

E-BOOK

# How Mid-Sized Retailers Can Increase Online Sales

**27** Top  
Tips



The  
True Cloud  
Commerce™  
Platform

When it comes to selling online, it is important to pay attention to the smallest of details to increase your online sales. The following is a list of 27 useful tips to get the best conversion rates happening when it comes to your digital commerce, along with a hands-on questionnaire to help you to understand your online store's maturity level. While every aspect of this list may not be that relevant for every online store, let it be a guideline for the steps you should be taking to get the best turnout.

### **1. Make it Easy for Your Customer:**

By helping your customer find what they are looking for easily, and by making shopping convenient for them, you are assisting in keeping them as customers for the long term. Intuitive shopping is a very good thing, lessening the need for countless menus. Rather, being able to sort products by specific data like price range, or age for children's products enables customers to navigate smoothly from shopping through checkout.

### **2. Security and the Visitor's Sense of Security:**

In an online business, it is necessary to have a reputation for both security and credibility. One of the most basic measures is having an SSL security certificate, however additional stamps of security and credibility attest to your site's safety and increase the visitor's sense of security, which equates to trust in your business.

### **3. Performance = Results:**

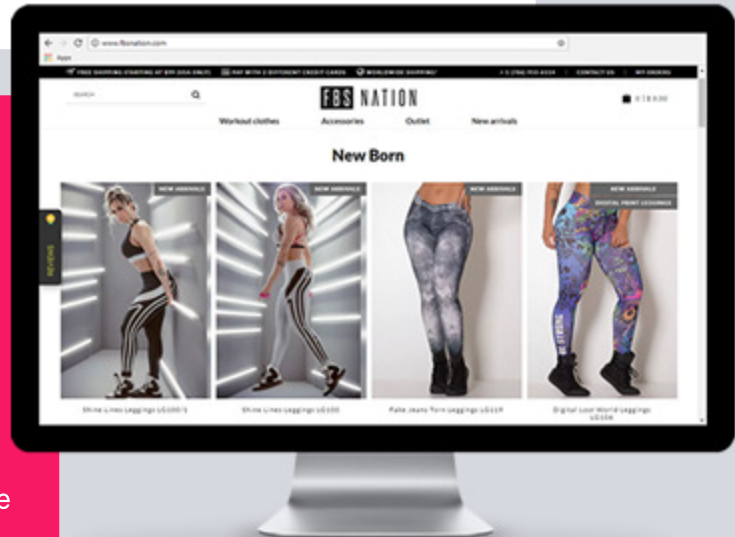
You simply cannot get around this one. The better performing your site is, the better it will be overall for your conversion rates. Load time of pages is especially important, so be careful with how content, banners and photos are used on the pages.

#### **4. Availability:**

Unified commerce is pretty much the norm nowadays, as it's expected that if you are a seller, you've got your product in as many channels as possible to reach as many audiences as possible. However, the same goes for traditional channels of communication when it comes to customer service; make sure your company can always be reached. It is still essential to have a phone number which customers can reach you on, as well as by email, and even through a chat feature if possible.

#### **5. Invest in Good Design and Banners:**

As exemplified by one of our brands, Fit by Sue ([www.fitbysue.com](http://www.fitbysue.com)), well-made banners that occupy a larger space are highly attractive and are eye-catching. Also, their "living showcase" demonstrates quickly and easily how the garments work on the moving body, communicating with a glance visually.



#### **6. Offer Something in Return:**

If you are aiming to capture an email address, offer something as a gesture of reciprocity. A discount code or free shipping can go a long way, so make use of these tactics when attempting to gain something. Also, email addresses are literally gold; so do your best to get them from your customers. They are essential to running campaigns and remarketing strategies. Focusing on placing orders is important, but don't forget about the long-term benefits capturing email addresses.

## **7. Email Marketing:**

Email marketing should never be overlooked! When done correctly and frequently, as well as with the right tools for shooting them out and monitoring their success rates, it is a highly effective, highly efficient tool. Email marketing provides you with concrete info on the opening rate, how many clicks, bounces, as well as other factors necessary for targeting upcoming campaigns.

But, don't forget to personalize your campaigns to improve your results.

## **8. Increase the Open Rate:**

Have you had a bad success rate of people receiving your marketing emails and not opening them? You may not be using the right submission tool. You can also try to send again to those who didn't open the first time (with a window of 24-48 hours from the time your first email was sent), by rewriting the subject and using the same content (hence creating an entirely new email) which will allow you to double the results of the campaign overall.

