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# How To Start An Online Business

If you have a retail storefront you need to realize your competition is not only down the street but also online. Any of the top 20 sites listed in Google, Bing or Yahoo can take away a lot of your customers no matter what business you are in.

While you would assume everyone with a retail store or something a product to sell would have an e-commerce web site the opposite is true. Most have a URL but don't take it to the next level, which is selling online.

The main reason seems to be lack of knowledge. Most are afraid to learn how to build a web site and know the cost to hire a professional designer is prohibitive. When I build my first site it was for a jewelry store and within six months knew I no longer wanted to pay high retail rent because I could move online. Soon after that I moved to a location that was 1/3 the cost.

I recommend using a free web editor like Kompozer or Joomla. Searching on line will give you a lot of free tutorials that walk you through building your first web page. Several low cost video lessons are available as well as free lessons on youtube. sure it is not easy and will take some to master but after you get used to the program the rest of the pages are easy to build. Some areas such as form building is a little harder to learn but you can find free form builders and companies like coffee cup software to purchase programs from that allow you to build any form within minutes.

After your site is finished take advantage of paypal and google shopping carts. If you want to offer several payment options a company called e-junkie has a cart that is easy to use and very low cost. the next step is learning to get your site found in the search engines. Take a look at a site called [photographypromotion.com](http://photographypromotion.com). It has a lot of SEO ideas that work for almost any business. Another useful site that reviews back link software is [linkbuildingreview.info](http://linkbuildingreview.info). The information found would get you on the right path to successful search engine ranking.

The first web site listed was built for selling [platinum wedding bands](#). Later Jeff developed another business and focused on professional product photography. This site has grown to feature both product photography and [executive business portraits](#). As you can see, you have no limit to the sites you can build when you learn basic web site design.

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