BUILD YOUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

E-COMMERCE LAUNCH CHECKLIST

Prepare, test, launch, and improve your online store with confidence.

2026 EDITION • PRACTICAL BUSINESS RESOURCE

01 / LAUNCH CONTROL

How to Use This Checklist

A successful store launch depends on coordinated readiness across products, customer experience, payments, operations, compliance, measurement, and support. Complete each section, record evidence, and assign an owner for every unresolved item.

Launch standard: Do not mark an item complete because it has been configured. Mark it complete only after the required workflow has been tested from the customer's perspective and verified by the responsible owner.

Status	Meaning	Required response
READY	Configured, tested, and accepted.	Retain evidence and monitor.
AT RISK	Incomplete or dependent on an unresolved issue.	Assign owner, due date, and contingency.
BLOCKED	Prevents a safe or credible launch.	Resolve before launch or formally delay.
NOT APPLICABLE	Does not apply to this business model.	Record the reason.

Launch ownership

Executive launch owner: _____ Due: _____

Store administrator: _____ Due: _____

Product / merchandising owner: _____ Due: _____

Operations / fulfillment owner: _____ Due: _____

Marketing owner: _____ Due: _____

Customer support owner: _____ Due: _____

Technical escalation contact: _____ Due: _____

Target launch date: _____ Time zone: _____ Go / no-go meeting: _____

02 / STOREFRONT

Brand, Navigation, and Customer Experience

Confirm that the storefront clearly communicates the offer, works across common devices, and helps customers move from discovery to purchase without confusion.

Brand and content

☐ Logo, colors, typography, and imagery are consistent.
Review desktop and mobile presentation.

☐ Homepage explains the value proposition and primary action.

☐ About, contact, and customer-support information are complete.

☐ All placeholder text, test content, and draft images are removed.

☐ Spelling, grammar, tone, links, and calls to action are reviewed.

☐ Footer includes essential navigation, policies, and contact details.

Navigation and usability

☐ Primary navigation reflects how customers browse and decide.

☐ Search, filters, sorting, collections, and breadcrumbs work correctly.

☐ Forms show clear instructions, validation, success, and error states.

☐ Store is reviewed on current mobile, tablet, and desktop browsers.

☐ Text contrast, keyboard access, image alternatives, and focus states are checked.

☐ No broken links, missing pages, inaccessible controls, or layout shifts remain.

Customer journey test

☐ Arrive from search, social media, advertisement, email, or direct URL.

☐ Find a relevant product through navigation, search, and collection pages.

☐ Understand the product, total cost, delivery expectation, and return conditions.

☐ Add, edit, remove, and save cart items.

☐ Complete checkout, receive confirmation, and access support.

03 / CATALOG

Products, Inventory, and Merchandising

Every product must be accurate, understandable, purchasable, and operationally supported. Test both normal and exception conditions.

Product records

☐ Product titles, descriptions, specifications, and benefits are accurate.

☐ Images are sharp, consistent, compressed, and appropriately licensed.

☐ Variants, options, bundles, subscriptions, and personalization work.

☐ SKUs, barcodes, weights, dimensions, costs, prices, and tax settings are verified.

☐ Inventory quantities and overselling rules match operating policy.

☐ Digital products, services, preorders, or backorders have clear delivery terms.

Merchandising controls

☐ Products appear in the correct collections and sales channels.

☐ Related products, recommendations, cross-sells, and upsells are relevant.

☐ Sale pricing, compare-at pricing, discount dates, and promotional claims are correct.

☐ Out-of-stock, low-stock, discontinued, and unavailable states are customer-ready.

☐ Product URLs, metadata, search previews, and redirects are reviewed.

☐ Restricted, regulated, fragile, hazardous, or age-limited products are controlled.

Sample product	Price	Inventory	Shipping	Tax	Page approved
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	☐
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	☐

04 / TRANSACTIONS

Cart, Checkout, Payments, and Tax

Validate every transaction path using test orders. Confirm that pricing, discounts, payments, tax, notifications, fraud controls, refunds, and reconciliation behave as intended.

Cart and checkout

☐ Cart updates quantities, variants, discounts, gifts, and removals correctly.

☐ Guest and customer-account checkout paths are tested.

☐ Required customer, billing, shipping, and consent fields are appropriate.

☐ Shipping options, taxes, duties, discounts, gift cards, and totals calculate correctly.

☐ Abandoned checkout and recovery communications follow approved rules.

