

Think you need an online shop?

Here's what you need to know

B R A V E

Explore. Innovate. Create.



Why Ecommerce

Why now



“During the Covid-19 crisis, it’s clear that our clients with ecommerce sites are still doing business. In some cases, doing better than ever before.”

Grant Mills
CEO of Brave Digital

Stay relevant. Stay current. Stay in business.



Ecommerce is thriving and maturing in South Africa

- Ecommerce revenue growing at a rate of **15% y-o-y** ¹
- Ecommerce revenue in SA in 2020 is ± **US\$3,804m** ¹
- By 2021, Internet user penetration expected to reach **60%** ²
- Mobile penetration is growing, currently at **65%** ²



Covid - 19



Online Shopping

More South African consumers exposed to online shopping



Staying safe

Due to social distancing, shopping from home now has a wider appeal



Lockdown

During lockdowns, shopping online often the only option



The nation has never been more primed to visit your virtual retail space.

Ecommerce and the financial benefits for your business

Lower cost to scale. Increased ROCI

Software is a force multiplier - the effort you put in is multiplied out. You can leverage your investment significantly once you go digital.

An online shop is scalable

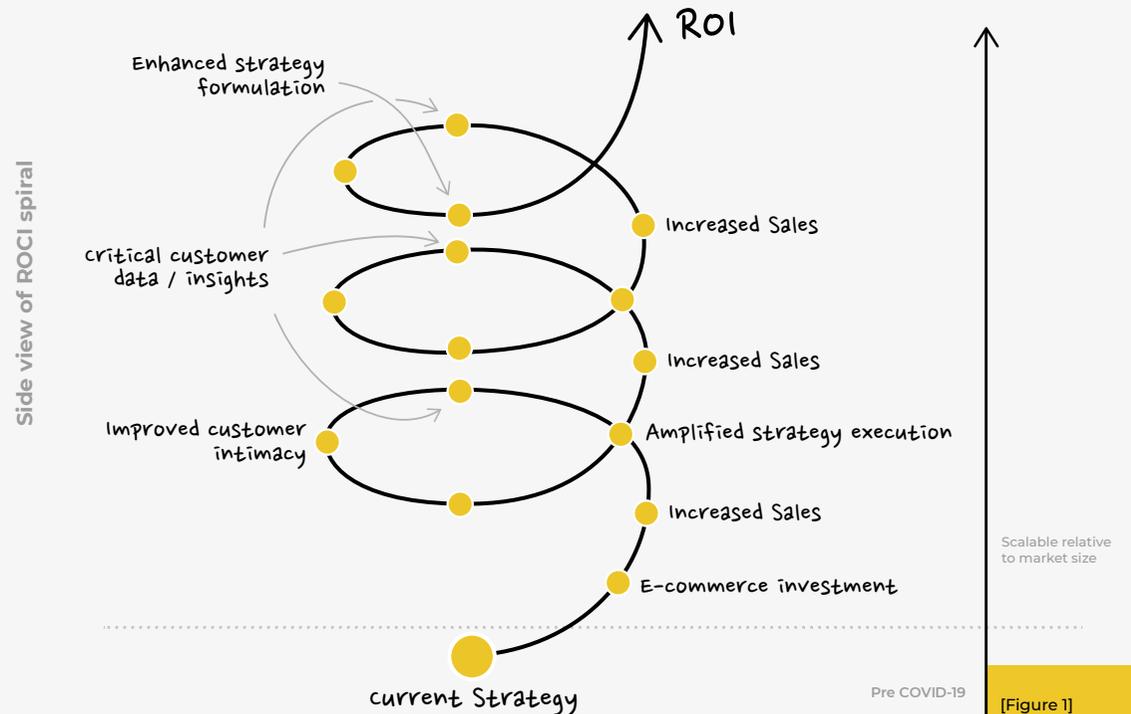
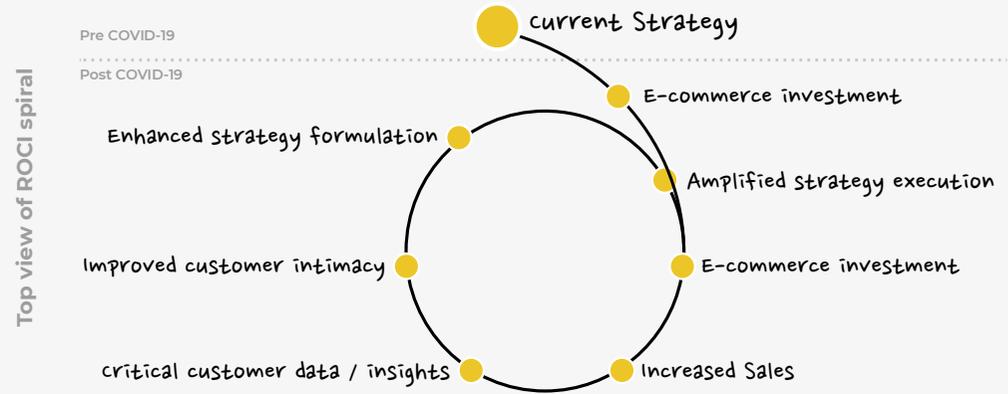
Build it properly once, and it can keep growing in lockstep with your business. Keep reading to find out how to ensure you get a scalable, flexible solution.

