Search

For a few years now, all social media search activities have flowed into Google's ranking algorithm, as well. These are nearly as important as keywords and descriptions. In short: The more re-tweets, likes and shares you generate with your content, the more relevant Google ranks your site. This implies that you

shouldn't just be content with the creation of a *Facebook* page, but also foster and increase the activity of the community – the more, the better.

The benefit here is based on the assumption that what feels relevant to your network and expressed in the form of Likes or re-tweets is also relevant to you. The same applies to reviews or product recommendations from friends, which gives you more detectable confidence than product recommendations with a recognizable commercial background.

The more re-tweets, likes and shares you generate with your content, the more relevance Google attaches to your site.

Equally important is your networking (keyword: linking) to other sites. First and foremost, pages you are linking to should be relevant to your content. Google recognizes the interplay between your content and other content-based keywords and links. This is why it pays to be active in related communities. This, of course, offers you the advantage of establishing your (brand) personality and become better known.

- Follow the most influential social media accounts in your listing
- Become visible: Comment, share and post in this account
- Link to your topics, products or website content

Storytelling & Emotions

Especially in the area of social media, emotions and entertainment play an increasingly important role. Brand and product merge into one, spurring specific emotions like joy, humor and love with the customer. This is why “storytelling” can create content that goes beyond the sale.

**Have your “About Us” page tell the history of your brand.
A personal component builds the foundation for sympathy and trust.**

These can be personal experiences, your own thoughts or motivational sayings. Positive emotions bring confidence and thus, a positive buying experience. This can create an emotional connection with customers, fans, and followers. Blog articles or posts, which allow visitors to look behind the scenes, are bound to establish relationships. Anything goes, as long as it supports your brand and makes its theme more believable.

To put it in simple terms: The little shop around the corner holds the bonus of familiarity, and you wouldn't think twice about buying things there since it's completely built on trust. Large retail companies need to reaffirm this trust by running image campaigns in regular intervals and by offering new service solutions.

In the chapter on social media strategy (see [chapter 1.7. 4](#)), we'll see to the compilation of content posted on *Facebook*.

**Check and analyze your own favorite shops and their social media channels! How does the provider convey an image and deploy language?
What elements evoke your trust, confidence or affection?**

Impulse Buying & Personalization Trends

More than two-thirds of online consumers regularly purchase supplies and products on large marketplaces and portals (e.g. *Amazon, Asos, Ebay*). What's more, there is a growing interest in personalized or handmade products. This market is fragmented and highly competitive. This is where it gets interesting, because more and more customers do not buy out of a specific need, but yield to so-called "impulse buying".

Impulse buying can be explained by the psychological effect of reward. Those buying for themselves do so by yielding to an impulse of desire for reward. The provision of sound visuals with an emotional appeal increases the chances for good sales.

(Source: "E-commerce 2015 – How do we really shop online" – ECC Cologne)

1.5. Practical Part – Brand Building

Anyone looking to sell successfully needs a brand which reflects its own distinctive identity. A solid brand goes a long way towards positive perception and recognition. There are, of course, a number of prominent examples (such as Apple, Coca-Cola or Nike), but building your brand doesn't need to be quite as complicated and inflated as these industry icons.

Develop a Passion for What You Do.

Being confident in your own ideas goes a long way. Work only on concepts that make you glow passionately. If you, yourself, love what you do, you have the necessary power to convince others. It is often said that if you speak on the phone with a smile on your face, people can tell. The same goes for passion for your work.

Discover Your Own Style

Discovering your own style is how you spread enthusiasm among your customers by means of the visual and emotional representation of your ideas. This doesn't only speak to quality designs, but also self-created logos or distinctive design elements that increase brand recognition. It is important that these elements are recurring and uniformly visible throughout all of your sales and communication channels.

Be Authentic and Original

In order to inspire others with your ideas, it takes more than good selling points. No one would buy a T-shirt of his favorite band because of the great product features. It is all about the emotional bond with the fans (see [chapter 1.4. 3](#)). You win them over with emotions by telling potential buyers about the idea behind your designs. Just be yourself and present yourself in the most approachable way.

