



## **Top E-Commerce CMS platforms (Shopify / WordPress / BigCommerce)**

Seunghun Bang

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

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## Abstract

<b>Author(s)</b> Seunghun Bang
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<b>Report/Thesis Title</b> Top E-Commerce CMS platforms
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<p>The purpose of this thesis is to present a clear direction for the e-commerce environment of future entrepreneurs' business through e-commerce. There are many types of e-commerce cms platforms. How to start your own business according to your budget, direction, and various aspects is one of the topics that many dreamers of entrepreneurs worry about.</p> <p>Starting a business requires a lot of preparation. It also requires serious consideration in various areas such as target markets and target customers.</p> <p>The goal of this thesis is to specify how an entrepreneur should choose an e-commerce CMS platform and what direction to start considering the basic parts (cost, business size, etc.) of starting a business.</p> <p>Followed by this general survey on the three most used e-commerce cms platforms which are 'Shopify', 'Wordpress' and 'BigCommerce', and through which platforms entrepreneurs can achieve their goals according to their own business items and goals.</p> <p>The theoretical framework will begin with a survey of the market shares of the three currently best e-commerce cms platforms. We will describe the common functions and differences that common CMS platforms have based on market research on what kind of business they have. Based on such differences, you will be able to build basic data on how to set the direction of your e-commerce.</p> <p>The outcome of this research is to obtain the qualitative data. Therefore, it will be possible to suggest which platform can be more beneficial to entrepreneurs with a specific direction. As well as I can present a more valuable direction along with the results of examining what aspects to consider in the field rather than just the theoretical part by interviewing developers who build e-commerce with this technology.</p> <p>Finally, the result of this thesis is to have the specific datas among these three main platforms so that it can direct people with the business to choose which platforms to approach first based on various aspects of starting their own business.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Entrepreneurs; E-commerce; CMS;

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# 1 Introduction

The "e-commerce market", which refers to a market in which products or services are purchased using online (PC, mobile, etc.) media, has already penetrated our daily lives for a long time and continues to expand its scope and scale. Then why is the recent e-commerce market/business more popular than other businesses and deeply embedded in daily life?

The answer lies in the advancement of technology.

## 1.1 Background

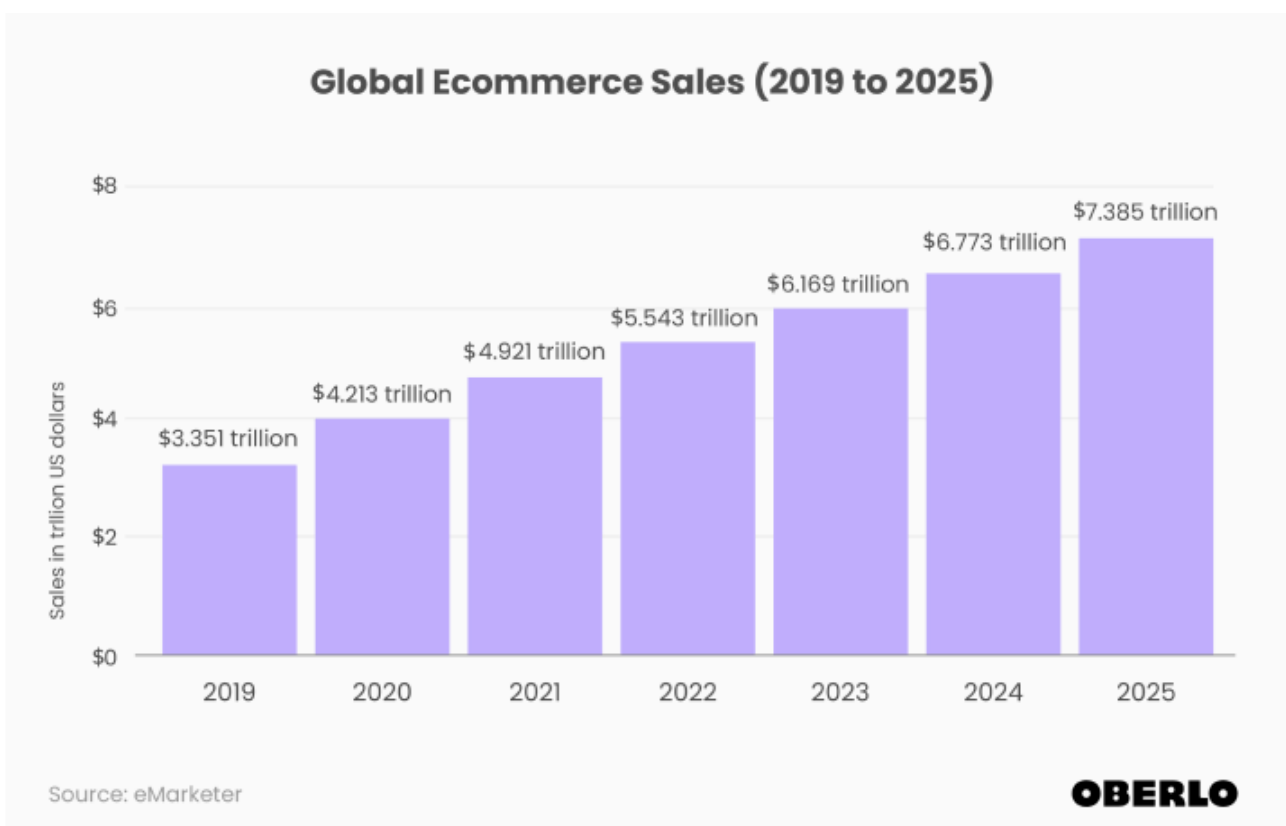


Figure 1. Global Ecommerce Sales (2019 to 2025). (Adapted from mowico team 2022)

If we analyze the numerical values in Figure 1, we can see that the prospects for e-commerce are good. The pace of development is not going to decrease, and it can be expected that the size of the business in the future will grow accordingly.

