



# 10 LIES WE TELL OURSELVES ABOUT DIGITAL COMMERCE

BY SCOTT JOHNSON, QAD DIGITAL COMMERCE



Whether you are just starting out or you've been in business for 20 years, don't be led astray by believing these 10 lies about digital commerce.

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Find out why you need to change the way you think so you can successfully grow your business and thrive in challenging times.

1

## I SELL ONLINE

We have all come across digital commerce ads claiming you can be successful selling anything online — just open with their store solution! Now, hundreds of new entrepreneurs start online businesses every day using one of many template solutions that promise you can be online selling within 24 hours.

Unfortunately, there is much more to being successful than what these ads promise. When it comes to digital commerce, only a few can claim true online success. Those that have succeeded do so by knowing their audience and curating targeted product selections, and not by any off-the-shelf store solution.

Start with a targeted marketing approach and take sufficient time to evaluate available platforms that will deliver on your specific requirements. Above all, remember selling online requires strategy and creativity — the same qualities you need to build your business.



# 2

## COMPETITION IS JUST DOWN THE STREET

Gone are the days of concern over the competitor down the road. If someone thinks your product is too expensive, they simply go online to find a lower price from an online competitor and order it. Shipping is a consideration, but quite often your competitor will ship it for free. The [internet is the new business “street”](#) — sales transactions can now be resourced and accepted everywhere.



# 3

## CUSTOMERS LOVE US BECAUSE WE'RE SPECIAL

Sorry, but you are not special. You are not guaranteed anyone's money — you must earn your customers' business every day, otherwise you will see that business dwindle away. This affects every business, large and small. Look at the struggle Walmart is encountering today against Amazon. Just a few years ago, no one could have imagined that a company with no physical stores would challenge — what was then — the world's largest retailer. Find your unique value proposition and sell it like no one has ever sold before. That is how you become "special".



# 4

## DIGITAL COMMERCE IS A PASSIVE BUSINESS

Really? I am sure that many of you are promised that a website with hundreds of products is all you need to grow your business online. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Offering products in a self-serve environment may reduce time spent order processing, but expect to be busier than ever in marketing your business worldwide.

Successful digital commerce takes research, design, marketing, sales, fulfillment and customer service like any other business. The difference is that you are now soliciting globally, no longer just your local community. While this presents a fantastic opportunity, you need to remember that your competition is global too. To grow your business, you may be wearing many hats on any given day. Decide to roll up your sleeves and be the best you can online.



5

## IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

Unfortunately, although you may have built the world's best mousetrap, it doesn't mean there are mice finding it. Today you have to differentiate and brand yourself aggressively. Digital roads to your site need to be built, people need to be told, marketing executed and customers channeled to your store. If your [phenomenal website is not found](#) and is [not mobile responsive](#), then money is lost and your business will not grow and be successful.



# 6

## OFFERING FREE SHIPPING IS TOO COSTLY

Free shipping is not too costly at all if you've structured your online business properly from the start. Always consider your profit margins and adjust online pricing of your products accordingly. Customers look at shopping online as a convenience – they want to self-serve. Having products priced as delivered adds to that convenience mindset, as it simplifies their comparing prices and calculating add-on fees. Promoting “Free Shipping” is a very popular marketing campaign, and it is a proven sales strategy that shoppers now expect.

The same can be true with similar incentives like waiving setup fees and sales tax. Online customers are often impulse buyers — “discounts” catch their attention and promote action. Think simplification and promote one price as final.





# 7

## THE RELATIONSHIPS BUILT WITH MY CLIENTS IS ROCK SOLID

Too many of you keep telling yourself that successful online businesses have built empires off the belief that customers will remain loyal based on relationships. The Pied Piper in digital commerce is CONVENIENCE — it plays an addictive tune and customers follow.

I met a prospect several years back while exhibiting at a trade show. He was recounting his story of when his largest customer kept constantly requesting information on launching a product store on his website, asking this vendor if they could provide them with a copy of their store. As his story goes, the vendor did not wish to provide a store to his client to sell his products. This story ended with the vendor remarking that less and less sales were being conducted with this customer over the past couple months. He later discovered they found someone else who would provide a store for them to add to their site. By year-end, the vendor lost his biggest customer.

