



Internet Business Success for the 21st Century.

Ten Questions to Answer for eCommerce Success

By Heidi Richards Mooney, Founder ~ [Women's eCommerce Association](#)

When planning the future of your online business, there are tried and true principles that apply. Here are the top ten questions you need to answer for ecommerce success in the 21st Century.

What's your vision for the future?

What will your business look like in the future (two, five, ten years and beyond?) Write it down. If you have an idea of what success looks like it will be easier to get there. Do you serve a local, national or international clientele? How much income do you want to generate? How much profit? Write it down. Be specific. The more specific you are the better able your mind will be to come up with the roadmap to get you there.

What system will you use?

How will you run the business end of your company? Creating a system will help you automate those processes that work best when automated. Think inventory. When retail needed a way to keep track of inventory, the pos (Point of sale) system was invented. Implement quality controls into your system. Mindmap the system and visualize how each area of your business interconnects. That's the system you need to develop.

How will you define what your employees (and partners) will do? Write a job description for each and every human function that affects your company. From the CEO to the mailroom clerk. Develop procedures how these roles affect your company and when they are needed as well as the action steps to get the job done.

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How will you set up the processes so they work for anyone? In my retail business I created an operating manual that each employee gets when they come on board. And it was updated and reviewed at every company meeting. I asked for feedback and we modify and change any wording that doesn't make sense or no longer applies. Since we are a small business, our employees are cross-trained to do several jobs. That way, when one area is slow, other areas that need help will get it. Want to learn more about my policy and procedure manual? Send a note to Heidi@redheadmarketingblog.com with ***“Employee Manual”*** in subject line. You will receive a link to more information.

How will you create opportunities for people to excel? People need to know there are opportunities for growth and advancement. It is one of the top three things that keep employees satisfied. A satisfied employee is a loyal employee. Tell your staff what your company's goals are. This will help create buy-in and they will feel compelled to help you reach those goals. Give progress reports. Let them know how their role impacts the goals you have set. Get feedback from them either in the form of suggestion boxes, one on one conversations, group meetings; whatever works for your company. Note: don't hold meetings just because you always hold a meeting on a specific day and time. Only hold them when a clear purpose has been set. Nothing annoys a team more than a useless meeting.

How will you measure success? In addition to financial reports, human resource management is key to knowing how your company is doing. Include customer service reports and customer feedback.

How will you improve your company? Find ways to improve processes, products and people skills. Create opportunities for your staff to learn more, test new products and try new ways of doing things. Sometimes the obvious isn't.

How will you communicate with your customers, your partners, your staff?

Communication is the key to success in the 21st century. With so many forms of communication available, there is really no excuse to stay in touch with anyone and everyone who affects the bottom line of your company.

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You have phone, fax, teleconference, in person one on one meetings, group meetings, bulletin boards, company newsletters, chat rooms, web conferencing and more. Ask questions. And wait for the answers. Listen and learn. Answer questions. Honestly. Be transparent and open.

How will you Create and Track Goals? What system will you use to know if you are reaching your goals? Review these goals often. Set **SMARTER** goals:

S - Specific, significant, stretching

M - Measurable, meaningful, motivating

A - Attainable, achievable, action-oriented

R - Realistic, relevant, reasonable

T - Timely, tangible, trackable, time-limited

E – Enlightening, engaging, encompassing,

R – Responsible, rewarding, results-oriented



How will you show appreciation? To your customers, your staff, all stakeholders. Without customers, there is no business. And if you have employees who handle those customers, they need to be appreciated so they can continue to serve your customers well. Investors need reports and a thank you from time to time. Create processes to manage those important relationships. This could include a phone call, a postcard or thank you note or showcasing individual and team efforts in your quarterly reports, your newsletters and more.

Download your copy of:

Internet Marketing Success: Your Step by Step Guide to Make Money Online

For more information about the Women's eCommerce Association, visit

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