## **9. AB Testing:**

Multiple campaigns call for multivariate testing, to see precisely where you're getting the best results. This enables you to test what's working, fix what isn't, and allows you to plan ahead for future campaigns.

## 10. Check your Bounce Rates:

Pages with high bounce rates will be in need of improvement. Compare your average bounce rates with pages that are high up. Typically the culprit behind pages that are not holding the attention of visitors is going to be either usability or the content.

Monitor both areas to see where things could be off.

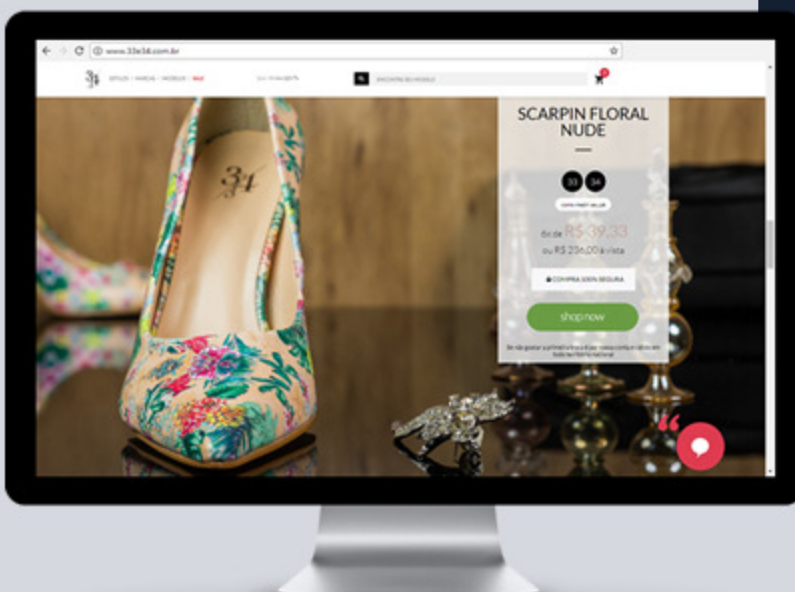
## 11. The Importance of Ratings and Reviews:

Product evaluations and reviews are an excellent way to add credibility to your product selection and content offerings. Because they enable customers to make decisions, negative reviews are just as important as positive ones.

## 12. Product Value:

Your photos and product descriptions are among the most important parts of your online presence, so make sure you are putting forth the absolute best quality content in regards to both.

**Tip:** Highlight major products with special attention, data, and possibly video.



### **13. Take the Customer's Advice:**

Product recommendations based on the customer's actions and behavior are a great way to increase the average ticket, and customer satisfaction.

### **14. Say NO to Cart Abandonment:**

It is essential to pay attention to cart abandonment rates, and to find ways to increase the usability. The scroll bar should always be strategically placed, and call-to-action buttons should be visible at all times.

### **15. Say YES to Abandoned Cart Recovery:**

Not everybody who adds products to the shopping cart places an order. However, you can increase your conversion rates by using abandoned cart recovery tools.

## 16. Incomplete Order Recover:

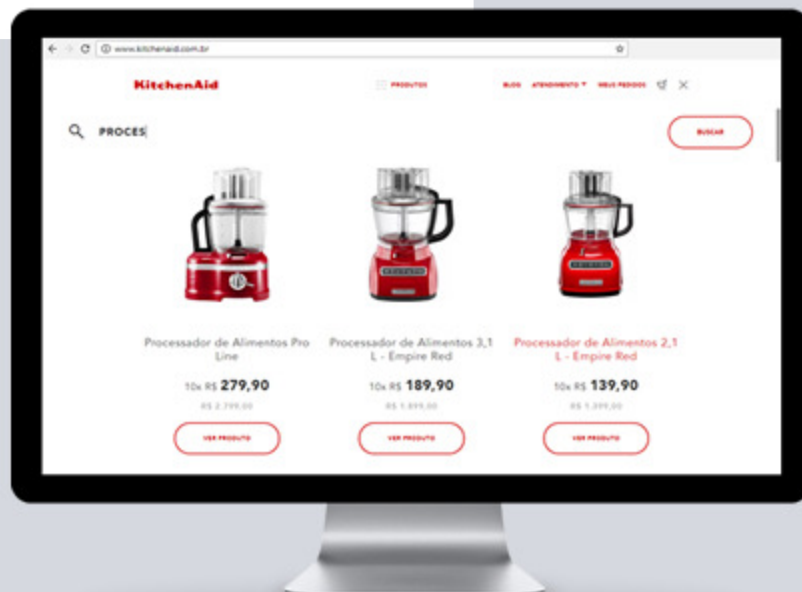
Do not discard any information! Whether it's an incomplete order, or a fraud refusal; if the customer has reached this point, do your best to reverse the situation to a positive. Try automated tools or manual strategies to turn those incomplete orders into sales.