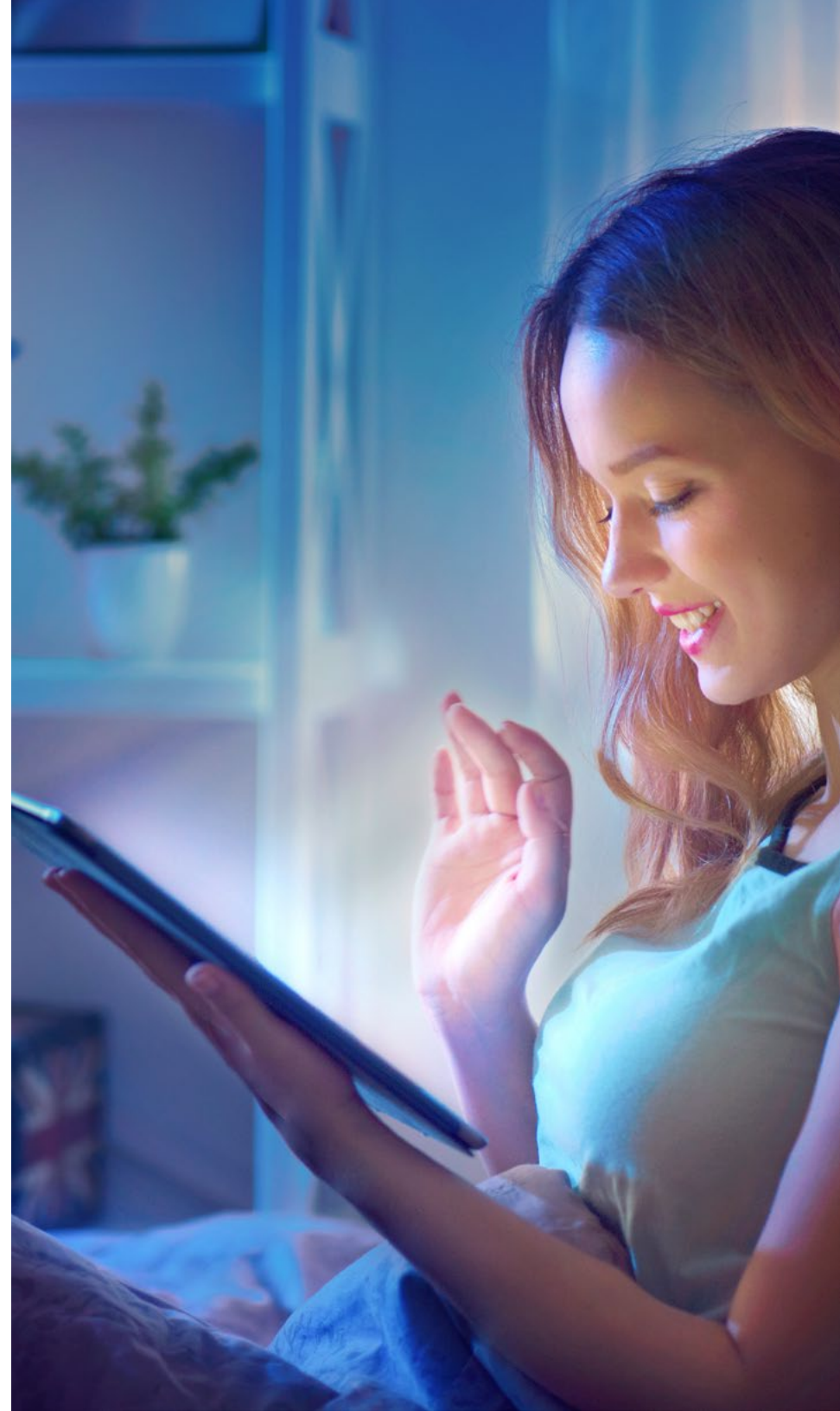


# 8

## SELLING ONLINE IS FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION

That is like stating automobiles would [never replace horse-drawn carriages](#) in the 19th century. Digital commerce is not just a generational anomaly — it is an efficiency model pure and simple. Time is precious for everyone — digital commerce enables us to save time by going online to make a purchase instead of traveling to a store or scheduling a sales call.

The past 30 years of our lives have revolved around the internet. The world has accepted that the internet is not a passing fad. Embrace technology or accept the inevitable consequences of losing business if you ignore the change in buying behaviors.



# 9

## DIGITAL COMMERCE PLATFORMS ARE EXPENSIVE

Quite the opposite is true. You can launch online stores that rival and even surpass the very best online businesses — all for around the same cost as adding an entry-level employee. Avoid the trap of inexpensive templated stores. There is truth in the old adage — you get what you pay for. An “okay” website is unlikely to deliver more than an “okay” result.



# 10

## DIGITAL COMMERCE IS NOT FOR MANUFACTURERS

What began within the online resellers (distributors) arena has now expanded to how manufacturers can provide efficiencies and sales tools along with accurate information to their distributors. Several recent events have created challenges within the industry. These include issues around staffing, pricing, tariffs, disruptions in the supply chain, product safety and inventory on-hand. As a result, manufacturers need real-time transparency to avoid miscommunications and lost business between distributors and manufacturers.

The time is now to focus on how your business will successfully compete in the next year, next five years and next 10 years. If you ignore the signs that the ways in which selling products are changing, then you will be likely holding a buggy whip in your horse-drawn carriage.



## ABOUT QAD DIGITAL COMMERCE

QAD Digital Commerce is a leading e-commerce platform for medium to large-sized businesses. It provides a complete range of services, including website set-up, custom programming, support and online marketing services. QAD Digital Commerce is a software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform containing more than 100 features to maximize sales and reduce costs for B2B companies and retailers.

For more details see [qad.com](http://qad.com).



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