



Visualizing the E-Commerce Ecosystem

Global Innovation Forum

TRUST

Online tools, including ratings systems, user reviews, and purchase protection guarantees foster trust, which supports the success of online and offline businesses.

Two-thirds of consumers trust and act on online reviews.¹

Digital platforms support local, offline businesses too: 86% of consumers read reviews before frequenting local businesses.²

VISIBILITY

Global platforms help small businesses reach a larger audience, raising the visibility of their products and services internationally.

Today, a greater percentage of consumers discover new products to buy via online channels (59%) like user reviews, social media posts, ads, websites, or online articles than offline means (53%) such as seeing it in a physical shop, talking to friends or family, or reading about it in a print magazine.³

Four Ways Small Businesses Benefit from Global Technology

PRODUCTIVITY

Digital tools reduce costs and make small businesses more productive.

Technology lowers the costs of doing business: For example, the average cost of processing digital payments is 57% less than that of non-digital payments.⁴

Technology increases productivity: 83% of employees depend on technologies like cloud software and storage tools for effective collaboration.⁵

KNOWLEDGE

The internet enables entrepreneurs to access digital learning resources on how to run a business and develop global support networks with peer, public and private sector advisors.

“The Internet is more than just a place where we market and sell our products, it’s a place where we learn a lot. We’re not from a business background. Through various online channels, we’ve learned a lot about marketing and selling products around the world,” - Eva-Dewi Pangestian Harahap, Co-Founder of German-based Nauli (nauli.de/en/)

1. <https://www.nielsen.com/ca/en/insights/report/2015/global-trust-in-advertising-2015/>

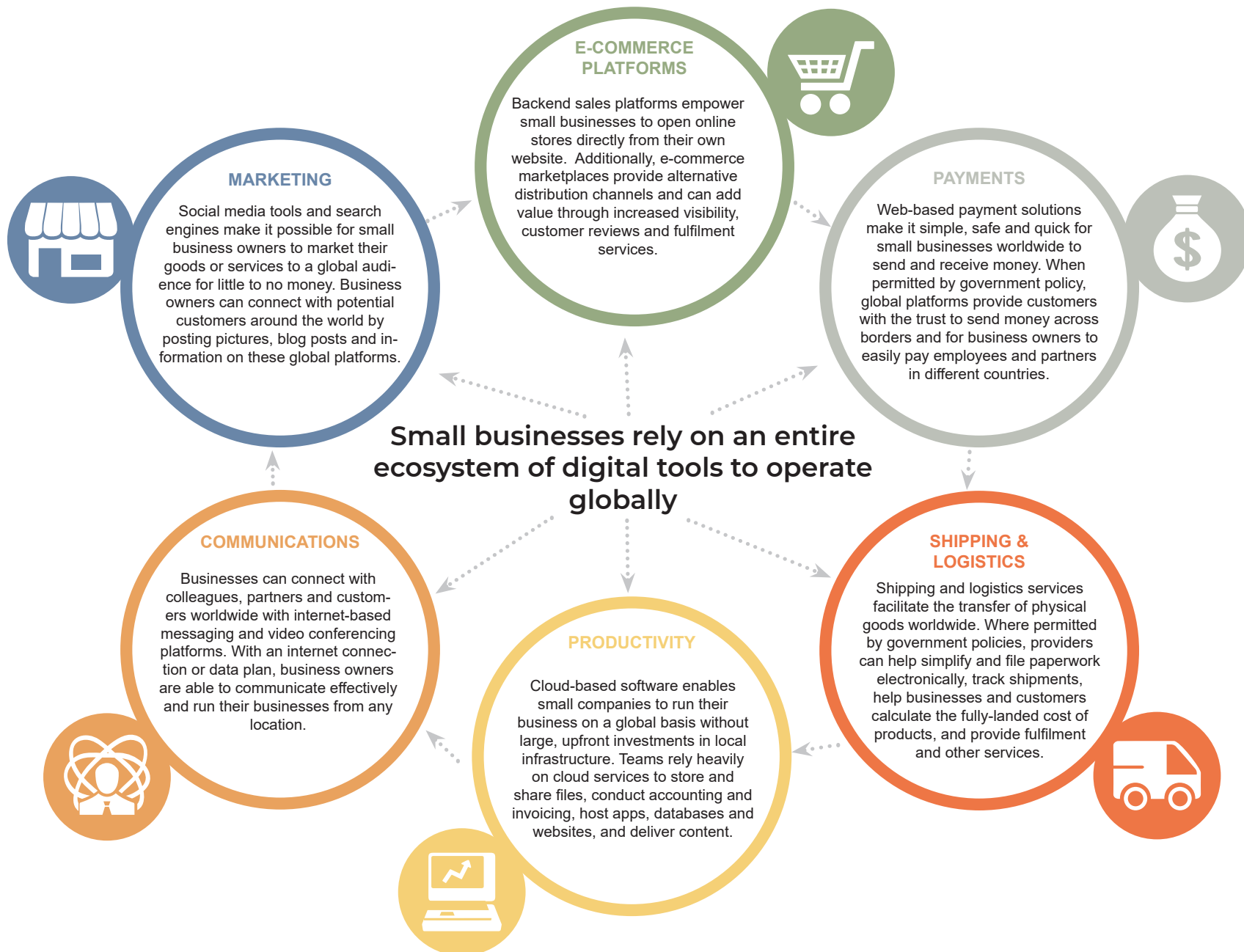
2. Local Consumer Review Survey 2018, BrightLocal, available at <https://www.brightlocal.com/research/local-consumer-review-survey/>