Improving your return on capital invested

An ecommerce platform becomes a true asset that enables you to leverage your Pre-COVID corporate strategy in a post-COVID economy (see Fig 1 on the right). Ecommerce allows you to get back to selling your products, and start gathering valuable data about your customers. The result? You get to know your customers better, which informs your strategy formulation and amplifies your strategy execution efforts, creating a scalable, positive feedback spiral over time.

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Self reinforcing ROCI spiral



[Figure 1]

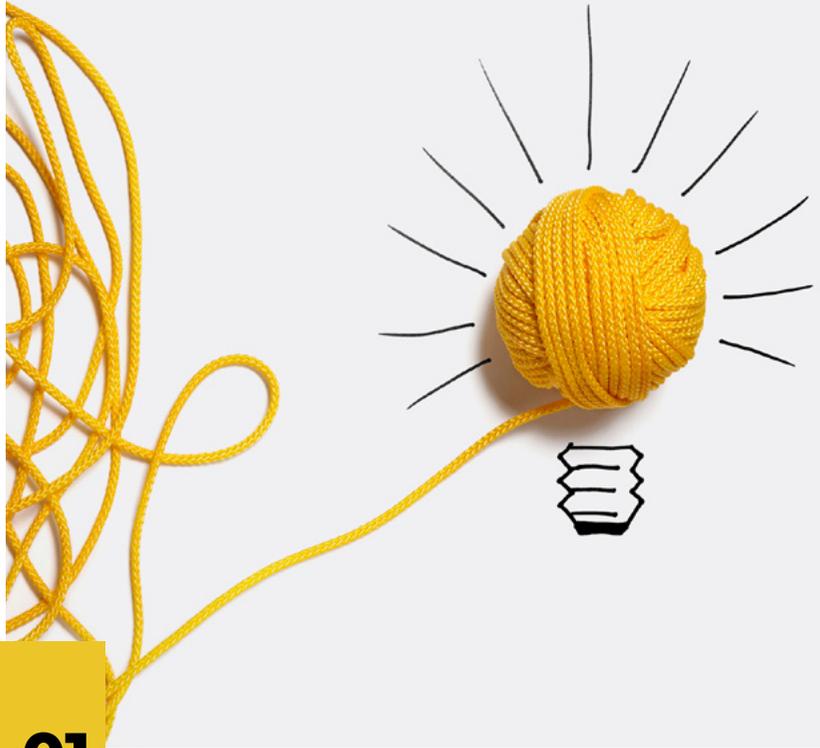


What you really need to know before building your online shop

“Significant competitive advantage can be gained by understanding your customers, then adopting user-centred design principles to help them reach their goals, and ultimately return.”

Ryan Hudson-Bennett
Creative Director & Co-Founder of Brave

Arming yourself with these vital insights before selecting a development team to build your online shop may well save you time, money and trouble in the long-run.



01

Have a design strategy for converting potential customers into paying ones

From the start of each project at Brave Digital, we're mindful of the end goal - to get customers to buy.

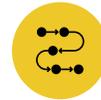
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To achieve the best possible conversion rates, your online shop should follow User Experience (UX) best practices to ensure that it's designed to be:



Easy-to-use

Your potential customers are used to websites that function a certain way. Don't introduce unnecessary confusion.



Obvious to navigate

It should always be clear where to click, and what to do next. The user journey should have a 'flow'.



Uncluttered

Ensure that users can easily find what they're looking for. Crowded pages equal information overload.



