

# HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT E-COMMERCE SOLUTION

Whether you want to create an e-commerce website from scratch or replace an existing one, the first thing you need to do is select the right technological concept. It must meet all your specifications and fit your organization and the resources at your disposal.

In order to choose the best solution from the variety of available options, you need to evaluate a number of factors that are relevant to your business. For this purpose, we have prepared a list of the most important aspects that you should consider. For each of these aspects you will find some sample questions to answer in your evaluation.

For details on the various topics and solutions available on the market, please download our free guides.



## ORGANIZATION

- To what extent is your organization geared to e-commerce?
- What areas need to be improved or enhanced?
- What other functions are needed to support them? Are they provided by your teams and existing IT systems?
- Do you have any legacy software that requires modernization to handle e-commerce?
- Does your company's product and customer data management need to be adapted or reorganized?

## STRUCTURES

- What new processes need to be established to support e-commerce?
- What existing processes will be involved? Do they need any adjustments?
- Which solution will allow you to best replicate and integrate these processes?
- Can you provide the desired level of automation?
- Which tasks are to be handled by e-commerce and which by other systems?

## CORPORATE STRATEGY

- Does the solution enable you to achieve your strategic goals?
- Will the solution grow with you, serving more customers, more SKUs, or new markets?
- Are you partnering with or limited to any software vendor? What is the scope of that partnership?
- Does your IT partner offer e-commerce solutions or implementation support?
- What is your policy on developing, hosting and maintaining your IT systems?

## PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

- What programming languages are the solutions you are considering written in?
- What programming languages does your IT team specialize in?
- Is their knowledge of the language sufficient to write an e-commerce portal from scratch?
- To what extent are coding skills required to implement or customize the selected solution?
- Are you open to hiring additional programmers or working with an outside service provider?

## SECURITY

- What level of security is represented by the various solutions you are considering?
- What are the potential security risks associated with choosing a particular solution?
- Is your IT team capable of providing the desired level of security on its own?
- Has the solution you are considering encountered any security issues in the past?
- How does the software provider respond to security threats or data breaches?

## COMPLEXITY

- What is the solution's architecture? Is it a monolith or a set of smaller services?
- How many features and functions is the system supposed to have?
- How complex will the relationships between the various components be?
- What is the scope and quality of documentation delivered by the software vendor?
- What kind of support does the software vendor provide?

## FIXED PRICE VS. AGILE

- Do you aim to launch a fully featured e-commerce portal all at once?
- Or would you rather release an MVP first and then add new features in subsequent iterations?
- Do you prefer to pay a fixed price for a strictly defined scope of work?
- Or would you like to have the possibility to change the scope during the project?
- Are you able to determine the complete scope of work in advance?

## CUSTOMIZATION

- Which solutions meet the most of your requirements in terms of features and functions?
- Will the built-in (standard) features allow you to realize your vision of an e-commerce portal?
- Or maybe you want to customize them to address your specific needs?
- Does the solution facilitate customization and to what extent?
- How difficult will it be to develop and deploy custom features?

## IMPLEMENTATION

- How difficult and challenging is it to implement the solution you are considering?
- What competencies and skills are required for a successful and timely implementation?
- Does your team have relevant experience in software development?
- Are you able to ensure such competencies by hiring new people or finding an external partner?
- What is your expected timeframe for the launch of your e-commerce portal?

## INTEGRATIONS

- What systems should your future e-commerce portal be integrated with?
- Does the solution you are considering offer all the required integrations?
- Will you have to customize built-in integrations or develop your own APIs?
- Does the solution allow you to customize integrations and create brand new ones?
- Is your team able to perform all required integrations and make necessary customizations?

## HOSTING

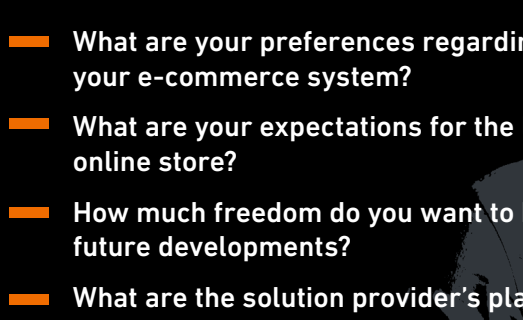
- Which solutions come with their own hosting?
- What freedom does the solution offer when it comes to changing the hosting option?
- Are you open to hosting the solution in the cloud, or do you prefer to keep it in your own data center?
- How about a hybrid model, i.e. storing some parts of the system on-site and less critical ones in the cloud?
- Do you have the right infrastructure and resources to host your e-commerce on your own?

## MAINTENANCE

- What are your preferences regarding who should maintain your e-commerce system?
- What are your expectations for the lifespan of your planned online store?
- How much freedom do you want to have when it comes to future developments?
- What are the solution provider's plans for new features and technologies? What is the approach?
- Do you have the right skills and tools to maintain the highest system reliability and performance?

## TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP (TCO)

- Are you able to identify all potential sources of cost over the lifespan of your solution?
- Which costs you have to pay and which do you not when you choose individual solutions?
- Are you sure you can correctly estimate the amount of each cost?
- What is your preferred licensing model: one-time fee or recurring subscription fees?
- Which ongoing costs (like hosting, maintenance, or licenses) are likely to change over time?



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**Striped Giraffe**  
**Innovation & Strategy GmbH**  
Lenbachplatz 3  
80333 Munich | Germany

Limmatquai 1  
8001 Zurich | Switzerland

**Striped Giraffe**  
**Innovation & Strategy Polska sp. z o.o.**  
ul. Mariacka 33  
40-014 Katowice | Poland

[experts@striped-giraffe.com](mailto:experts@striped-giraffe.com) | [striped-giraffe.com](https://striped-giraffe.com)