1.6. Practical Part – Targeting

1.6.1. Target groups

Each business revolves around a central question: Who is my audience? All marketing activities, product offerings, customer contact and the selection of communication channels should be aligned to the target audience. We have put together some very important considerations for you designed to make your strategy wholesome:

For the customer approach:

Age, gender, residence, marital status, education level

For customer acquisition:

Preferred media and information channels, related topics and interests

For pricing:

Occupation, income, price sensitivity, consumer habits

For finding topics:

Hobbies, interests, consumer behavior, media



To collect customer data, you can run small surveys on your site designed to ask about the gender, age and other demographics.

It's a good idea to start with a *Facebook* survey. You can also sift through thematic and interest-based forums or blogs to analyze user behavior. Email newsletters provide another way to understand the basis of the applications to determine what nationality or gender your users are.

The concept of target group is quite a general one. The aim here is to map out the highest common denominator of your buyer group. For a more detailed look at your buyers, a persona model (see [chapter 1.6.2](#)) helps you work out specific customer behaviors and customer needs.

An example of a possible target audience:

Male, single, 28-35 years, \$1,600-2,300 net income, university degree, Internet savvy, active in social media, sports enthusiast

1.6.2. Personas

Why should you – next to the target group – still have a need for personas?

Your target audience is, as the name suggests, a group. However, this leaves a single customer as an individual on the sidelines. Matching customer types in the form of personas can be used to remedy this problem. By pin-pointing a unique individual, it's easier to make specific statements about a preferred customer audience while being able to address them specifically based on their needs.

What Are Personas?

A persona is a fictional person who is characterized by means of specific properties and attributes. In addition to general demographic information, a persona can be described by the following key points:

- Objectives
- Wishes
- Expectations
- Likes and hobbies
- Expectations of your products

The better you know your customers' details and understand the needs of your target audience, the easier it is to sell an idea. A possible prop here to support your approach is to give these people a fitting name like "Facebook Tony" or "Volleyball Mila" to add more flesh to their character traits. The aim is to create a profile with all the details and characteristics for each persona.



PERSONA

Team/ Product/ User: _____ Date: __ / __ / __

Media & Tech Usage _____

Lifestyle & Attitude _____

Family & Environment _____

Shopping Behavior _____

Needs _____

Name _____

Age _____

How to Make Personas?

Personas connect you with customers who are interested in your product and who are ultimately willing to buy it. We don't advise working with fabricated data or projecting one's character onto others as this would run the risk of giving away valuable potential.

We recommend the direct approach through **interviews**. Look for people who you think would potentially buy in your store. Create an online survey and ask people to join. Providing small incentives such as a little sweepstakes where people can win a T-shirt or any other product in your store is bound to prove beneficial to your Shop's success.

Google Analytics can also help you draw conclusions about **user behavior**. *Facebook* gives you a chance to run ads to target a marked audience based on different data such as gender, 'liked' pages, etc.

1.7. Social Media Strategy

Successful marketing in networks such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, etc. is vital. The networks are full of info-graphics, explanatory videos and hashtag campaigns, that always have the potential to hit the roof in a viral way. So let's look at the points that need to be considered:

Choose Your Platform

In most countries, the undisputed market leader is *Facebook*. *Twitter*, *Google+*, *Instagram* and *Pinterest* have also gained in popularity in recent years. In the

beginning, it's important to limit yourself to only a couple of social network channels. *Facebook* is the natural choice to get your social media campaign off the ground. There you will find not only the majority of your users, but also a prospect to corner almost any niche.

Content Pays Off

Your social media feeds should be laced with content that is entertaining and informative for your followers. It is particularly necessary to deliver relevant content on *Facebook*. Don't just share links to products in your Shop. You need to come up with sharable content that captures the enthusiasm of your followers and makes them want to engage in interaction.



The Facebook algorithm determines what is shown in the news feed of your followers. Everything that Facebook deems relevant for users is bound to appear more frequently in their feeds.

Relevance for Your Followers

The *Facebook* algorithm measures how relevant your content is by using the following engagement numbers:

- Number of 'likes', comments and content shares
- Frequency of profile views by your followers
- Retention of users on your posts
- Completeness of your profile
- Community overlapping with other *Facebook* pages

Please note: Remember it's not *Facebook* that makes purchases in your Shop, but rather the people who appreciate your products or stories. Be visible to these people, post regularly and engage in the interaction with your followers. Show them things that you like yourself. Stick to the stuff that is clearly related to your field of interest and your community.

