

Planning Your Shop

Before setting up your shop you'll want to plan how you will offer your products for sale. There are several aspects of your products and fulfillment procedures that you'll want to address. Listed below are a few of the key areas you'll want to consider:

- **Product Name**
Each product you offer online should have a unique name that identifies the product to your customers.
- **Product Image**
As an option, you may want to include an image of the product; particularly if the product's physical appearance is relevant to the customer.
- **Brief Product Description**
The brief product description will show up in search results for the product and gives a small amount of the most relevant information to the customer. The brief product description should be no longer than one or two sentences.
- **Product Description**
The product description provides detailed information about the product. Detailed information may include the physical dimensions of the product, shipping and handling information, and an extended product description, including a description of any product options that may be available.
- **Product Options**
Product options are typically attributes of the product that customers can choose. For example, when selling shirts online you may have both crimson and white colors as available options. Note that options do not include additional costs, therefore if product options incur additional charges they should already be calculated into the price of the product. In addition, customers will only be able to choose one of the product options for each product ordered.
- **Product Categories**
Product categories are used to help customers locate products using the Browse feature in ShopCart. Products can belong to multiple categories or you can choose not to categorize a product.
- **Additional Charges**
Charges for shipping & handling and sales tax cannot be charged separately using ShopCart; therefore you should include these additional charges in the price of your products. In addition, you'll want to consider how to make shipping information available to your customers via product descriptions and confirmation emails. The shipping information may include the name of the carrier, expected ship dates and costs.
- **Fulfillment Procedures**
Once the customer has purchased the product online, you will need to decide how the order will be processed by your staff. Important aspects to consider are returned merchandise, refunds, shipping processes, and customer communications after the sale (e.g. phone calls/email to the customer).