



Brief Comparison of E-Commerce Solutions for Small Businesses

	Wix	Shopify	SquareSpace	WordPress with WooCommerce
International Market Share	4.2%	11.0%	17.9%	28.0%
Yearly Overhead Costs for your Domain (3)	14.95	Start @ 11.00	\$20 - \$70	Start @ \$20 and includes Private Domain Registration. (1)
Monthly Overhead Cost	\$23 - \$500	\$29 - \$2,000	\$26-\$40	\$12.95 (1)
One-Time Costs	None unless you pay someone to set up your Wix site for you.	None unless you pay someone to set up the site for you. Paid themes range from \$140-\$180. If you need a developer to modify, there could significant additional costs.	None unless you pay someone to set up the SquareSpace site for you.	Most likely yes. It is recommended that you have someone who is familiar with WordPress and WooCommerce set up the site and your online store configuration for you. Cost will vary based on the amount of time and the rate charged by whomever is doing the work.
Hidden / Potentially Unexpected Costs	Price deals they offer require upfront payments for entire term. Deals aren't offered in perpetuity, so at next billing cycle your costs could be significantly higher.	Additional apps to plugin for more functionality range in price also and are charged on a monthly basis.	Price deals they offer require upfront payments for entire term. No "hidden" fees per se but you may find you have to use a higher hosting plan to get the functionality you need for your online store.	If you need functionality that is only offered in a paid licensed plugin, then the cost of that license will be extra. Examples of such might be integration with FedEx or UPS to auto-calculate shipping costs on the fly at checkout. (5)



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Hidden / Potentially Unexpected Costs (continued)	Private Domain registration is an additional cost of \$9.90 per year. Many Wix Apps required additional payments as well from \$3-\$15 per month.			
Email Accounts included	NO	NO	One Free one for the first year. Afterwards \$6 per account per month	NO. Accounts can be setup and purchased and prices vary by email service provider.
Online Payment Transaction Fees	PayPal, Stripe, Wix Payments or more. Starts at 2.9% + 30¢	Shopify Payments 2.9% + 30¢ or as low as 2.4% + 30¢	PayPal, Stripe, Square. Starts at 2.9% + 30¢	PayPal, Stripe, Square, Authorize.net, and more. Depends on payment processor. Typically, 2.9% + 30¢
Hosted Software	Yes	Yes	Yes	No, You must have a hosting solution for this. However, this is the monthly cost noted above. (1)
24x7 Support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Depends on your hosting set-up. (4)
Multi-Channel Integration	No	Yes, with possible additional costs	Limited, with possible additional costs	Yes, some at no cost others at minimal yearly cost.



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Ability to Customize Look & Feel, Functionality	Limited capability	Yes, but need to learn Shopify's coding language "Liquid" in order to do so.	Ok, but can be difficult to tweak the settings. Not for beginners.	Yes, the options are nearly limitless and is largely done through the theme used on the website. Basic CSS styling may be necessary. Customizing functionality is also possible for little to no cost.
Powerful Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	Has improved in recent versions but is still limited.	Yes, but has potentially high additional costs for the add-ons	Has some limitations on how sites look on mobile and loading speed.	Yes, many options for tuning and optimizing.
Do You Own Your Content?	You have full ownership over your shop and domain name. You can end your subscription at any time, and Wix will delete the store and all data. You'd have to completely start over with set up and marketing on a new platform if you chose to move away from Wix.	You have full ownership over your shop and domain name. You can end your subscription at any time, and Shopify will delete the store and all data. You'd have to completely start over with set up and marketing on a new platform if you chose to move away from Shopify.	You have full ownership over your shop and domain name. You can end your subscription at any time, and SquareSpace will delete the store and all data. You'd have to completely start over with set up and marketing on a new platform if you chose to move away from SquareSpace.	Depends on who is hosting your site and their policies. (6)



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Local Provider?	NO – based in Tel Aviv, Israel	NO – based in Ottawa, Canada	NO – based in New York, NY	Potentially YES. Depends on the local firm you choose to implement it on your behalf. (2)

Notes:

- (1) This depends on what company hosts your website. Price quoted is for hosting from Life Light Creative (www.LifeLightCreative.com).
- (2) Wordpress.com and WooCommerce e-commerce add-on are open source software. This means that the base software is FREE to use. However, installation and setup are required for these products. There are many local web design / web hosting providers in Western South Dakota who can implement this solution for you. Life Light Creative is based in Belle Fourche, South Dakota. We partner with Liquid Web for server hosting and all our servers are physically located in a data center in Lansing, Michigan. We may use licenses for plugins that are obtained from US or Foreign developers. All billing for our customers, however, is from South Dakota.
- (3) Domain costs can vary based on the TLD (top-level-domain) extension you choose. Typically, .com is the most common for online shopping. However .biz, .co and others are available. The price per extension varies widely and is set by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names).
- (4) Support for your website largely depends on these things (1) Who built it, (2) Did they adhere to best practices, (3) where it is hosted and (4) their commitment and availability to manage support requests after the site goes live. For our customers, we support all the sites I build after go-live. We prefer to manage the hosting as well as it gives us the ability to control and better support the hosting environment. We partner with a leading, U.S. based server hosting company that provides us 24x7 onshore support. We only deploy sites using up-to-date, licensed (where necessary) code that is monitored 24x7x365. We provide email, phone and text support to all our customers as part of the hosting package we provide.



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- (5) At Life Light Creative, we make an effort to keep costs down for our customers, so we have developer licenses that we offer to our customers at no cost for many common licensed plugins that are necessary for a solidly-configured WordPress website. We also attempt to find quality, free plugins for other advanced functionality that may be required. When we must implement a paid licensed plugin, we pass along the direct costs to our customers, with no added fees. Licenses typically range from \$30 - \$80 per year. Rarely does a licensed plugin cost more than \$80 a year.

- (6) At Life Light Creative, it has always been our policy that customers own their full website, shop and domain. If they choose to move away from our hosting services, all licenses purchased by the customer for their site specifically, stay with the site. For licensed plugins that are the developer versions we offer to our customers who host with us, we do not allow those licenses to transfer with the site. The latest version of the plugin would transfer, but any new updates after the transfer would require the customer to purchase their own license. If the transfer was not to another WordPress hosting scenario, we would work with customers to produce a spreadsheet and or other documents that represent the content and products for their shop to take with them at no charge.