Painless to sign-up and purchase

Make the checkout process as smooth as possible to avoid cart abandonment by:

- Minimising steps to sign up and buy. 21% of cart abandonment occurs because the checkout process is too long and/or complicated.
- Following best practice when it comes to the checkout process, including page layout and ordering of steps.
- Knowing your user. At Brave Digital we've found that understanding the psychology of online sales can make the difference between a sale and an abandonment.

02

Optimise for flexibility, scalability and integration

“Building an e-commerce site starts with understanding how the client’s existing business operates and how best to tie into systems already in place. This step is crucial in a successful e-commerce deployment.”

Mike Pote
Senior Developer at Brave Digital

When it comes to building your online shop, there are many DIY plug-and-play ecommerce options out there, but if you want to be genuinely competitive in the market, teaming-up with specialist software developers is pivotal.

Why is this the case?

Building from the ground up means:

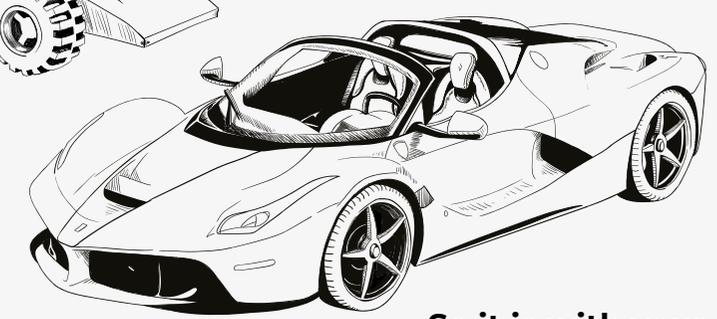
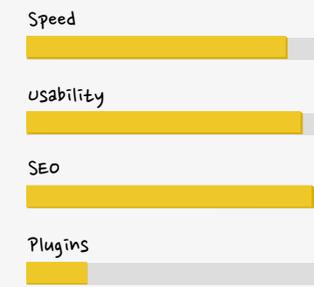
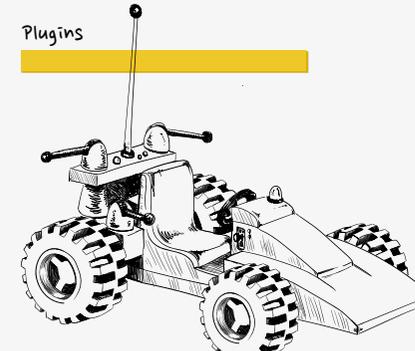
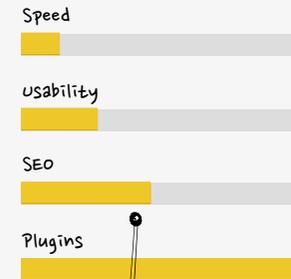
- Robust architecture that holds up under pressure,
- A system that can integrate with the best ecommerce tools on the market,
- A site that can grow as your business does.

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Imagine building a sports car...

First, you need an engine that’s powerful enough to go at speed, whilst being strong enough to handle the forces thrown at it. You need a chassis that can support the engine, withstand the stresses of racing, and provide an optimal base for sleek, drag-reducing body work.

If you start with a basic little engine you find online, and keep adding bits to it to make it faster or more agile, adding ‘plug-ons’ as you go, you’re going to end up with something unstable that barely makes it to the starting line, and doesn’t have a hope of finishing the race.



...So it is with your online shop.



At Brave Digital we have a legacy of building ecommerce websites that function as business tools, each one an integrated system that is flexible and scalable.

This means that the websites can improve, as time passes, based on valuable insights collected.

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It also means that the online shops can integrate with the best 3rd party tools, such as:

Woocommerce

- One of the most highly-regarded and powerful Ecommerce tools available today.
- Offers back-office functions.

Metrilo

- Collates insights and learnings to achieve better customer intimacy.
- Measures marketing performance, tracks product performance, and explores individual customer behavior in detail.

Payment Systems

- You want the best, most secure way to get payments from your customers. Being able to integrate seamlessly with the top-end payment systems is essential for ecommerce success.
- Some of the systems we've experience integrating with include: FNB, PayFast, Peach Payments and PayGate.

Delivery integration

- Getting orders to your customers often requires that your online shop integrates fully with an established, tried-and-tested delivery solution such as Deliveroo or MDS Collivery.