☐ Order confirmation page provides a clear receipt and next steps.

Payments and finance

☐ Live payment processor is approved, connected, and owned by the business.

☐ Successful, declined, cancelled, duplicate, and high-risk payments are tested.

☐ Alternative payment methods operate only in intended regions and currencies.

☐ Settlement bank account, payout schedule, fees, and reconciliation are verified.

☐ Refunds, partial refunds, cancellations, chargebacks, and disputes have owners.

☐ The business has confirmed applicable tax, invoicing, and recordkeeping obligations.

Test-order evidence

Scenario	Order #	Result	Owner / issue
Standard order		☐ Pass ☐ Fail	
Discount / gift card		☐ Pass ☐ Fail	
Declined payment		☐ Pass ☐ Fail	
Refund / cancellation		☐ Pass ☐ Fail	
International / alternate currency		☐ Pass ☐ Fail	

05 / DELIVERY

Shipping, Fulfillment, Returns, and Support

The promise made at checkout must match what operations can reliably deliver. Verify rates, routing, packaging, inventory movement, communications, and exception handling.

Shipping and fulfillment

☐ Fulfillment locations, inventory routing, service areas, and cut-off times are correct.

☐ Packaging, weights, dimensions, labels, carrier accounts, and rates are verified.

☐ Free-shipping thresholds and promotional shipping rules calculate correctly.

☐ Domestic, international, local delivery, pickup, and excluded regions are tested.

☐ Tracking updates and customer notifications are accurate and branded.

☐ Lost, damaged, delayed, partial, and undeliverable orders have procedures.

Returns and customer care

☐ Return, exchange, cancellation, and refund policies are clear and operational.

☐ Return address, labels, authorization, inspection, restocking, and refund timing are defined.

☐ Support channels, operating hours, response targets, and escalation paths are published.

☐ Support team can locate orders, correct addresses, issue refunds, and document outcomes.

☐ Frequently asked questions reflect real product, payment, shipping, and return scenarios.

☐ Customer-service templates are accurate, human, and consistent with the brand.

Operations acceptance

☐ Inventory deducted and restored correctly Evidence / issue: _____

☐ Order routed to the correct location or supplier Evidence / issue: _____

☐ Label and packing document generated correctly Evidence / issue: _____

☐ Tracking received and displayed correctly Evidence / issue: _____

☐ Cancellation and refund reflected in all connected systems Evidence / issue: _____

06 / TRUST

Policies, Privacy, Security, and Business Readiness

Before launch, confirm that the store reflects the business’s actual obligations and practices. Obtain qualified legal, tax, privacy, accessibility, or security advice where appropriate.

Policies and disclosures

☐ Business identity, contact information, jurisdiction, and required registrations are accurate.

☐ Privacy notice reflects actual collection, use, sharing, retention, and customer choices.

☐ Terms, returns, refunds, shipping, subscriptions, warranties, and cancellation rules are published.

☐ Prices, promotions, endorsements, product claims, and delivery representations are supportable.

☐ Cookie or consent controls match the technologies and jurisdictions involved.

☐ Required product, safety, age, export, customs, or regulated-market disclosures are addressed.

Security and continuity

☐ Business controls the domain, registrar, DNS, platform, payment, email, and recovery accounts.

☐ Multifactor authentication is enabled; administrator access is minimal and documented.

☐ Applications, themes, integrations, scripts, and user permissions have been reviewed.

☐ Backups, exports, recovery steps, fraud response, and incident contacts are documented.

☐ Payment-card data is handled only through approved, properly configured providers.

☐ Vendors, contractors, and former staff have only the access they currently require.

Important: Templates and platform-generated policies are starting points, not confirmation of compliance. Ensure published language matches actual operations and applicable requirements.

07 / GROWTH SYSTEMS

Email, Analytics, Search, and Integrations

Measurement should be operational before traffic arrives. Confirm that customer communications, consent, search visibility, campaign attribution, and connected systems work end to end.

Marketing and search

☐ Sender domain, reply address, authentication, branding, and unsubscribe behavior are verified.

☐ Welcome, abandoned-cart, post-purchase, review, replenishment, and win-back flows are tested.

☐ Customer segments and suppression rules prevent inappropriate or duplicate messages.

☐ Page titles, descriptions, canonical settings, structured data, sitemap, and redirects are checked.

☐ Social profiles, marketplace listings, advertisements, and campaign links use correct destinations.