3. “The truth about online consumers.” KPMG’s 2017 Global Online Consumer Report. 2017. Web. <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/xx/pdf/2017/01/the-truth-about-online-consumers.pdf>

4. Digital Transformation of SMBs: The Future of Commerce, available at: <https://usa.visa.com/dam/VCOM/global/run-your-business/documents/digital-transformation-of-smb.pdf>

5. Collaboration trends and technology: a survey of knowledge workers. Available at: <https://www.alfresco.com/sites/www.alfresco.com/files/dimesionalresearch-collab-survey-findingsreport-082415.pdf>

The E-Commerce Ecosystem



MA TÉ SAI

LAOS

In 2010, Emi Weir launched Ma Té Sai (“where is it from”) to provide a platform for Lao people to sell their products. Starting in 2013, Ma Té Sai began teaching women in different districts to sew, further enabling them to create finished products from naturally dyed and woven cotton cloth.

The young women Ma Té Sai empowers “are now the major breadwinners in their families,” Weir added. The unique, handcrafted products represent the work of 15 artisan villages, 5 individual artisans and 8 organizations across the country.

Ma Té Sai is omnichannel and benefits from bricks and clicks. “We couldn’t survive without tourism,” explained Weir. The company maintains a brick and mortar showroom in Luang Prabang, occasional pop-up shops in Vientiane and a growing online presence.

Her company has benefited tremendously from increased online visibility. Tourists and online shoppers are able to discover the company through services such as Tripadvisor and social media tools, which have grown her business.

With a dispersed network of artisans and global customers, Weir and her team rely heavily on digital tools and platforms to operate the business. “WhatsApp is the number one tool for us. It changed our business. It allows us to communicate as a team, regardless of where we are,” emphasized Weir.

Web-based messaging tools are so integral to the communication and logistics of the company that Weir now provides her teams with a phone and a monthly stipend to ensure they have access to data.



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Learn more:

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MARKETING

Customers can learn more about the company, read reviews, browse photos and learn more about the company. Both platforms also link to the website where they can purchase handcrafted goods.



ONLINE SALES

Customers can purchase Ma Te Sai goods on their website (built with Weebly) or on platforms like Etsy from anywhere in the world with just the click of a button.



PAYMENTS

Through the online marketplaces, customers can pay using web-based tools like PayPal and Visa and Mastercard. The tools simplify transactions for international customers and instill trust in the experience.



How Ma Te Sai uses the e-commerce ecosystem

COMMUNICATIONS

Founder Emi Weir uses web-based tools to communicate with her network of artisans across remote villages, partners locally and abroad, and customers around the world.