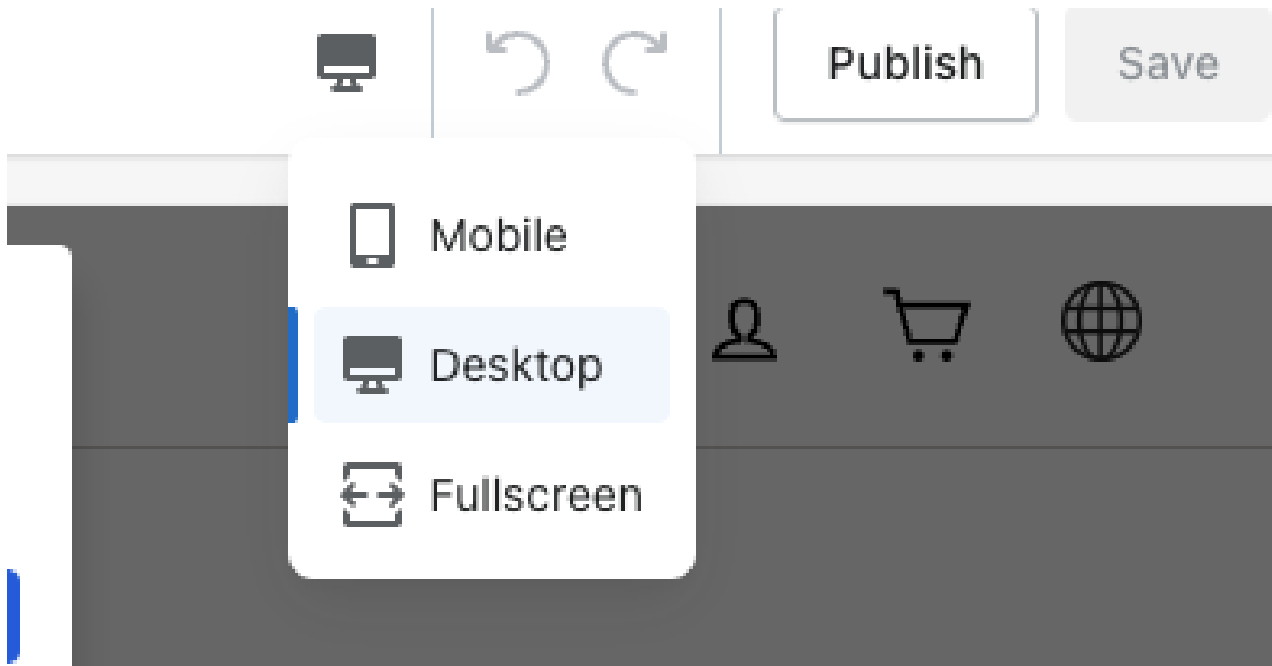


Figure 2. Shopify Platform Responsive Test Functionality in Admin Page of the theme

There is one thing to watch out for. In particular, the increase in demand for products or services in the e-commerce market has a great impact on the supply of mobile devices to many people. Therefore, even though it is a website, it is important to know that if it causes inconvenience to users or has problems in the environment used even in the mobile environment, it may be more competitive than other platforms.

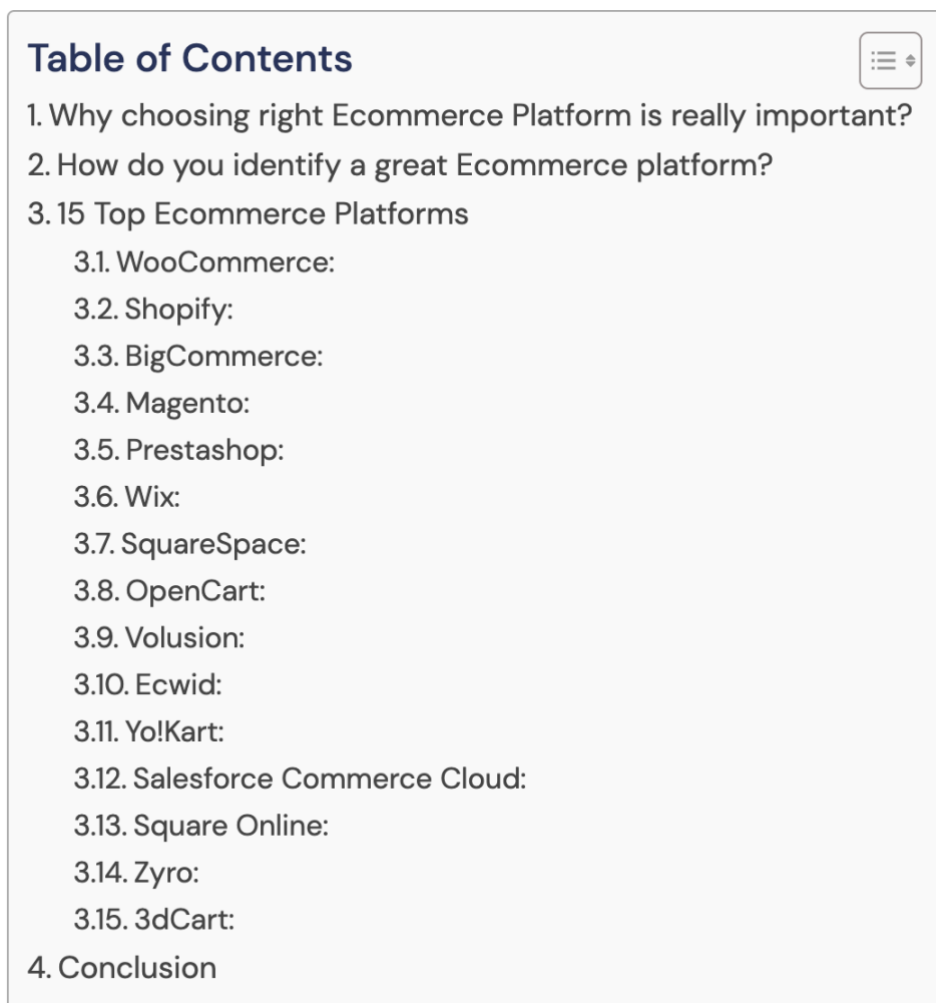
As an example, with shopify platform to show the mobile development, through this Figure 2, there are the feasibility and readiness of the Shopify platform. As the demands go higher, it is natural to think about both mobile & website users and it is not personally laborious to have the test environment for responsive design, but Shopify can preview various display situations before publishing e-commerce stores through built-in functions and prevent problems.

There are three main reasons for the development of e-commerce. In the case of emerging markets, factors for the growth of the e-commerce market, such as 1) household income growth, 2) mobile device penetration, and 3) population, are well established.

- 1) In general, the greater the income, the greater the expenditure on consumption.
- 2) Due to the development of mobile technology, various social media marketing is also developing at the same time. It can be seen that the exposure of the e-commerce market is also increased.
- 3) In general, the greater number of populations, the more people who are willing to pay

Not only this, but also the development of related businesses can be said to be related. As an example, consider the position of the delivery industry. As the demand for faster delivery expands, the delivery industry is contemplating and developing how to provide faster service to customers. Accordingly, it can be seen that the delivery area (eg fresh food) can also be expanded, which has a positive effect on the expansion of the e-commerce industry category.

Moreover, considering the rapid growth of the world through the graph of Figure 1, this trend is expected to accelerate.

A screenshot of a document's table of contents. The title 'Table of Contents' is at the top left in a bold, dark blue font. To its right is a small icon of a list with a downward arrow. The list items are numbered 1 through 4, with item 3 having sub-items 3.1 through 3.15. The text is in a standard black font on a light gray background.


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Figure 3. Top Ecommerce Platforms By Market Share. Shoaib Khan

The reason I chose these three platforms is simply because they are the most representative platforms. In addition to this, you can tell by looking at the list, but if you can analyze the representative platforms among various other platforms, you will be able to give more solid experience and advice to other business starters.

## **1.2 Purpose of the research**

The goal of this thesis is to present a specific direction for entrepreneurs starting e-commerce and to give recommendations how to choose and deploy e-commerce platform.

As suggested above, as the prospects for the e-commerce market are good, many people want to start their own business. However, there can be confusion about which platform to start on, which is the most important, except for basic business preparation, there are several comparison materials, but it is difficult to know the practical difference.

We aimed to express specific strengths and weaknesses through interviews with people in the field of e-commerce as well as data on the Internet.

For example, depending on the size of your plan's e-commerce business, different platforms offer different plans and different plug-ins. There are functions that are provided in common by the three platforms, but I am aiming to find the direction I am pursuing through the functions that are different.

## **1.3 Thesis type and method**

This thesis type is research-oriented thesis to answer the research question based on online resources and qualitative interviews with a group of professional employees and CTO from a company who are working closely with E-commerce platforms.

The structured qualitative interviews were chosen to ensure the specific detail insight from the people who have experiences to develop the E-commerce business with among three platforms.

Online resources can help to implement the way of thinking and show a slightly wider perspective. However, references should be clearly marked and well differentiated measures of correctness of the data.