1.8. We Help You to Boost Your Success

Tips & Trends on the Blog

On our [Blog](#), we give you regular insight into sales statistics, explain copyright regulations or fill you in on emerging search trends. Keep checking the blog to get useful information to incorporate into your Shop.

Discounts for Your Customers

We regularly run campaigns that you can pass on to your customers. Find out which promotion is up next by reading the newsletter as well as the User Area under the tab "Marketing". There you can see all the news and new promotions.



Coupon codes are automatically displayed in your Shop as soon as you activate the "Promotion Banner" setting in your Shop settings. You will provide an additional incentive when you use them and your own banners on your website to promote your Shop in your community.


Exchange on the Forum

Meet other Shop Owners and exchange views on various topics. Benefit from the knowledge of others and participate in the exchange.

Ask about their experience or just read up on discussions:

<https://forum.spreadshirt.com> 

Jack of All Trades – the SpreadShop

The SpreadShop meets the latest e-commerce requirements and is continuously being updated. It supports mobile browsing, has search engine optimization (SEO) and Google Analytics integration for web analysis so you can observe user behavior more precisely. You can find more information about the spread Store here: <https://shop.spreadshirt.com> .

Spreadshirt Partner App

We developed the Seller App to help retailers like you keep track of sales.

You can find more information about the app in [chapter 2.3](#). .



2.

PRICING

2.1. Design Price as a Lever

In this chapter, we will provide some insight regarding pricing and present the most important figures in e-commerce. It will help you assess the performance of your Shop correctly and react accordingly. The primary instance of pricing for Shops is the design price. Design price can be manually adjusted, and you can control the profit per item sold.

If you look at the online presence of small fashion labels, you will often find capped prices. For example, all hoodies in their line may cost \$32 and all T-Shirts \$23. Adjust the design price to round up product prices or create uniform pricing. A convincing pricing structure is important to generate trust and to look professional.

Another way to increase the appeal of your products is to adjust the design price to seasonal demand or to promote Spreadshirt's campaigns. You can, for example, reduce T-shirt prices at the beginning of summer for a short time to make them more attractive to your customers.

Design Price:

Choose a design price between \$1.00 and \$5.00. The final price will remain reasonable and you'll still turn a good profit.





Price Increase:

Significantly higher priced designs should first be tested on individual products. Watch the sales development or consult friends before you adjust all prices: "What's the most you'd be willing to pay for this T-shirt?"

2.2. Influence of Printing Types on Price

Spreadshirt offers a variety of printing types, which vary depending on the file format of the uploaded image. The print types also differ in terms of cost. This means that you can predetermine the print method and final product price by choosing a file format. The following list shows how prices are determined:

* Print prices for 1 print per item.

Printtype	Price *
 Design/ Text with plot printing, 1 color	\$3.00
 Digital Transfer/ Digital Direct (no limit)	\$4.50
 Design/ Text with plot printing, 2 colors	\$5.50
 Design/ Text with plot printing, 3 colors	\$8.00

Printing costs are included in the product price. Since the added design price can be freely adjusted, using different print types on products leads to inconsistencies in the pricing structure:

	Price *
Men's T-shirt	\$10.99
Final price with Digital Direct	\$15.49
Final price with Design/ Text with plot printing, 1 color	\$13.99

* Price example

You'd be well advised to make yourself familiar with the different types of printing, because each has a specific use. For example, some print styles can only be applied to certain products.

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Make sure that the print types you offer are uniform for all of your products.
Be sure to point out exceptions when using a different print method!

To obtain detailed information about the types of printing, please refer to this useful article in our [help section](#).

2.3. Practical Part – Watching Consumer Behavior with the Spreadshirt Partner App

To get a feel for the demand in your Shop and working with figures, we suggest using the *Spreadshirt Partner App**. The app allows access to current sales reports and provides various forms of evaluations. You should use it on a regular basis to analyze your sales to see:

- Which design did very well?
- In combination with which products did customers order the design?
- Where in your Shop can customers currently find the design?
- Do you sell more products to men or women?
- Which price range is most popular?

Appropriate measures can then be taken to increase the exposure of your Shop's top sellers, and you can highlight these accordingly on your website.

