

# *Heather's Guide to... Getting started with Shopify*

Hey there, I'm Heather, and I'm a writer, podcaster, and storyteller - I created my first history website in 1998, was on blogger in 2002, and have been podcasting since 2009. I also have a successful online store selling products inspired by Tudor history to my audience. I'm passionate about this method as a way to grow your audience, and your message, and I'm committed to teaching others how to do it too. (If you're a creative, and you want to build your audience through product sales, I'm launching an online course to teach you - step by step - how it's done. [You can learn more about it here.](#))

I so completely believe in this because of the difference it has made in my creative business. Selling products has not only added cash to my bank account, allowing me to pursue my passions full time, but it's also made me so much more connected to my audience than I ever was before. **I have more names on my email list, and I connect with them on a much deeper level than I did when I wasn't selling them products - it's almost as if, by buying my products, they have become much more invested in me and my success.** I believe this can work for every artist and creative entrepreneur, and I'm excited that you're interested in doing it, too.

Let me know what you have questions about after reading through this!

## **So, what is Shopify?**

Shopify is an ecommerce platform which is also a web host, and content management system. It's as if you took Wordpress, a hosting company, and WooCommerce, and rolled it all into one elegant package. They also offer a payment system, or you can integrate paypal to accept money. You can also connect your Amazon seller account and push products through to Amazon through the Shopify interface. Basically, if you are looking to sell products online, Shopify is a really great option.

## **What I like about Shopify**

I first experimented with eCommerce platforms when I was setting up a membership site on my WordPress self hosted site, and I downloaded the WooCommerce plugin. It added a lot of pages to my site - shopping cart, checkout page, etc., and it didn't look that easy to navigate. I wound up not pursuing that project, but I did use WooCommerce later that year when I sold my first Tudor Planner using a print on demand service at the end of 2016. It wasn't the nicest

solution, I wasn't thrilled with how you added products, and the product page itself, but it did the job.

It wasn't until almost a year later when I set up a shop with products geared towards my niche (Tudor history) that I "figured out" Shopify.

### **So here's what I like about it.**

- 1) Searching is so easy. From the top bar in my dashboard I can easily search for customers, orders, and products, simply and cleanly.
- 2) The reports and analytics are amazing. No more exporting and organizing spreadsheets the way I did with WooCommerce.
- 3) Every product page has an area to fill out that helps with SEO.
- 4) Amazon integration!
- 5) All of the apps that work seamlessly - with WooCommerce, it sits on top of your WordPress theme, and then your hosting, and there are so many variables of different plugins talking to each other, and there's a lot more chance that something is going to stop working in all of that. With Shopify, it's all done within the same environment, so it's super clean.
- 6) The KIT automatic CRM/marketing assistant. This is a product that had been built on its own, and Shopify bought, and it automatically sets up Facebook ads, for you. That's great, but the thing I really love about it is that it will automatically send thank you notes to new customers, which is something I always wanted to do, and it just took too much time, or I forgot.

So how to you get started creating print on demand products on Shopify?

- 1) Set up a Shopify account. I'd love it if you used my affiliate link (<https://www.shopify.com/?ref=renaissance-english-history-podcast>) - you get a free 2 week trial, and if you decide to continue with them, I do get a commission, but you pay the same price.
- 2) Decide what kinds of products you want to create. If you want to do Print on Demand there are two major companies that integrate well with Shopify. They are Printful and Gooten. I have a separate document comparing the two with some popular products. A good idea is to start with one as you get going. Then you can always add the other. See my note at the end as to why this is a good idea.
- 3) You'll want to create an account with that drop shipping company. **This is separate from your account with Shopify.** Create your account with Printful or Gooten, and then you

will connect that with your Shopify account.

(Note, I'm also a Printful affiliate - if you choose to sign up through this link, you'll pay the same price, and I'll get a small commission on your products:

<https://www.printful.com/a/358593:5915eaf8e6244672ab81b0877fe8107f>

I should say, Printful and Gooten each have their own strengths, and I use both in my shop. But I think that, unless there's something really compelling that you want to sell that only Gooten offers (travel mugs, puzzles, yoga mats) Printful is the better place to start because it's much easier, and the process is more streamlined.