## **1.4 Thesis structure**

This thesis structure starts with an introduction that showing about background information of the overview of E-commerce Business ecosystem, as well as objectives and goals of this thesis with thesis type and research questions.

The theoretical framework is the foundation of research. It is essential to argue why all research, be it dissertation or degree work, is understandable and requires research. This can be considered an important issue, and if the theoretical framework is not clear, the reliability of the investigation



may be diminished, or it may be expected that it will not go through the correct process, so be careful. As it will begin with a survey of the market sales of the main e-commerce platforms, it must provide a broad vision of the research, which is clarity of provision of information. If these points are lacking, persuasion will be lacking. In Chapter 2, through online resources, it will show the list of the differences and strengths and weaknesses of the basic e-commerce platforms. In Chapter 3, by providing the measure of information that is more persuasive and more detailed than online sources, as interviewed research questions are answered by e-commerce related business workers, it will help to build the foundation to reach a conclusion. And there will be the last summary of comparison for the last chapter including the information of both online resources and interview resources.

### **1.5 Research questions**

This research is to find out what is the most efficient and effective e-commerce platforms among these three based on the size of business level and having specific standard of deciding e-commerce platform for own business.

RQ: How popular and efficient e-commerce platforms support various types of businesses to start their own e-commerce stores and how would you start your business?

The interview questions are as follows:

IQ 1: Suppose, you are thinking of starting E-Commerce Business. Which platform are you going to utilize for your E-Commerce platform among three options?

IQ 2: What would be the main reason for people not starting their own business in E-Commerce, even if they have a great idea?

IQ 3: What would be the main reason for you to select the platform?

IQ 4: Do you have any experiences that you might dislike the specific platform from your work experiences and why?

IQ 5: Do you think the sizes of business can have different benefits according to these three platforms?

## 2 'Shopify' vs 'Wordpress' ('WooCommerce') vs 'BigCommerce'

Here is the overview information about three main platforms.

- Shopify: The all-around top e-commerce solution with rich features, one of the quickest and easiest platforms to use to start an online store.
- WooCommerce: An open-source WordPress plugin, best suited for WordPress users and business owners who want an approachable open-source solution. (2022 Randa)
- BigCommerce: An all-in-one e-commerce platform with impressive payment processing options, well-suited for a variety of business owners.

### 2.1 Basic Prices (Shopify / WooCommerce / BigCommerce)

**Set up your store, pick a plan later**

Try Shopify free for 3 days, no credit card required

Start free trial

By entering your email, you agree to receive marketing emails from Shopify.

Monthly
Yearly (Save 10%)

+ 3 MONTHS FOR €1/MO +		
<p><b>Basic</b></p> <p>Everything you need to create your store, ship products, and process payments</p> <p style="font-size: small;">€24</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">EUR € 1 /mo</p> <hr/> <p><b>WHAT'S INCLUDED ON BASIC:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Basic reports</li> <li>👤 2 staff accounts</li> <li>📍 Up to 4 inventory locations</li> </ul> <div style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">Try for free</div>	<p><b>Shopify</b></p> <p>Level up your business with professional reporting and more staff accounts</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">EUR € 69 /mo</p> <hr/> <p><b>WHAT'S INCLUDED ON SHOPIFY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Professional reports</li> <li>👤 5 staff accounts</li> <li>📍 Up to 5 inventory locations</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid #28a745; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">Try for free</div>	<p><b>Advanced</b></p> <p>Get the best of Shopify with custom reporting and our lowest transaction fees</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">EUR € 289 /mo</p> <hr/> <p><b>WHAT'S INCLUDED ON ADVANCED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Custom report builder</li> <li>👤 15 staff accounts</li> <li>📍 Up to 8 inventory locations</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid #28a745; text-align: center; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;">Try for free</div>

Figure 4. Shopify Pricing & Plan (Adapted from Shopify main website)

Shopify offers these three plans. However, if you are running your own business with an annual plan, you can proceed with a 10% discount. However, considering the third-party plug-ins Shopify has, there is a possibility that the usage fee could increase further.

WooCommerce has a different direction than other platforms. WooCommerce can be defined as a WordPress plugin. Basically, it can be said to be a plug-in that transforms a regular webpage or blog of WordPress into an online place.

WooCommerce is a free open-source plugin, but the free features aren't enough for a website. That means user will most likely have to pay for additional features like: (Themes, WordPress additional plugins, etc.)

A basic budget starts at as little as \$10 per month, and if users want more advanced features and rich user customization, it can be easily added up to \$200 or more. Also, hosting related plans has to be considered into your business budget plan because it is a fee that users keep paying every month.

<b>WooCommerce Price Check List</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b>
Web Hosting	Between \$2.95 – \$13.95 a month
Name of the Domain	Between \$10 – \$20 a year (or potentially free, if included in your hosting plan)
Theme	Between \$0 – \$129 (one-off cost, but support is paid annually)
SSL Certification with additionaly Security	Annually, \$0 – \$450 (or potentially free, if included in your hosting plan for SSL)
<b>Additional Plug-in (Examples)</b>  Payment Shipment Customer Service Security Various Ads Deisgn features	Between \$0 – \$299 a year

Figure 5. WooCommerce Pricing (Adapted from websiterating)

As well as BigCommerce, there are main three plans with upgraded features for Enterprise plan offer. Also, they offer 10% discount for annual plan for 'Plus' and 'Pro' plan. To upgrade your BigCommerce store, there are also available resources based on various categories which are:

**Try BigCommerce free for 15 days, then pick a plan**

[START YOUR FREE TRIAL](#)

Monthly Annual

Save up to 10% when you pay annually. Offer available for Plus and Pro plans.

Standard

\$29.95/mo

Sell online with your own beautiful online store

MOST POPULAR

Plus

\$79.95/mo

Grow your online business with marketing tools proven to increase conversion

Pro

\$299.95/mo

Scale your growing business with a comprehensive set of features

Enterprise

Contact sales or call 1-866-991-0872 for custom pricing

Power your team's success with the best full-service open platform

Figure 6. BigCommerce Pricing & Plan (Adapted from BigCommerce main website)

Overall prices are not different much compared to Shopify plan. Three of essential plans support various features as if Multiple storefronts, sales channels, multi-tier pricing to B2B integration as a default.

However, there are features that can only supported by specific plans which are:

Features	Standard	Plus	Pro	EnterPrise
Abandoned cart saver	X	O	O	O
Extra payment gateways	X	O	O	O

Real-time shipping quotes	X	X	O	O
ShipperHQ shipping tool	X	X	X	O
API Integration calls	X	X	X	O
API supprt	X	X	X	O
Faceted search (product filtering)	X	X	O	O
Custom Filter (product filtering)	X	X	O	O
Customer group segmentation	X	O	O	O
Price lists	X	X	X	O
Pre-negotiated rates	X	X	X	O
Customer group pricing	X	X	X	O
Bulk pricing	X	X	X	O
B2B tier pricing	X	X	X	O

Figure 7. BigCommerce Features Table (Adapted from Bsscommerce)

## 2.2 Additional Enterprise Plans

Shopify and BigCommerce has their own additional enterprise plans for upgraded features.