PRODUCTIVITY

With cloud-based services, Emi and her team keep track of orders, product information and financial data. They can access the files in real-time whether at the store in Luang Prabang, a coffee shop or traveling abroad.



SHIPPING & LOGISTICS

The Ma Te Sai team takes the packages to the local post office, fills out any necessary customs forms and submits payment to ship the handcrafted goods using the local Express Mail System (EMS) or DHL to customers worldwide.



WAKANOW

NIGERIA

Entrepreneur Obinna Ekezie founded online traveling booking site Wakanow.com in Nigeria in 2010, just as the internet e-commerce boom was getting underway.

Back then, he had to hustle to develop trust with online consumers from Nigeria, the rest of Africa and around the world. He says that stellar online customer service helped, as well as the ability to use the internet to build a global reputation.

Obinna relies on a number of social platforms including Youtube, Instagram, and Twitter, and tools like Verisign, Verve mobile payments, Visa and Mastercard to build a global reputation and generate visibility and trust. He also developed his own innovative financial services tool, Pay Small Small, which allows customers to put 25% down and pay in an installment plan for their trip.

Back in those early days when he was hustling to gain traction, LinkedIn played a role in connecting his company to international financing. Ekezie recalled how a New York-based venture capitalist, who saw him speak on CNBC, used LinkedIn to investigate his background and to connect directly, eventually leading to an investment in his company.

Obinna also relied heavily on the internet to gain knowledge about how to start and grow his business. He read a lot of books on how some of the most successful people in the world created their businesses. "How do you start a business? What is the process? How to write a business plan? All those things are online; you just need to put the time in and be focused and dedicated." He added that, "You have to use the internet; anything you want in this world you can get online. You can download books on your phone. You can really educate yourself."¹



“[WAKANOW STARTED AT] THE EARLY STAGES OF NIGERIANS BOOKING ONLINE AND USING E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS. CREDIBILITY WAS THE MAIN ISSUE BUT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BUILD THAT TRUST.”



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1. Quotes taken from: <https://guardian.ng/life/on-the-cover/obinna-ekezie-walking-tall-flying-high/>

MARKETING

Wakanow uses social media like Instagram, Facebook and Youtube to tell stories about its vacations. It engages its more than 43,000 Instagram followers with travel photos.



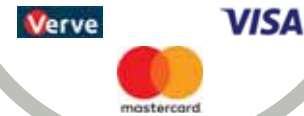
ONLINE SALES

Wakanow uses the VeriSign Seal as an element of developing trust with customers online. It helps convince customers that the website is secure, backed by Symantec's continuous protection and security.



PAYMENTS

Wakanow offers a range of trusted cashless payment options, including Interswitch Verve, Visa, Paypal, Mastercard or Wakanow Credit, that allow its customers to make travel payments on the go.



How Wakanow uses the e-commerce ecosystem

COMMUNICATIONS

Wakanow prides itself on stellar online customer service. It uses a variety of channels including Facebook Messenger to communicate with clients and potential customers.



PRODUCTIVITY

Wakanow uses a number of tools to increase its productivity, including Zendesk as a solution for help and customer service.



RAGS2RICHES

PHILIPPINES

In 2007 Reese Fernandez-Ruiz founded Rags2Riches (R2R), a social enterprise that works with community artisans to create eco-ethical fashion and home accessories and sell them direct to retailers. “Our goal is to be a sustainable and reliable life and livelihood partner to artisans from poor areas of the Philippines,” said Fernandez-Ruiz.

Based in Quezon City in the Philippines, Fernandez-Ruiz oversees a team of 35 people who run the growing global business. R2R has a strong focus on establishing a presence in the Philippines, but Fernandez-Ruiz also sees tremendous potential of global markets to expand her business and help scale her positive impact on women artisans.

R2R exports to retailers and distributors, including well-known brands such as Anthropologie, in countries such as the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Canada, and the United States. “We work with like-minded and like-hearted retailers and distributors who share our products as well as stories to their advocates,” said Fernandez-Ruiz.