- 4) Go to the Shopify App Store to connect the app of the drop shipping company for your designs that you chose - Printful or Gooten. Once they are integrated in your shop, you can create products right there, and automatically push them to your store.
- 5) Connect your Facebook page so that you can have your products for sale on Facebook. In countries where it's permitted, people can purchase right from the Facebook environment that way, and even where people need to check out on your site, they still have a way to look at your products on your Facebook page.
- 6) Choose a theme for your shop. Debut is the theme that they all start with, and it's what I use only because I haven't had a chance to explore others yet. I'm happy with it, though!
- 7) If you already are an Amazon seller, you can connect your Amazon Seller account. You will still need to push products through to Amazon separately after they're listed in Shopify. I'll write another Guide on that soon - selling on Amazon can be daunting, but once you get it worked out it can do wonders for your business. Now when people search for Elizabeth I they often find my combat boots with Elizabeth I portraits on them. How cool is that?

### **Now it's time to create products!**

I use Picmonkey for my tshirt and mug designs. For leggings, I found a designer on fiverr because the specs need to match perfectly.

For tshirts in Printful I use a canvas that is 3000x3000 pixels. This provides a good print quality, and I can also reuse it for mugs. With Gooten, each product has its own specs, listed on the product page, so you'll need to design to their measurements.

You will choose the type of product you want to create, and then upload your artwork. You'll have a chance to choose what kinds of photos to include, and then write your description. Printful automatically includes a basic product description and sizing information if needed, which is something I love about them. Gooten doesn't do this, and if you want to include those basic descriptions (ie ceramic mug, dishwasher safe) you need to grab it from their catalog, which is an extra step. That's one thing I like about Printful better than Gooten!

Both Gooten and Printful offer product mockups. As you go through the process of creating your product, write a great description, and headline, and then push it to your shop. After your product is listed in your Shopify store, you'll want to go back in - within Shopify, rather than editing in Printful or Gooten - and make sure that all the available sales channels are checked (Facebook and Amazon if you are an Amazon seller).

Also, edit the SEO at the bottom of the product page.

**Note on using multiple print on demand drop shipping companies:**

The issue that you will encounter if you use two print on demand companies is that if a customer buys a pair of leggings that you will order from Printful, and a travel mug that you will order from Gooten, they only paid shipping once. But you wind up having to order and pay for shipping twice.

There is a Shopify App called Advanced Shipping Rules that you can set up that will manage that for you, but it takes time. As you're first getting started, unless you REALLY need to, try to stick with just one company. So compare the offerings of Gooten and Printful to see which will work best for you.

Also, remember that Printful is an Etsy approved seller, so if you want to sell your designs on Etsy, they'd be a great one to start with.

**As you get used to the Shopify environment, here are some other things you will want to do:**

You don't have to do these now, so don't be overwhelmed. But as you get used to Shopify, you may want to set Printful or Gooten to automatically fulfill so that you don't need to manually approve the order each time one comes in. For me, I wanted to approve each order as it came in because I was uncertain about the process, but the automation is part of what makes it so easy, so you'll want to turn that on when you're comfortable with it.

There are some apps that will help you with conversion - the most important thing is showing **social proof**, and there's an app called **Yo** that has small popups showing recent purchases by location.

You can also collect email addresses by having an offer and a popup - **Privvy** is an app that will handle that for you.

### **Resources:**

Shopify - my affiliate link: <https://www.shopify.com/?ref=renaissance-english-history-podcast>

Printful - my affiliate link:

<https://www.printful.com/a/358593:5915eaf8e6244672ab81b0877fe8107f>

Gooten.com

Picmonkey.com

Then there's my online course called **The Abundance Whoosh** for creatives who want to incorporate eCommerce as another revenue stream. For this first launch of the program I'm including individual coaching calls weekly with each participant so I can get a good sense of how it's working out for you, and make sure all the lessons are clear. Learn more and sign up here!

<https://heathers-school-fc9d.thinkific.com/courses/the-abundance-whoosh-growing-your-art-and-audience-through-selling-products/>

### **The designer I used on fiverr for sublimated projects, which is a good place to start**

For leggings, you'll want to search for *Sublimated Printing*, which is the type of printing that this is. I used <https://www.fiverr.com/ndarajatun> and she is great. But definitely search around to find someone whose style gels with yours.

### **My Facebook Group for support/questions/inspiration**

Join the Facebook Group I just formed to help creatives grow their business using Shopify. Hopefully this will grow over time, and we can all share ideas and new discoveries.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/294642781056163/>

And please, tell me what you're creating, and how you imagine product sales helping your business. I can't wait to see!