* *The Spreadshirt Partner App is available to download for free on the iTunes Store or Google Play Store. It's available for all Android and iOS devices.*

2.4. Key Figures in Online Shopping

The "conversion rate" (CVR) was established as a key figure in online marketing to allow for a numerical success evaluation of all marketing activities. It indicates how the ratio of visitors to a page relates to transactions, e.g. sales, downloads, etc. With tools such as Google Analytics, you can accurately measure and figure out how people use your site.

Online Shops that do well achieve a conversion rate of 1%-3.5%

The CVR is a percentage that usually falls within the range of 0.1 to 10 percent. Your initial CVR may seem a bit disheartening at first, but you should take it as a goal to motivate you to achieve. How do you calculate it? The following formula helps you measure your performance:

$$\frac{\text{Number of sales}}{\text{Number of visitors}} \times 100$$

Since some visitors might convert for a second time and thereby falsify the result, a more concrete indicator is the retention of unique visitors as opposed to returning visitors. Here the formula would be calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Number of purchases of a unique visitor}}{\text{Number of visits of a unique visitor}} \times 100$$

What does that mean to you as a Shop Owner? It is completely normal that visitors convert only sporadically in the initial phase after launch. To sell successfully, it is even more important to bring all actions in line with visitor behavior and to push customer acquisition. Without traffic there is no conversion. It's that simple.

If you want to sell stuff every day, you'll need to lure hundreds of visitors into your Shop every week.

3.

PRODUCT

3.1. Shop Types

Spreadshirt provides you with SpreadShop, a shop system that is not only easy to use, but that can be freely configured according to your wishes. Regarding the set-up of your Shop, you should be aware of what your goals and topics are. Here we are going to present you with a couple of shop types to help you make the right marketing and product decisions.

Fashion Shop

Consider the fashion shop as your realm for creative development. You can decide about the layout of the shop and the choice of designs and products. The fashion shop is characterized by a very consistent approach with a high degree of recognition, which is conveyed by recurring colors and a small but fine selection of styles and designs. The fashion shop is great to put your brand in the limelight.



Concepts that are difficult to express online have been around offline for ages. What shops in your area convince in terms of a coherent concept involving a logo, product selection and unified approach to interior design?

Merchandise Shop and Fan Shop

You want to be at the service of your sports club, your band or the absolute cult game? Then, a merchandise shop or fan shop is the right choice. This shop concept is earmarked by its variety of products and clearly-referenced topics. Choose from our huge selection of merchandise to print your designs upon and get a step closer to your idols and fans!

Gift Shop

The gift shop is a bit more colorful and brash, as it wants to appeal to those looking for presents for special occasions: Birthdays, weddings or anniversaries. At its core you find the relationship with family and friends. That's why a more personal touch is needed. Be aware of this info when creating products and designs that people would want to give away. Our T-Shirt Designer also gives you the chance to create products with custom messages, names, dates and photos.

3.2. Practical Part – What Makes an Attractive Offer?

Depending on your audience, the products offered should be selected with care. A sound selection and range converts significantly better than focusing on quantity instead of quality. As a Shop Owner, you may get overwhelmed by the huge assortment that Spreadshirt provides you. It's important to put your customers' needs first and to prioritize according to your target audience.

Tip 1: Reduce the Quantity

Nobody really likes bargain bins. A clean and well-stocked product range provides an overview and helps customers come to quick decisions. Focus on just a few products to meet the demands of your target audience rather than clutter your Shop with a ton of different products.

Tip 2: Fine-Tune Your Standard Product Selection

When choosing the products in your line, try thinking in categories such as "sports", "street wear" or "lifestyle". Mouse pads or aprons do not match "street wear", but perhaps the product selection in "gifts" and "accessories". It is important to create a range of products in sync with your theme to convey a uniform impression. This way, your customers will understand your concept and feel compelled to buy your stuff.

Tip 3: Remain at the Wheel

What your customers want matters. Frequently ask your customers for requests for certain products so you can meet their demand. Then add what they want to your Shop. If you've just started the Shop, you can ask friends to take a closer look at your Shop and give you tips. Ask them what they would expect in your shop. *Facebook* polls are also useful to determine customer requirements without a lot of effort.



Crucial Advice: React to Change!

At regular intervals, put individual products to the test. Make way for top sellers, seasonal products and newly trending articles.