The company also sells directly to consumers via a slick online e-commerce shop called “Things that Matter,” powered by Canada-based Shopify. “Instagram is the most effective for us in terms of driving traffic to our online store and converting to sales,” Fernandez-Ruiz said, and noted that she uses “a lot of cloud-based tools for our operations” including Google Suite, Dropbox and PayPal.

“We are a small enterprise with global aspirations and global distribution, we rely on the accessibility and affordability of cloud-based services to enable us to reach our markets as well as each other,” shared Fernandez-Ruiz. She sees a lot of potential in other ASEAN countries to grow her international sales and network “given the right partners and advocates.”



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MARKETING

Rags2Riches connects with its global audience through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Customers can browse photos of the accessories made by local artisans, learn more about the products and connect to the marketplace to purchase them.



ONLINE SALES

ThingsThatMatter is Rags2Riches online marketplace that was built with the Canadian platform Shopify. Customers can shop the stylish and functional products directly from this e-commerce marketplace.



PAYMENTS

R2R customers can trust their transaction and do so efficiently. The ThingsThatMatter website is linked directly to PayPal, which allows customers to use their PayPal account or pay by credit card.



How Rags2Riches uses the e-commerce ecosystem

COMMUNICATIONS

Founder Reese Fernandez-Ruiz uses web-based tools to communicate with her network of artisans across remote villages, partners locally and abroad, and customers around the world.



PRODUCTIVITY

Founder Reese Fernandez-Ruiz and her team collaborate internally using cloud-based tools like Google Suite and Dropbox. With all documents in the cloud, she can easily access information in real time.



SHIPPING & LOGISTICS

Rags2Riches relies on international logistic company FedEx to complete customs paperwork and get the packages from her shop in the Philippines to the customers worldwide.



INCREASE CARD

ARGENTINA

Founded in 2014, IncreaseCard provides a fintech solution to empower and connect businesses that receive credit and debit payments. The company provides merchants, including small e-commerce shops, with greater visibility, control and automation of their payment settlements, taxes, withholdings, and coupons across their business.

The team has grown from its two founders, Sebastian Cadenas and Matias Doublier, to a group of 22 based in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

IncreaseCard has customers around the world ranging from small businesses, such as local kiosks, to large corporations, including LATAM, Shell and Nike. Cadenas noted that the team is beginning to focus on expanding their operations globally -- including to Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Peru, Uruguay and the United States.

“Absolutely everything we have is online,” shared Cadenas. From the cloud where all the information is stored to the application itself, the internet is essential to Increase Card. The tools that enable the team to share files, collaborate, electronically sign contracts and more are necessary to the company’s day-to-day operations. “We have specific tools for the development team and other online tools for the marketing team -- everything is in the cloud for us,” added Cadenas, “The biggest challenge is when we work with organizations that are not on the cloud.”

Increase has marketing campaigns on Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram that allow Cadenas and his team to track conversions and connect with prospects worldwide.



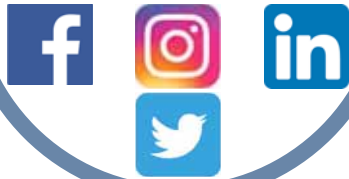
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MARKETING

Social media tools are an effective and inexpensive way for IncreaseCard Founde Cadenas and his team to market the fintech solution to businesses of all sizes.



ONLINE SALES

Customers can learn more about the product on the IncreaseCard website (built using WordPress). Cadenas closes new deals using web based tools to sign and send contracts to businesses globally.



PAYMENTS

As a fintech company, IncreaseCard collaborates with existing digital payment tools to provide seamless solutions to its customers. Cadenas and his team also use tools like Mercado Pago, Visa and Mastercard to send and receive payments



How IncreaseCard uses the e-commerce ecosystem

COMMUNICATIONS

As a completely digital company, IncreaseCard connects with existing and potential customers using a number of different cloud-based tools, including Zendesk and Salesforce.



PRODUCTIVITY

With all aspects of the company based on the internet, Google Suite is the tool of choice for the 22 person team to coordinate on projects and share documents.