### 2.2.1 Shopify Plus

Shopify has an upgrade plan that allows users to create unlimited staff accounts called Shopify Plus. All resources of the existing Shopify plans are provided by default, and there are 13 key differences, which are:

- A dedicated account manager (Launch Manager / Engineer)
- More theme customization with access to Liquid
- Unlimited staff accounts
- More control over the checkout
- More API integrations
- Exclusive apps
- Integrations with existing platforms
- Wholesale channels
- Merchant Success Program
- Exclusive access to other resources
- A unified dashboard to manage multiple stores
- More in-depth analytics options
- Shopify Plus pricing – higher prices (that vary based on sales)

(Adapted from Shopify vs Shopify Plus: 13 Key Differences Between the Two)

With manager accounts, unlimited staff accounts, and more free API integrations / Exclusive App / Theme customizations, the owner's e-commerce store can be decorated more colorfully.

Shopify Plus not only supports APIs such as gift card and multi-pass login, but also integrates with various custom apps and builds personal private apps. There are also other integrations with existing platforms as if PIM, ERP, IMS & OMS, CRM, WMS, Global fulfilment partners and other third-party logistics are available to integrate to upgrade your E-commerce business.

Exclusive apps include apps that are not available to existing Shopify users. For example,

- Wholesale channel: Shopify's wholesale channel is a feature designed to help businesses with high-volume B2B sales. It provides a separate storefront that is hidden from the public, enabling you to create custom pricing and discounts, set minimum order quantities, and restrict access to specific products or collections for wholesale customers.

With this feature, you can manage both retail and wholesale orders from the same dashboard, making it easy to streamline your business operations.

- **Shopify Flow:** Shopify Flow is an eCommerce automation platform that enables you to automate many customer-facing tasks and office processes within your store and across your apps. It's built on a simple visual builder that allows you to create triggers, conditions, and actions that automate tasks such as tagging loyal customers, sending reorder requests, and more. With Shopify Flow, you don't need any coding knowledge to automate tasks, making it accessible to all users.
- **Launchpad:** Launchpad is a useful tool for planning and automating flash sales, product launches, or sales campaigns. With Launchpad, you can create a schedule for your event, automate tasks such as product publishing and price changes, and customize your storefront to reflect your campaign. Once your event is over, you can easily roll back all changes made during the event, making it a seamless process.
- **Script Editor:** Script Editor is a powerful tool that enables you to create personalized shopping experiences for your customers during the checkout process. By using small pieces of code, you can apply discounts, customize shipping and payment options, and reduce the number of abandoned carts. With Script Editor, you have complete control over the checkout process, enabling you to create a seamless experience for your customers.
- **Transporter app:** Transporter app is an app that makes it easy for you to import customer, product, and order records into your
- **Shopify store.** With Transporter, you can seamlessly migrate from another platform or store, making it easy to transfer data without losing any information. This feature is especially useful for businesses looking to move from another eCommerce platform to Shopify.
- **Bulk Account Inviter:** Bulk Account Inviter is an app that enables you to invite customers who have been imported from another platform or store to activate their accounts for your online business. With this app, you can easily invite customers to your Shopify store without having to manually send individual invitations. This feature is especially useful for businesses looking to migrate from another eCommerce platform to Shopify. Other than these are mainly focused on detailed dashboard of diagnose your multiple stores with collaborating other platforms and resources.

However, please be aware that Shopify Plus plan will require a minimum \$ 2,000 per month for standard setups and integrations that can be up to \$ 800,000 sales per month.

## 2.2.2 BigCommerce Enterprise plan

BigCommerce, like Shopify, may offer larger plans as your business grows. It's called the Enterprise plan. What makes the BigCommerce Enterprise plan special is broken down into six main categories:

- Reliable Hosting & Security
- Comprehensive Conversion Tools
- Additional Shipping Support
- Custom Facets (Product Filtering)
- No Limits to API Calls
- Higher Level Customer Service

(Adapted from BigCommerce vs BigCommerce Enterprise)

Compared to other platform, BigCommerce has great built-in sales features which are:

Customer Groups	Segment your customers for pricing, product access and promotions without having to maintain a second site.
Price Lists	Give B2B customers a B2C-level experience with custom pricing at the SKU level for customer groups.
Bulk Pricing	Take control of bulk pricing with customization down to the SKU level for individual customers or customer groups.
Purchase Orders	Offer approved customers payment by purchase order via BigCommerce solution tech partners.
Punch Out	Customize BigCommerce to your ERP punch out solution via framing and sequence. Or, use our best-in-breed partner PunchOut2Go.
Quote Management	Manage quotes with native CSR generated quote management and third-party tools, including B2B Ninja and BundleB2B.



B2B Payment	Make it easier for your customers to pay with a broad spectrum of flexible payment methods and credit authorization.
Advanced Search	Power your store with faceted search built with Elasticsearch or integrate with best-in-breed solutions for complex search criteria.
APIs	Use the industry's fastest APIs to automatically sync data from 3rd party systems (such as ERPs) seamlessly into BigCommerce.

Figure 8. BigCommerce Built-in Sales Features (Adapted from BigCommerce B2B sales features)

### 2.3 Features Differences Between Platforms

Searching the platforms' differences on the specific platform's main webpage cannot be reliable data. They have their own priorities and strengths they advertise to main potential business owner and their interpretations of each functionality may differ.

Key features	BigCommerce	WordPress	Shopify
Free trial	✓	—	✓
24/7 support	✓	—	✓
Sell online and in-store	✓	—	✓
Business capital	—	—	✓
Custom domain	✓	✓	✓
SEO features	✓	—	✓
Hosting	✓	—	✓
Sell worldwide	✓	✓	✓
Multi-currency support	✓	—	✓
Mobile-friendly	✓	✓	✓
Fraud protection	—	—	✓
Integrated checkout	✓	—	✓
Integrated fulfillment network	—	—	✓
Email marketing tools	—	—	✓
App Store	✓	✓	✓
Mobile app for merchants	✓	—	✓

Figure 9. Why choose Shopify over BigCommerce and WordPress. (Adapted from Shopify main website)

This is what shopify website provide us as a comparison of their platforms with others. It is a typical claim on the Shopify website as a difference of given platforms. However, it is wise to consider the reliability of relevant information. Since the claims on this page are from Shopify's position,

## Both BigCommerce & Shopify offer credit card rates that improve with each plan

However, Shopify merchants would be forced to pay additional transaction fees on top of any credit card processing rates if they used a provider other than Shopify Payments. The additional transaction fees range from 2% (on Shopify Basic) to 0.5% (on Shopify Advanced). BigCommerce merchants never have to worry about paying additional transaction fees no matter which credit card processing provider works best for your business.

Figure 10. BigCommerce VS Shopify (Adapted from BigCommerce main website)

As BigCommerce insists, there are the features they consider as their main priorities, so it is hard to distinguish which platforms has the edge. Thus, it is better to consider and compare about what features each platform can operate with, rather than making comparisons with other platforms.

### 2.3.1 Ease of Use

In general, self-hosted plugins like WooCommerce are relatively less easy to use than those built with their own e-commerce platforms like Shopify or BigCommerce.

In-house e-commerce platforms are all ready for those starting a business. On the other hand, since WooCommerce is hosted by itself using plugins in WordPress, WooCommerce can look much more attractive to users who want customization, but Shopify and BigCommerce also have environments where customization can be used. Opinions may differ depending on whether you want to customize in the early stages.

When compared in percentage terms, Shopify took a good rating of 80.7% for being the simplest among the three platforms. Big Commerce was next in order with 66.2%, and WooCommerce is evaluated as the most difficult because there are parts that require coding from the early stages.

### **2.3.2 Build Time**

The range of WooCommerce build times is very wide. Due to the nature of WooCommerce, which requires customization, it should not be overlooked that it may take longer to build a website. Also, if the person who wants to start a business already has a website using WordPress and uses a plugin on top of it, it won't take long, but if that person needs to start from the initial stage of the website, the initial setting will have to spend time on several factors such as hosting, theme, content, etc.