Integrating an online shop with existing back-office systems

- If your business has a stockroom, ordering and delivery system already in place, Brave Digital has extensive experience in integrating new ecommerce sites with existing systems, such as Syspro, Argility, etc.

03

Prioritise speed, security and SEO

As experienced software developers, we always build with speed in mind.

The faster your ecommerce website loads, the better your SEO scores, which means a higher ranking with Google Search Engines.

Customers expect things to happen quickly...



Excessive use of plugins, sloppy code, and images that aren't optimised for the web are just some of the factors that can slow down loading speed.

Strong site security is essential when your trustworthiness is on the line.



17%

of incomplete purchases are due to lack of trust on behalf of the user. Give them reason to trust your website with their credit cards. ³

All websites should be as secure as possible to avoid hacking and misuse. Here are a few vital security aspects that you'll need to consider:

- Hosting
- SSL certificates
- POPI / GDPR compliance
- Encryption of user data
- Integration with a reliable payment system (as covered earlier)

Get your SEO right to get found by your customers.

We've already covered how site loading speed can affect your search engine rankings, but that's just the tip of the iceberg...

Search engines determine the quality of your site based on a range of ever-evolving factors, but here are a few to keep in mind:

- **Cross-device compatibility**
Responsive websites are Google's preferred choice for mobile optimisation. ⁴
- **Good UX**
As mentioned earlier, your site needs to be easily navigable and searchable, with relevant internal linking.
- **Meta descriptions and title tags**
Utilise your website code to inform users and search engines as quickly as possible.
- **Image tagging**
While users respond to great images, Google can't see them. Use alt-tags to ensure your images count.
- **High quality content and descriptive headlines**
Great copywriting not only gives your site visitors what they want, it helps users and engines to find you, and improves your relevancy scores.

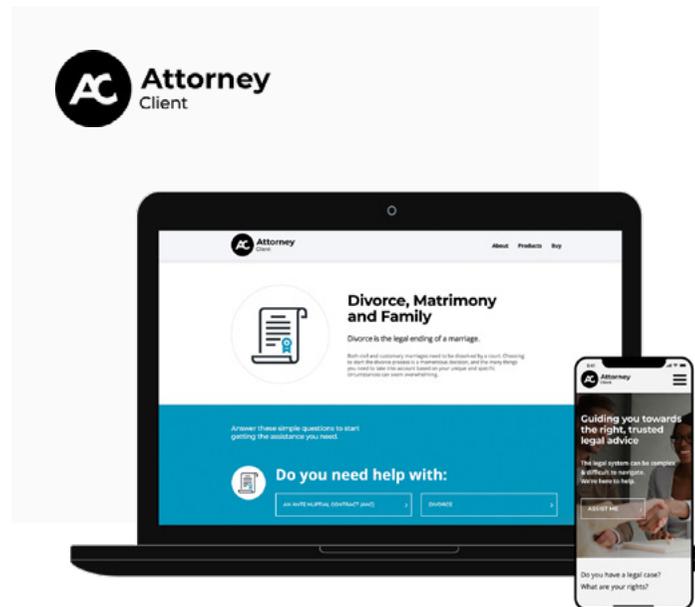
What you should expect to spend

To get a successful ecommerce site that meets the high standards covered in the previous pages, you'll likely be paying for top-class web designers and experienced developers that know their stuff.

At Brave Digital we guide our clients to choose the best solutions to fit their budget, and are up-front about the financial realities. The more complex your online shop needs to be, the higher your budget needs to be.



Real-world examples from Brave Digital:



Online legal assistance site

Legal help in just a few clicks on an easy-to-use interactive site that matches users with trusted attorneys.



G.Fox ecommerce website

Massive online shop selling a vast range of products with multiple options for each. Back-end features a bespoke autonomous 'product update' agent.





04

Quick summary:

-  Ecommerce is a maturing market in South Africa, and the addition of Covid-19 means it's now more important than ever to consider an ecommerce platform.
-  Financial benefits of ecommerce include lower cost to scale, and increased ROI.
-  Before you build:
 - Have a design strategy for converting customers that encompasses UX and UI best practices, and a streamlined checkout process.
 - Ensure your site is optimised for flexibility, scalability and integration of the best 3rd parties by building robustly from the ground-up.
 - Prioritise speed, security and SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) by using expert developers.
-  Budget according to your needs – the more complex the system, the higher the cost.
-  Ensure you pick a development team that can deliver on all these requirements.

Thank you

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