3.3. Basket Size

On average, customers tend to check out with somewhere in the neighborhood of two articles. As explained in [chapter 1.4. !\[\]\(529949c2c3dadbaa4e538e8c643454bc_img.jpg\)](#), more and more visitors buy on impulse, so the idea that customers want to reward themselves with a purchase is a likely one. If a customer randomly ends up in your Shop – for example through links or ads – he perhaps finds the T-shirt that hits the proverbial nail on the head. As a result, he yields to the desire to buy this T-shirt.

Let's be honest: Not many of your potential customers would be likely to order more than 1, 2 or 3 products (group orders excluded). People don't know how a small supplier like you performs in terms of quality or reliability. Customers are careful when shopping online, typically ordering in relatively small quantities. If the purchasing experience is positive and your marketing efforts effective, they may return to your Shop and your goal of customer retention is successfully reached.



Keyword: Bandwagon effect.

Give accessories or inexpensive items good visibility in your Shop. These are very popular with people on a budget and for those shoppers who'd grab a little something on the way to the supermarket checkout.

4.

PROMOTION

4.1. Where are My Customers? How Does Customer Acquisition Work?

Regarding social searches (see [chapter 1.4. ☞](#)), we have already talked about how to make your own website palatable to search engines. The more visible you are in a community representing your potential customer base, the greater the chance to achieve conversions.

Since you generated your brand idea, you are best suited to determine the places where people with similar interests come together. This is where you should gain exposure to potential customers. Add the URL of your website to your profile, and post in the name of your *Facebook* page to related groups and pages. Become active commenting on posts and become visible.

As for acquisition, it's also worth posting about discount campaigns just before they're launched. We announce these in our newsletter and the news section in the User Area. Shop Owners get the information about upcoming actions well in advance so that they can promote them on their channels (see [chapter 1.8. ☞](#)). Although flyers, postcards or business cards may seem a bit old school, they are still effective measures to be handed out at fairs and markets.

4.2. Make Seasonal Trends, Events and Regional Differences Work for You

Differences in customer behavior are often due to regionalism, special events or seasonal changes. This should be known in order to exploit it.

The regional touch:

If your Shop has any relevance to a certain region (language, specific places, etc.), your customers are unlikely to come from different parts of the country or from abroad. There is no limit to the core market, but you should have a strong focus on your microcosm. You can scale this concept and expand your portfolio later.

Seasonal fluctuation:

Seasonal fluctuations are recurring patterns attributed to a particular season. This is why, for example, holiday periods or the weeks between Christmas and early January are often accompanied by a slump in sales statistics. In the spring – when customer propensity rises again – there is an increased T-shirt demand. Discount campaigns during this time are particularly worthwhile.

**Tip:**

If the decline in incoming orders continues over an extended period of time, you should check your prices, products and increase your community work.

International holidays:

Everyone is aware of the increasing hype around Halloween or Valentine's Day and the associated increase of newsletters and discount offers. As a matter of fact, holidays and campaigns are a real heyday for sellers. But there are many lesser known events that are worth your while such as *Sweatpants Day* on January 21st or *Talk-Like-A-Pirate Day* on September 19th. Operating on an international level with different styles suggests embracing events like the *Super Bowl* or the *Spanish Tomatina* that is held in Valencia. Everything can be recycled.

4.3. What Campaigns Are Worthwhile Apart from Spreadshirt Promotions?

Being creative and observing the competition is key. Promotions do not always boost sales directly, but they help to build your brand through an increase of visitors, likes and shares. Don't be afraid to invest some time and money. The following options have proven to be the most beneficial:

- **Sweepstakes:** Through contest, you can give away small gifts or products from your product selection! It's important not to forget checking the terms and conditions of the respective platform carefully to make yourself – and your customers – aware of user data usage and rules of conduct.
- **Giveaways:** If you know your customers personally, you should provide them with little somethings. Stickers, postcards, notepads or buttons come in handy and they aren't too expensive. They can be personalized with the web address of your Shop or other helpful information to stick in the memory of your peers.
- **Cooperations:** Making ties takes time, but it can increase your visibility and your Shop visits immensely. Try to find providers, retailers or social media celebrities with an audience as congruent with yours as possible. Realize joint competitions, promote your content in mutual efforts or try to align your activities. Of course, if you already have a strong reach, it will be easier to establish collaborations. The common target audience and specific ideas about the respective cooperation can produce convincing arguments to get cooperation off the ground.