On the other hand, both Shopify and BigCommerce are complete packages. That means you have all the components you need to create an e-commerce website on which you can launch your business. On average, Shopify takes a few hours and Big Commerce takes a day or two to prepare your store.

### **2.3.3 Design Flexibility**

Theme is the style of the components and contents composing the website. Basically, there is no need to use Paid Theme from the beginning, and three platforms provide Free Themes.

Shopify has 9 free themes and over 60 paid options. It is also a good way for business operators to use the paid option if they want to decorate their website in a more diverse style. Its price ranges from \$100 to \$180. But keep in mind that when changing a theme, it takes time to reformat the previous settings in the templates.

BigCommerce offers 12 free themes and over 100 paid templates. It costs between \$150 and \$300, which is more expensive than Shopify, but having multiple design options is a very lucrative opportunity.

WooCommerce has a huge advantage over other platforms when it comes to design diversity because if you have coding skills, you can show off colorful designs due to the diversity of coding. Even if you don't know coding, WordPress's built-in theme customizer supports customization through custom menus, changing tiles and taglines, and updating homepage settings.

### **2.3.4 Help and Support**

The probability of encountering various problems while running your own business is very high. When faced with such a problem, most operators solve the problem through communication with customer service.

All three stores operate their own customer service and have a basic CS service configuration that suggests countermeasures when similar problems such as various F&Q are there to help the operations of E-Commerce business. However, the way how Shopify, BigCommerce and WooCommerce to cope with various customer issues are structured is not the same.

While Shopify and BigCommerce provide 24/7 support and business-related consultations under the management of the platform, and you can request 1:1 consultation when facing various situations as well as site related, WooCommerce is not better than this. situation is not the configuration of the help center is equipped, but 1:1 problem solving through live chat must be performed after installing a separate plug-in and become a member of the liveChat of WooCommerce.

The difference between Shopify and BigCommerce is the difference in email support. Both have 24/7 support and chat, but Shopify also manages issues related to email support and even social media, which is one way to promote your business.

### 2.3.5 Marketing Tools and Features

Marketing tools in e-commerce can be divided into three major categories.

- SEO
- Social Media
- Multi-Channel Integration

SEO is an abbreviation for Search Engine Optimization, and simply means that when you search for something specific on a large search platform such as Google, your own content can be exposed higher in the search results.

The power to expose one's content to the top means to take traffic from many people, and for e-commerce business operators, this meaning can be seen as an opportunity to introduce one's products to more people.

However, just by posting articles, content, and good products, will they all be exposed to the top? Of course, if the business operator is lucky or if the product and product description are good, it may occasionally get top exposure. However, it is never easy to expose all content to the top as desired without professional knowledge.

Each of these eCommerce platforms provides several built-in methods to optimize your website's search engine performance. These methods include the ability to edit meta titles and descriptions, update URLs to keep them relevant and easier to find and add image alt texts to help Google identify the contents of images.

By customizing meta titles and descriptions, you can create compelling and informative snippets that appear in Google search results, increasing your website's click-through rate. Updating URLs to be relevant to the content on the page helps search engines understand the context of the page and make it more discoverable to users. Finally, adding image alt texts can improve your website's accessibility and make it easier for search engines to understand the content on your page.

It is worth noting that while these techniques are supported on all three platforms, it's important to use them correctly and in combination with other SEO strategies to maximize the impact of your optimization efforts. Additionally, it's important to avoid over-optimizing your website, as this can result in penalties from search engines and harm your search engine ranking.

Both BigCommerce and WooCommerce recommend words that are likely to rank high on search engines, but Shopify tends to lack keyword support here, unlike the other two.

### 2.3.6 Plugins and integrations

Plugins and integrations help business operators power and run their e-commerce store. For example, if you have plugins such as live chat installed and you can provide accurate and specific solutions when customers visiting your website are experiencing problems, customers will remember the good experience. That means you can increase the chances of many customers returning.

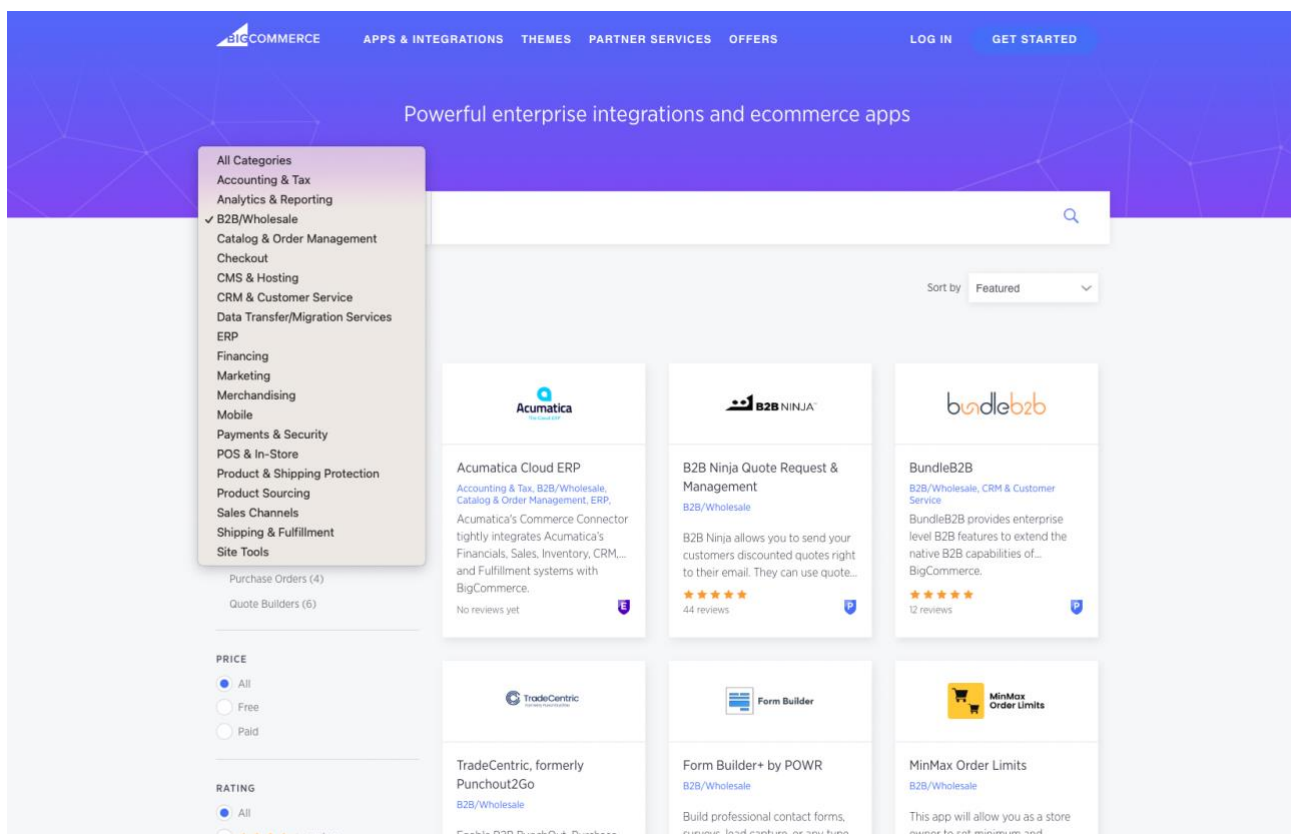


Figure 11. BigCommerce App Pages (Adapted from BigCommerce main website)

There are 20 categories of the choices for apps to integrate into your business, which are:

Accounting & Tax, Analytics & Reporting, B2B/Wholesale, Catalog & Order Management, Checkout, CMS & Hosting, Data Transfer / Migration Services, ERP, Financing, Marketing, Merchandising, Mobile, Payments & Security, POS & In-Store, Product & Shipping Protection, Product Sourcing, Sales Channels, Shipping & Fulfillment, Site Tools

### **2.3.7 Payment options and Fee**

The variety of payment options means more variety and more people can pay, as it can provide easier access to potential customers.