☐ Launch content calendar, offers, assets, owners, approvals, and contingency messages are ready.

Analytics and integrations

☐ Analytics property, time zone, currency, internal-traffic rules, and access are correct.

☐ Product views, cart actions, checkout progress, purchases, refunds, and key events are validated.

☐ Campaign parameters and channel definitions are documented.

☐ CRM, email, fulfillment, finance, support, and reporting integrations are tested.

☐ Data mapping, duplicate handling, failure alerts, retry behavior, and exception owners are known.

☐ Dashboard reports answer agreed launch and operating questions.

Launch measurement baseline

Metric	Definition	Baseline / target	Owner
Conversion rate			
Average order value			
Cart abandonment			
Gross margin after variable costs			
On-time fulfillment			
Return / refund rate			
Customer-support response time			

08 / RELEASE

Testing, Go-Live, and Launch-Day Control

Use a controlled release process. Freeze nonessential changes, test the live environment, maintain a decision log, and ensure the launch team knows who can stop or reverse the release.

Pre-launch acceptance

- ☐ Complete tests on the live domain using real customer journeys and representative devices.
- ☐ Remove storefront passwords or holding pages only at the approved time.
- ☐ Verify domain, SSL/HTTPS, redirects, email sending, checkout, payment, and order routing.
- ☐ Confirm inventory, rates, taxes, discounts, notifications, integrations, and support coverage.
- ☐ Record backups or exports and document rollback or containment procedures.
- ☐ Freeze nonessential apps, theme changes, catalog imports, and automation edits.
- ☐ Hold a formal go / no-go review with every critical owner represented.

Go / no-go decision

Critical area	Owner	Ready	Evidence / unresolved issue
Storefront		☐	
Catalog		☐	
Checkout & payment		☐	
Fulfillment		☐	
Policies & security		☐	
Marketing & analytics		☐	
Support & incident response		☐	

Decision: ☐ GO ☐ CONDITIONAL GO ☐ NO-GO Approved by: _____ Time: _____

09 / STABILIZATION

The First 30 Days After Launch

Treat launch as the beginning of an operating cycle. Monitor customer behavior, transaction accuracy, operational performance, support demand, and system reliability before accelerating traffic or adding complexity.

Period	Primary focus	Review
First 24 hours	Availability, checkout, payment, order routing, notifications, fraud, support.	Continuous monitoring and rapid triage.
Days 2-7	Funnel behavior, search, inventory accuracy, shipping, returns, campaign quality.	Daily operating review.
Days 8-14	Conversion barriers, product questions, integration errors, support patterns.	Twice-weekly improvement review.
Days 15-30	Unit economics, retention signals, fulfillment performance, controlled optimization.	Weekly executive review and 30-day retrospective.

Issue and improvement log

Date	Issue / opportunity	Impact	Owner	Due	Resolved
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐

30-day review prompts

- ☐ What prevented customers from purchasing or receiving the expected value?
- ☐ Which products, channels, and customer segments showed healthy economics?
- ☐ Where did staff rely on manual work, duplicate entry, or undocumented judgment?
- ☐ Which complaints, refunds, returns, or support requests revealed a systemic issue?
- ☐ What should be fixed, simplified, tested, or discontinued before further growth?

10 / REFERENCE NOTES

Sources and Use Guidance

Official sources were consulted for current platform guidance and foundational ecommerce considerations. Verify all requirements, features, and obligations directly before launch.

Shopify Help Center - Launching and managing an online store
https://help.shopify.com/
Store configuration, products, checkout, domains, shipping, analytics, and operations.

Federal Trade Commission - Business guidance
https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance
Advertising, endorsements, privacy, shipping representations, refunds, and consumer protection.

PCI Security Standards Council
https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org/
Payment-card security standards, resources, and merchant responsibilities.

Google Analytics Help - Life cycle collection
https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/12924233
Measurement across acquisition, engagement, monetization, and retention.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection - E-Commerce
https://www.cbp.gov/trade/basic-import-export/e-commerce
Import and export information relevant to cross-border ecommerce.

Important: This checklist provides general business planning information. It is not legal, privacy, accessibility, cybersecurity, tax, accounting, customs, payment-compliance, or consumer-protection advice. Requirements vary by product, jurisdiction, channel, and business model. Obtain qualified advice where appropriate.

THE CUMBERBATCH GROUP

Practical tools for building better businesses.