4.4. Facebook Advertising – An Overview

Increase Your Reach with Advertising Campaigns

To increase the range of your posts beyond your own fan base, *Facebook* and *Instagram* offer the opportunity to display ads. Based on your target audience knowledge (see [chapter 1.6](#)), you can pay for CPC (cost per click) or CPM (cost per thousand inserts) to run posts and campaigns in a precisely predefined audience. We recommend the CPC variant as it provides a clear ability to assign your spending to user interaction, and your budget is not as quickly depleted as the number of potential inserts.

The main requirement for running successful promotions is achieving a critical mass of recipients.

As we explained the aspects surrounding the conversion rate (see [chapter 2.4](#)), your Shop should attract a fair few visitors first until you make sales. Running a campaign should be directed at reaching the largest possible group of recipients. Here we are talking about 1,000+ visitors. This does not refer to your own fans, but the recipients reached by running your promo advertisements. The range of an advertisement varies greatly and should be subject to the characteristics of your target group:






- Age
- Language
- Gender
- Location (country data)
- Interests (thematic listing according to interests, 'likes' given on social media)
- Behavior (mobile devices, operating systems of the users).

If you find out that, for example, more women click on your ad, you should consider using a product image to please this peer group next time around. Link the ad directly to the featured product to make shopping as easy as possible. Having a clear structure also helps. An ad campaign can consist of several ads. Find answers to these questions:

- Should you promote your *Facebook* page or the Shop?
- Which ad formats are you familiar with?
- Is the budget in line with the sales targets?

There is a basic distinction between two different areas for placing adverts: the right side (only available in desktop views) and the newsfeed. The newsfeed is the most used area and does especially well with mobile devices. Seeing that most users tend to be more prone on mobile devices these days, it is preferential.

Placement

Placements	
 Mobile News Feed ⓘ	<input type="radio"/>
 Instagram	<input type="radio"/>
 Audience Network ⓘ	<input type="radio"/>
 Desktop News Feed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
 Desktop Right Column	<input type="radio"/>

Especially in the beginning, it is worth trying different ads to test them against each other in order to better understand your product and customers and exploit your potential as best as possible. The more similar the respective ads, the more accurately you can determine which small element makes one work better over another.



Tip:

Create ad groups to run multiple versions of an ad simultaneously. Observe the performance and adjust details such as images, the way you address the recipient and calls to action.

The advantages of *Facebook* ads are clear: The interface for editing your ad campaigns is simple and intuitive, and the financial risk is kept at a minimum because the campaigns are always adjustable.

Assessment

Facebook and *Instagram* offer their users an interface to evaluate the success of the advertising campaigns. In this way, you can find out which groups of people make up your fan base and how well your posts did. *Twitter* even offers its own [analysis tool](#).

Also, there are many stand-alone applications, the basic or test versions of which are often free. We recommend [Fanpage Karma](#) for *Facebook* and *Twitter* and [Iconosquare](#) for *Instagram*. If you are active on *Pinterest*, you can use their analysis function, and we can also recommend using [Tailwind](#). Always recommended is using a Google Analytics ID that you can either directly tie in with your social media profiles or through integrated interfaces.

4.5. Advert Campaigns with Google AdWords

Google AdWords is one of the most powerful advertising systems out there, as it provides you with the ability to run relevant ads on the result pages for relevant searches. Your ads will be displayed above and below the organic search results. You decide when and for which keywords your ads should be run. The big advantage over SEO is that you can switch your ads live immediately, and you'll always be in control.

You only pay for clicks or mediated visitors, no matter how many times your ad was displayed. Similar to an auction, you enter your maximum bid for a keyword. Depending on the amount of your bid, some quality criteria and the competition, you will then receive an acceptance for a specific position. The higher your AdRank (calculated by bid and quality score), the better the position of your ad.

What's more, *AdWords* offers access to [Google's Display Network](#), consisting of thousands of sites. Besides running classic text ads, you can also place photos there.

Assigning keywords

The more general your keywords are, the more often your ad will appear on *Google*. However, the costs per click are bound to be higher due to stronger competition. On the other hand, if your definition terms are too narrow, the associated search volume may be too low and you may not be able to reach enough people.