Not surprisingly, all three platforms, like the famous PayPal, Stripe, and Apple Pay, offer and support a wide range of payment options. However, there are small differences between the three platforms.

Unlike the other two platforms, Shopify receives transaction fees through its own gateway in addition to 'Shopify Payments'. And from a choice point of view, Big Commerce has limited options while other platforms have over 100 options.



2.3.8 Overall Score

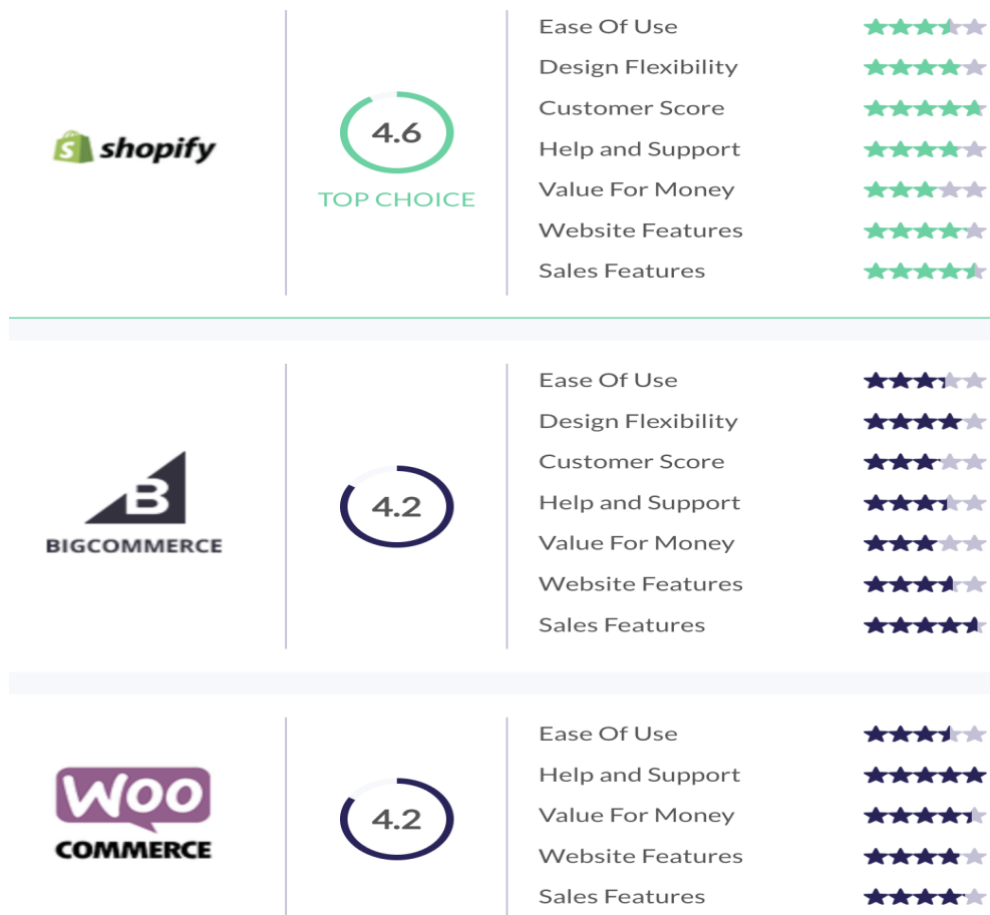


Figure 12. Overall Score of three platforms (adapted from “websitebuilderexpert”)

If a CEO thinking of starting an e-commerce business, If the business starters have everything you need to build a platform in one package, require relatively little coding knowledge, have great sales tools compared to other platforms, and don't care too much about transaction fees, then the answer is Shopify.

Compared to other platforms, the degree of freedom in customizing is high, various support options can be created by hand, and if you do not mind coding a little, the answer is Woo-Commerce in WordPress.

If the business starters want to scale your business further using sales features, don't mind a little learning, or need a choice that focuses on marketing/sales tools, BigCommerce is the answer.

### 3 Interview Results

These five main interview questions were carried out by those who have developed or experienced Shopify/Big Commerce/WooCommerce, and various opinions from designers/developers/platform operators were posted.

IQ 1: Suppose, you are thinking of starting E-Commerce Business. Which platform are you going to utilize for your E-Commerce platform among three options?

IQ 2: What would be the main reason for people not starting their own business in E-Commerce, even if they have a great idea?

IQ 3: What would be the main reason for you to select the platform?

IQ 4: Do you have any experiences that you might dislike the specific platform from your work experiences and why?

IQ 5: Do you think the sizes of business can have different benefits according to these three platforms?

Interviews were conducted mainly with people who have worked on projects related to Big Commerce / Shopify / WooCommerce (WordPress) or are currently working in a related field, and there are 25 responses here. It was a good opportunity to collect better quality data than expected.

Interviews were conducted from January to mid-February and were conducted by contacting the respondent directly or by distributing additional interview links to employees in the same job category and colleagues in other companies at the respondent's company.

### 3.1 Graph Results of the interviews

Taking advantage of the advantage of visualizing data using Google Forms, it was possible to make high-quality data more accessible and simpler.

#### 3.1.1 IQ 1

IQ1 intends to ask respondents about their preferences in choosing an e-commerce platform. This allowed us to determine which of the three largest platforms was the most popular and preferred by users.

##### 3.1.1.1 IQ 1 (Overall) Graph

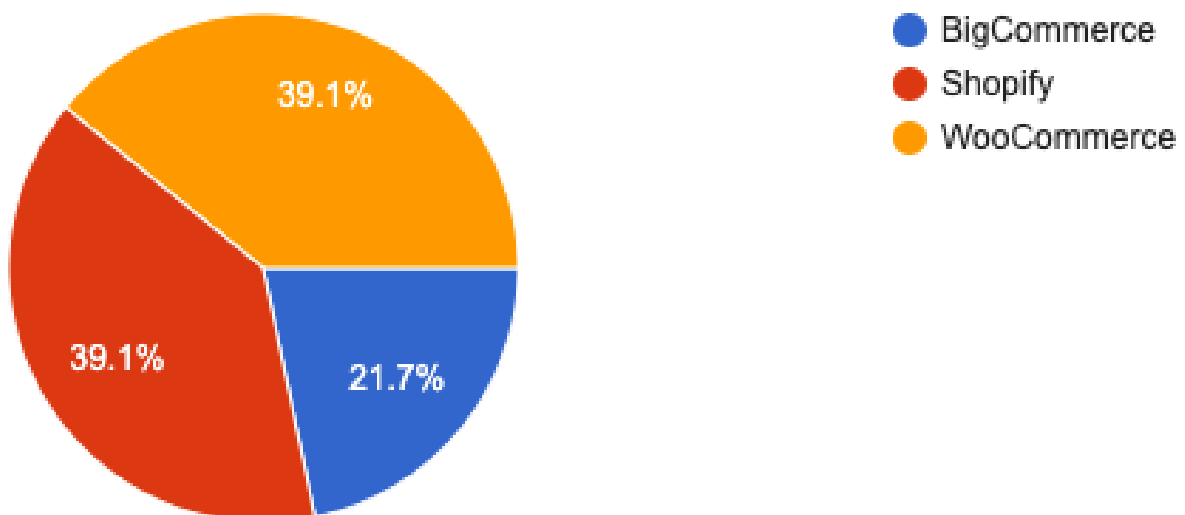


Figure 13. Interview Question 1 Graph

Compared to WooCommerce and Shopify, BigCommerce's response rate was relatively low at 21.7%. Even when looking for data on the Internet, compared to WooCommerce and Shopify, BigCommerce's survey data are relatively smaller, so these results seem reasonable.

