

## Grocery Site Experience

## Best Practices

In developing an online store, grocers need to have a deep understanding of the decisions their shoppers make, the types of information they seek to inform those decisions, and where and how they choose to make their purchases along the “Path-to-Purchase.” Regardless of where they shop, the key drivers behind shopper purchases are price, quality, convenience and product selection.

Your online store should have the following basic and enhanced features and functionalities:

1. **Product Categories.** Classify products in proper categories and sub-categories and implement this on your website to make it easier for customers to find the right product.
2. **Consistent Online and In-store Pricing and Promotions.** Must offer online shoppers with the same price, promotions and loyalty program benefits offered to shoppers in the physical store.
3. **Digital Weekly Circulars.** Digital shoppers seek the convenience of accessing and shopping the weekly print circular digitally, and receiving the same deals. Forward-thinking grocers are seeking ways to personalize the weekly circular based on shopper’s purchases, shopping list, recipes, etc.
4. **Efficient Product Search Tool.** If shoppers can’t find what they’re looking for when browsing product categories, then they should be able to search for it. The search tool should have an auto-suggest feature that is tolerant to minor spelling mistakes, plus in-depth filtering options.
5. **Social Commerce Features.** Include features such as sharing products on social media, social signup and showcasing user-generated content. Leveraging social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest can also help your business get good exposure.
6. **SEO Ready.** Make sure that your website has all key features to get easily crawled by search engine bots to ensure better ranking on search engine listings.
7. **Shopper List Management.** Make a list, save a list, and share a list.
  - a. Provide shoppers the option to make, name and save one-to-many shopping lists and orders to their profiles, which they can use for future reorders.
  - b. Allow shoppers to share a shopping list with other registered shopper(s) so that they can add additional products, and have them all delivered in one single order.
8. **Shop-By-Recipe.** Provide shoppers the option to view a recipe and its ingredients; create an ingredient shopping list and add-to-cart. Create a dedicated recipe section and display recipe ideas on the product pages (if the product is one of the ingredients).
9. **Shop-By-Coupons.** Provide shoppers the option to view available coupons and add selected coupon products to cart. Create a dedicated coupon section and display coupons on appropriate product pages. Also, it’s important that your website has the feature to receive and process manufacturers’ discount coupons.
10. **Notes to Order Selectors.** Allow shoppers to leave notes to order selectors for product substitutions, special cuts of meat, ripeness of fruits, etc.
11. **Efficient and Frictionless Checkout.** Develop a one-page checkout to get shoppers through the payment process as quickly and as painlessly as possible.
12. **The Last-Mile – Click-and-Collect and Home Delivery.** Provide shoppers the convenient options to buy online and collect in-store or other locations or have their order delivered to home or office.

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# eCommerce Diligence™ Checklist

## Grocery Site Experience

## Key Questions to Ask Providers

### Company

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1. How long have you been in this business?
2. Who is on your leadership team, and what are their experiences?
3. How many clients have you sold? What is your churn rate, and why?
4. What size or types of clients fall into your “sweet spot”?
5. What peripheral or support services do you offer (e.g., technology, process analysis and reengineering, 24/7 customer services)?
6. Who are your current partners and why? Who have you worked with in the past?
7. Who are the team members I'll be working with and what is their experience?

### Products/Services

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1. Is your platform geared strictly to grocery?
2. Is your solution offered as perpetual licensed software or on-demand multi-tenant solution?
  - a. If perpetual license:
    - i. What are the hosting requirements?
    - ii. What should I expect regarding upgrades (both timing and pain)? Cost?
    - iii. Do you provide customization and implementation services? Can outside third parties be used?
  - b. If SAAS / ASP:
    - i. Do all tiers include maintenance and support?
    - ii. How often are new features introduced?
    - iii. What can I do if I need a feature you don't have or plan to have soon?
    - iv. Define your redundancy / disaster recovery.
3. What is your solution built on (which OS, code base and database)?
4. Please describe your architecture.
5. How long to deploy a basic site? A complex site?
6. What skills does my organization (or hired third-party) need to implement this platform?
7. What are the terms of your service-level agreement (SLA)?
8. What does your onboarding process look like?
9. Ensure your provider has a plan in place so that you are not left on your own to deal with the transition and adjustment period. A good managed IT provider will be there to support you and your employees throughout.
10. What client references can you offer? Who are running the same kind of applications I'll be using?

### Features

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1. What key features are included in your platform?
  - a. What features are currently missing?
  - b. What new features have been added recently?
  - c. What does the product roadmap look like?
2. How do you integrate data (product, price, promotion, order, customer, etc.)?
  - a. Is real-time integration possible? How?
  - b. How effective are your import tools at uploading hundreds (or thousands) of products/images, coupons, recipes, etc. at a time?
3. Do you have a staging or test environment and a data/content migration tool to push data and content to live?
4. Which of the following services do you provide?
  - a. Data feed management, data optimization, reporting, competitive analysis, others?
5. What is your platform's competitive advantage over other packages? Why?
6. What does your dashboard include? How customizable is it?
7. Will your solution scale with my business?
8. How does your platform integrate with POS, Order Management System, including back-office systems, other online shopping channels and/or point solutions?
9. What reporting and analytics tools does your platform include? Does it provide the ability to analyze cart abandonment, quantify browser searches, tie product purchases to search terms, etc.?
10. Is it PCI compliant and certified?

### Pricing

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1. What is the typical implementation cost for your platform? What is the minimum cost to get onto the solution?
2. How do you charge for annual support? What about maintenance?
3. Are there any additional fees (e.g., implementation, training, transaction costs)?

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