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General keywords generate high and diversified traffic. Specific keywords bring about less traffic, but more potential buyers. Depending on the goal of the campaign, it is recommended that either a mixture of both is used or you decide on a targeted strategy.

Help with keyword search

To be able to obtain some information about possible keywords in advance, we recommend – next to using the [Keyword-Planner](#) – also giving the *Google* tool Google Suggest (auto-completion of search queries) a go. When entering keywords, it automatically provides you with current and commonly used term suggestions used in the search engine. [Ubersuggest](#) summarizes these proposals in alphabetical order.

Negative Keywords

You can also define keywords which you feel like avoiding, such as searches with words like “free”, “used” or “second hand”. People using those keywords are not likely to be out to spend money. Add these (and others) to your list of negative keywords!

Sitelinks – Ad Extensions

Sitelinks refine the search experience of many Google users and are therefore also called quality factors. With such an ad extension you can add useful information or links such as making reference to other products (hoodies, aprons, mugs) or designs (cat, dog, panda). Sitelinks also allow your ads to appear larger and are proven to increase the CTR.



Scheme of an AdWords advert with sitelinks. (1: main, 2: sitelinks)

4.6. Is Offline Advertising Worth it for the Shop?

Having presented activities and a selection of appropriate advertising channels online, we'd like to point out that promotions in the analog world are highly dependent on your target audience. Do you have the chance to meet your target group personally and talk to them? DIY fairs and community events are good opportunities to get in touch with potential customers directly. Here, investing in advertising material may well be worthwhile. The aforementioned giveaways play an important role. Printed flyers equipped with a QR code or a website URL will also serve their purpose. While classic advertising campaigns, newspaper articles or similar campaigns promise a very high range, these means are also very expensive and in our experience more suitable for very experienced Shop Owners.

SPREADSHOP 101

SUMMARY

Define Your Strategy

The path leading you from an initial idea to a profitable brand can be quite the adventure. And you may have to walk a few different roads before you find the right path to success. Try to be clear about where you are headed. With a clear concept and a pioneering strategy for marketing your idea in place, the next steps are likely to present themselves to you. And if you should still feel uncertainty at any point, you can always fall back on this guide, visit our blog or ask our forum community for advice.

Do Something Every Day

Selling is all about promoting your idea. The opportunities in social media – but also with online advertising – will help you define the exposure you get. Continuously increase the visitor rate on your pages. Increase the interactions by providing interesting content. Do this diligently enough and you'll reap the rewards on social media platforms such as *Facebook*. You may also want to be dealing with the term Social Search in order to understand how your behavior in social media affects your findability.

Define Your Target Group as Accurately as Possible

Know your target audience and you'll sell successfully. Whether you are just beginning or already have a community, it's important to **define your target audience** and adapt all of your activities exclusively to them. The target group characteristics should consist of a group of people with info such as average age, income and place of residence. **Use personas to elicit a precise description of your customers** as they relate to the specific customer behavior, interests, desires and goals as in "buys only durable clothing". Personas make your audience tangible. Both approaches allow you to understand the needs of your customers more precisely in order to further professionalize both your offer and your website.

Read Your Customers Every Request in Their Eyes

Always try to look at the performance of your brand and your Shop through the eyes of your customers. Get feedback from friends and compare yourself to the competition. Can navigating your Shop be done intuitively, and is content presented in an easily-digested manner? Are the expectations created by your offer actually met? Is it possible that some of your products are unnecessary? How do potential customers get to your store? What makes you stand out from other vendors? Do you spread enthusiasm with interesting content and information? The better you can answer these questions, the more people will come to visit your Shop and increase your chances to be successful.

You Are the Brand

The first impression counts! From the first visit, the design of your site, the tonality and the whole imagery triggers a feeling in your visitors. Every little detail determines how professional, light-hearted and convincingly your site works – or maybe not. Be mindful of following a common path in your storytelling. You alone decide how your brand presents itself.

Bring It On! You Decide Where to Go!

We hope our guide has provided you with a good overview about the world of selling, and that we could give you enough inspiration to help build a successful Shop. If you have any questions or want to give us some feedback, please send an e-mail to partner@spreadshirt.com. We'd love to hear from you!

Best Regards,
Caro and Thomas