Most of the people who responded to this response were those related to Shopify and WooCommerce (WordPress), and when this Google form was distributed to people, BigCommerce was the most relatively late to fill in the number of respondents.

### 3.1.2 IQ 2

IQ1 Detail is to find out the reason for the selection based on the e-commerce platform selection preference of the survey subjects. This made it possible to clearly distinguish the pros and cons of the selected platform by comparing it to prior internet research.

#### 3.1.2.1 IQ 2.1 (BigCommerce)



Figure 14. Interview Question 2 (BigCommerce) Graph

This is the answer of IQ2 that Big Commerce users responded to.

Among 6 selections, 2 selections were focused and answered by users who use Big Commerce. 83.3% of respondents said that they use it because they are accustomed to using the services and functions provided by the platform, and the rest thought it was cheaper than other platforms in terms of price.

However, if each platform's price plan shows that, users will find that the price part can vary depending on the size of the E-Commerce business operated by the user, sales revenue, or use of services provided in various other aspects. This part should not be overlooked at this point.

### 3.1.2.2 IQ 2.2 (Shopify) Graph



Figure 15. Interview Question 2 (Shopify) Graph

Out of 6 responses, 3 focused on the results.

The biggest response rate was that 70% of users were familiar with the platform, the same as Big Commerce.

However, considering that there are users who choose plugins and user customization, respondents understand and are satisfied with the advantages of Shopify in terms of other parts other than the familiarity of the platform itself, especially on the diversity of plugins and the freedom of customization to build the platform.

However, it is still judged that users are not attracted to the sales and marketing features provided by the platform itself in selecting and using the platform.

### 3.1.2.3 IQ 2.3 (WooCommerce / WordPress) Graph



Figure 16. Interview Question 2 (WooCommerce / Wordpress) Graph

This is a graph of WooCommerce, which had the most diverse responses compared to other platforms.

As with other platforms, the biggest reason for using it was familiarity with using the platform.

However, as previously researched on the Internet, there were also answers (App Plug-ins / Customization) that focused on the various directions in which e-commerce could be developed in WooCommerce/WordPress. The person who gave the personal response said that because WooCommerce is the largest open-source platform based on WordPress, it cannot be compared with other platforms in terms of customization.

### 3.1.3 IQ 3

IQ2 is to find out why it is difficult or not to start e-commerce among the respondents, especially those who have used or developed an e-commerce platform. This allowed to clearly understand the perspective of starting an overall e-commerce business.

#### 3.1.3.1 IQ 3 (Overall) Graph

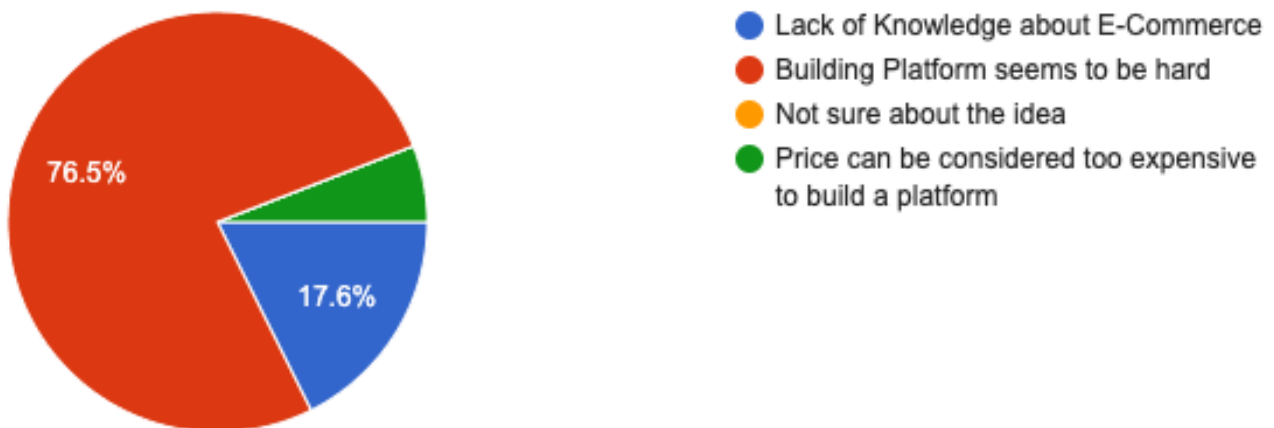


Figure 17. Interview Question 3 (Overall) Graph

All the survey respondents who have used Shopify, WooCommerce, and BigCommerce said that building a platform can feel like a challenge approaching for those just starting out in ecommerce, for the biggest reason.

As with the preliminary Internet research, it is impossible to implement the desired design and various layout configurations or functions without knowledge of programming/design, which means that those who start an e-commerce business without knowledge of development/design are programming/design can be determined to be employed those technicians at an early stage or even middle stages as well.

In the initial business stage, depending on the size of the business, hiring such technicians can be a huge expense. Therefore, E-commerce starters should keep in mind that the cost of technicians can vary depending on the size of your business and include this expense on each one's plan.

### 3.1.4 IQ 4

IQ4 is to find out the specific disliked parts based on the individual work experience of the survey subject. Through this, it was possible to clearly distinguish and recognize the special situation that the individual felt and the advantages and disadvantages that had not been identified.

The questionnaire allows personal responses to be answered in a narrative format, and if this part is shown as a table, it is as follows.

#### 3.1.4.1 IQ 4 Table

BigCommerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to implement my business into this platform.</li> </ul>
WooCommerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WooCommerce allows deep customization than Shopify. But it can be too complex for simpler webshops than Shopify.</li> <li>• Hard to customize unless you know how to code.</li> <li>• If people who want to start E-Commerce with WooCommerce do not have programming knowledge, it would be hard to build their business from the scratch. (2)</li> </ul>
Shopify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irritating Liquid.js Code</li> <li>• App plug-in that breaks down the whole production (3)</li> <li>• Expensive with entrepreneur plan level</li> </ul>
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to make customers understand the features they want can have conflict of the website they desire.</li> <li>• Nothing to dislike (4)</li> </ul>

Figure 18. Interview Question 4 Table

This is a table of respondents' personal opinions.

#### WooCommerce

WooCommerce users have mostly talked about customization and the early days of website building. Due to the nature of WordPress, deep customization is possible, but most of the opinions were that it would be difficult without coding-related knowledge in a simple website and in the early stages.



## **Shopify**

Shopify experiencers said one thing is that the code called Liquid JS is annoying and one thing is that the price of the entrepreneur plan is burdensome. Most significantly, it was pointed out that when integrating various app plugins, it can give problems to the entire production page.

## **BigCommerce**

The small number of respondents with related industry experience may be the reason, but unlike other platforms, Big Commerce did not have any distinct disadvantages pointed out. Rather, there was a response to praise that it was not difficult to use the platform.