## 17. Pay Attention to Colors:

Important information and call-to-actions can be conveyed using the right colors, such as orange and lime green, in order to be eye-catching. These colors should not be repeated haphazardly across the site; they should be used specifically and strategically to communicate your message.

## 18. Search is Optimal:

According to data from Nielsen, 43% of customers give up after the first search attempt. That's a huge percentage traffic that leaves due to frustration, which can easily be fixed with an efficient search engine that delivers intuitive, intelligent results customers are looking for.





### **19. Monitor Your Searches:**

Always keep your eye on the search terms that cause people to land on your site. This can help you increase your product mix to accommodate the demand, and also to create targeted, specific pages that cater to this traffic.

### **20. Remarketing:**

Landing your customers was tremendous work, however keeping them requires additional strategy. Don't waste the opportunity; existing customers are proof that you've done a great job in capturing them, and catering to them can be very effective so think about the long-term possibilities! Many remarketing tools exist, so take advantage of them!

### **21. Increase Product Assortment:**

Can you increase your product assortment by offering products from other sellers in your online store, without adding them to your inventory? Well, making this happen is just a matter of having the right technology to enable that. Having the option to offer other sellers' products in your online store without having to purchase these products will increase your assortment, reduce the CAC, and improve customer retention simply and conveniently.

## 22. Drive Shoppers Directly From Social Media to Your Shopping Cart:

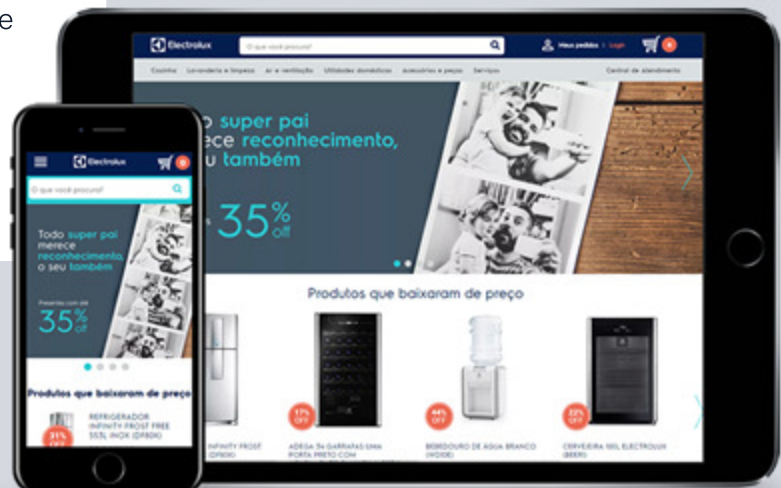
By focusing on the message and shortening the path by which you drive users to your online store, it's possible to sell more organically with the right tool: the "Social Buy Button." By adding a "Social Buy Button," you can easily promote products on social media and redirect users directly to the shopping cart and checkout. The result is an intuitive and seamless shopping experience that brings results with fewer clicks to purchase.

## 23. Implement Multi-Pricing Strategies:

Pricing strategy is not just a matter of reducing product pricing. It comes down to a matter of offering the right price to the right people, at the right time. Depending on the campaign, target, and competitors, each price point is created in order to maintain absolute competitiveness based on their market. This results in an increase in conversion rates, as well as an increase in margins, making it clear that you don't always need to offer the "best" price to everyone.

## 24. Mobile-First:

Almost half of all online customers are placing orders using their mobile devices. A 'mobile first' approach takes into account not just the screen size, but the basics of the user experience.



### **25. Ideal Customer Profile:**

The higher your customer targeting, the better your targeting communication is going to be in regards to your overall results.

Customer profiles that have the best conversion rates are going to be the ones to invest in.

### **26. Consider the Intangibles:**

Reputation is one of those intangible assets that is incredibly valuable and adds a great competitive advantage. Being very customer-friendly, offering great service, and carefully monitoring social media networks, and complaint sites allows you to stay on top of your customers' needs to continuously improve your offerings.

### **27. Test & Analyze:**

To quote 19th century Irish physicist, Lord Kelvin on the need for logic in all areas: "What you cannot measure, you cannot improve." This statement rings true even now in a digital environment, and we are in complete agreement. These tips may not be that relevant for every online store, so test everything you can, monitor, compare, and do your very best to improve the performance of your online store to achieve the best results overall.

## Online Sales Success Questionnaire

Questionnaire	Points
Does your online store have an SSL certificate (HTTPS)?	2
Do you offer a phone number or an email address for customer service?	1
Do you offer something in exchange to encourage first purchases and to acquire new customers?	2
Do you invest in collecting email addresses from your visitors?	2
Does your online store have a mobile-friendly and responsive design?	2
Do you have an email marketing strategy that leverages your digital commerce?	2
Do you provide personalized email marketing campaigns?	2
Are you running AB testing in your online store?	2
Are you analyzing bounce rates per page?	1
Do you allow customers to rate and review products?	2
Do you offer intelligent product recommendations to your visitors?	2
Does your online store have an abandoned cart recovery feature?	2
Do you clearly highlight your call-to-actions?	2
Do you currently monitor and improve performance and page load times?	2
Do you offer an efficient search engine to your visitors?	2
Have you mapped the profile of your ideal customers?	2
Do you have a strategy to recover incomplete orders?	2
On a monthly basis, do you have more orders from your current customers than new customers?	2
Do you currently sell products from other vendors using their inventory?	2
Do you use social media to directly increase your online sales?	2
Do you have a multi-pricing strategy in place for your best sellers?	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>__/40</b>

## About VTEX

VTEX is the only multi-tenant True Cloud Commerce™ platform in the digital commerce market with an auto-scaling elastic cloud infrastructure that leads to higher conversion rates, lower TCO, and builds customer loyalty.

The company attributes its rapid success to consistently maintaining an agile culture, enabling it to balance a diverse slate of customers' needs to deliver unified experiences. This agile culture combined with consistently cutting edge technology has allowed the VTEX platform to continuously deliver over 8,000 deploys/upgrades in 2016. Utilizing our exclusive patent-pending SmartCheckout™ technology; a secure, intuitive and easy password-free process, VTEX presents a superior and seamless option for digital commerce with a comprehensive, fully-adaptable, unified solution that keeps pace with ever-changing customer expectations. Companies running the VTEX platform have seen a 54% increase in conversion rates, and a significantly lower rate of cart abandonment.

The VTEX platform serves more than 2,000 online stores in 20 countries and is currently trusted by many top brands worldwide including Sony, Disney, Walmart, Danone, Whirlpool, Coca-Cola, Lancôme, Pandora, Avon and LEGO. In 2017, VTEX became part of Gartner's Magic Quadrant 2017, published by the world's leading information technology research and advisory company, placing it in direct competition with companies such as Salesforce, Oracle Commerce, SAP Hybris and Magento Enterprise.

Visit <http://www.vtex.com> to learn more. Connect with VTEX Cloud Commerce through our **Blog**. Join the conversation on **Twitter @VTEXTrueCloud**.



## About the Author – Alex Soncini

Alex Soncini brings over 17 years of experience in the digital commerce industry and a passion and appreciation for the accelerated transformation of global retail. With an educational background in Computer Engineering and a Masters Degree in Project Management, Alex has participated in hundreds of omnichannel commerce projects spearheading digital strategy, and the expansion of Fortune 100 companies across diverse industries.

Co-founder of **VTEX True Cloud Commerce™** platform, Alex has successfully propelled the company's expansion and dominance in Latin America, currently serving over 2,000 online stores in 20 countries. He is now currently leading the company's strategic North American expansion.

Alex has also coordinated the E-commerce Platform Committee of the Brazilian Chamber of Electronic E-commerce for two years, and is an international speaker and subject matter expert for emerging markets and digital commerce events. He has also instructed digital commerce courses at the most prestigious universities and higher learning institutions in Brazil.