## **Overall**

If you listen to the stories of the respondents who left an overall opinion on this IQ3, the most common response was that there was nothing they disliked. However, he said that it is difficult for a company that builds not only e-commerce but also various websites for customers to explain various functions and understand conflicts for customers who do not know coding.

From this, it is clear to see that those who operate e-commerce can increase the efficiency of using the platform even more if they have a certain level of platform usage knowledge and minimum programming skills.

### 3.1.5 IQ 5

IQ5 asks for survey respondents' thoughts on whether the three platforms can have different business-scale benefits. In other words, it is to check whether the benefits provided by these three e-commerce platforms can be different depending on the size of the company, and to see if the pros and cons of each platform are clear.

#### 3.1.5.1 IQ 5 Graph



Figure 19. Interview Question 5 Graph

It was a question asking for a definite yes or no, but some respondents gave additional explanations and explanations. Calculating again, YES is therefore 69.6% and NO is 30.4%.

Among them, one of the answers of No, which had additional explanations, was an answer that judged that the category of items sold in the e-commerce business would have more influence than the services provided by the three platforms.

### 3.2 Interview Summary

In addition to reliable Internet data, it was possible to draw more valuable and reliable conclusions by borrowing actual experiences through the interview process.

It was difficult to find people who had experience with all three, but we can hear from people who have experienced each platform and identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Most take it for granted that when they set out to start an e-commerce business, they tried to use the technology they were familiar with.

However, it was regrettable that the criteria for selecting an e-commerce platform to start their own business, which was the original purpose, were not clearly classified.

It could be seen that Shopify and BigCommerce are suitable for small to medium sized businesses. Also, unlike WooCommerce, simple features are basically not difficult to set up.

WooCommerce focuses most on design or customization that suits individual tastes, and it was also found that if users have some knowledge about programming using WordPress, they can conduct their own e-commerce more advanced.

It turns out that all three platforms are similar and support various features and have different strengths and weaknesses.

## 4 Overall Comparison



Feature 20. Shopify vs WooCommerce vs BigCommerce: Which is Best? (Photo is adapted from website builder expert)

BigCommerce, Shopify, and WooCommerce are three popular e-commerce platforms that businesses can use to create and manage their online stores. Each platform has its own unique features, benefits, and drawbacks, making it important for businesses to carefully consider their specific needs and goals when selecting a platform. In this article, we will compare these three platforms based on various factors such as ease of use, design and customization options, features, cost, and support and resources.

## **4.1 Ease of Use**

BigCommerce and Shopify are both fully hosted platforms that offer a user-friendly interface and intuitive website builder tools. They are designed to be easy to use, with no coding knowledge required to create and manage an online store.

WooCommerce, on the other hand, is a self-hosted platform that requires more technical knowledge to set up and manage. It is free to use but does require some technical expertise to fully utilize its features.

## **4.2 Design and Customization Options**

All three platforms offer a range of customizable templates and themes to help businesses create a unique online store. BigCommerce and Shopify have more modern and polished options that are easy to customize. They offer drag-and-drop editors that allow users to make changes to their store's design without having to write any code.

WooCommerce, being an open-source platform, offers limitless design possibilities but requires more technical knowledge to make significant changes.

## **4.3 Features**

When it comes to features, BigCommerce and Shopify have more built-in features than WooCommerce, making it easier to run and grow an online store.

For example, BigCommerce offers abandoned cart recovery, multi-channel selling, and social media integration, while Shopify has a built-in payment gateway and a mobile app for managing your store on-the-go.

WooCommerce, being an open-source platform, offers a lot of flexibility in terms of functionality. It has a large community of developers who have created a wide range of plugins and extensions that add new features to your store.

## **4.4 Cost**

BigCommerce and Shopify are both subscription-based platforms that offer different pricing plans depending on the features and number of products businesses want to sell. BigCommerce offers a range of plans starting at \$29.95 per month, while Shopify offers plans starting at \$29 per month. WooCommerce, on the other hand, is free to use, but businesses will need to pay for web hosting, domain registration, and any premium extensions or themes they want to use. This means that the

cost of using WooCommerce will depend on the hosting provider they choose and the plugins and themes they purchase.

#### **4.5 Support and Resources**

When it comes to support and resources, BigCommerce and Shopify offer 24/7 customer support through phone, email, and live chat. They also have extensive documentation and online resources to help users get started. WooCommerce, on the other hand, has a more extensive community of developers and users, which can provide support through forums and online tutorials.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In terms of which platform is best suited for specific businesses, small and medium-sized businesses that want an easy-to-use platform with a wide range of built-in features may prefer BigCommerce or Shopify.

These platforms are particularly useful for businesses that want to sell their products on multiple channels, such as social media, Amazon, and eBay. However, businesses that require more control over their online store's design and functionality may prefer WooCommerce.

WooCommerce is particularly well-suited for businesses with an existing WordPress website, as it integrates seamlessly with the platform.

Additionally, businesses with technical expertise and the ability to manage their own hosting and website maintenance may prefer WooCommerce due to its open-source nature.

In terms of design and customization, BigCommerce and Shopify offer more modern and polished options that are easier to customize. This is particularly useful for businesses that want to get their store up and running quickly, without having to invest a lot of time in design and development. However, businesses that require more flexibility and control over the design and functionality of their online store may prefer WooCommerce due to its open-source nature and the ability to customize every aspect of their website.

When it comes to cost, businesses on a tight budget may prefer WooCommerce, as it is free to use, and businesses only need to pay for web hosting and any premium extensions or themes they want to use. However, businesses that want a more comprehensive solution with built-in features and support may find that the subscription-based models of BigCommerce and Shopify offer better value.

In terms of support and resources, BigCommerce and Shopify offer more comprehensive support and documentation, making it easier for businesses to get started and troubleshoot any issues they encounter.

WooCommerce, on the other hand, has a larger community of developers and users who can provide support through forums and online tutorials. This can be beneficial for businesses that prefer a more community-driven approach to support.

Ultimately, the choice between BigCommerce, Shopify, and WooCommerce will depend on the specific needs and goals of each business. BigCommerce and Shopify are well-suited for small and medium-sized businesses that want a user-friendly platform with built-in features and multi-channel selling capabilities.

WooCommerce is best suited for businesses that require more flexibility and control over their website's design and functionality and have the technical expertise to manage their own hosting and website maintenance.

By carefully considering each platform's features, cost, and support, businesses can choose the platform that best meets their needs and helps them achieve their goals. In conclusion, all three platforms offer unique features and benefits that businesses can take advantage of to create and manage their online stores.

BigCommerce and Shopify are fully hosted platforms that offer user-friendly interfaces and built-in features, making it easier for businesses to get started quickly. WooCommerce is a self-hosted, open-source platform that offers unparalleled flexibility and control over design and functionality but requires more technical knowledge to use.

When choosing between these platforms, businesses should consider factors such as ease of use, design and customization options, features, cost, and support and resources. By carefully considering these factors, businesses can choose the platform that best suits their specific needs and goals.

Overall, BigCommerce and Shopify are great options for businesses that want to get started quickly and have access to a range of built-in features. WooCommerce is an excellent option for businesses that require more control over their website's design and functionality and have the technical expertise to manage their own hosting and website maintenance.

In the end, the right platform depends on the specific needs of each business. By weighing the pros and cons of each platform and considering their specific requirements, businesses can make an informed decision and choose the platform that will help them achieve their e-commerce goals.



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