Selling Pottery Online

The good, the bad, and the “hmm, maybe not”

This presentation compares popular online selling platforms and build-your-own website development options, and is intended to help you determine what’s right for you.

The analysis in this presentation was assembled with the help of AI intelligence. As such, the evaluations are not intended as OGP recommendations. Take everything with a grain of salt and do additional research. There is a lot of valuable information online.

THE OTTAWA GUILD OF POTTERS
LA GUILDE DES POTIERS D’OTTAWA

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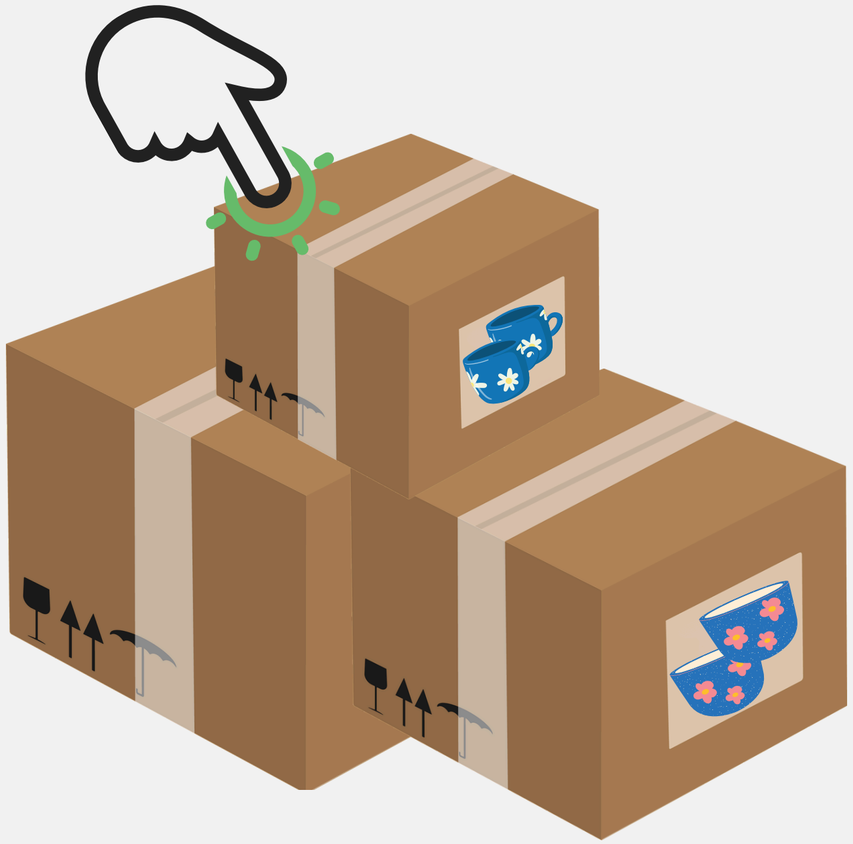
September 2025

Why Sell Online?



- Bigger audience than selling only at local markets
- Helps create a strong, personal brand
- Sell 24/7, even when you’re in the studio
- More ways to show off your work
- Lets people find you instead of you chasing buyers
- You can combine multiple selling platforms and options

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The Downside

- Need to be familiar with shipping options and costs. For example, as of August 2025, the U.S. suspended the de minimis exemption for most imports. All low-value shipments (less than $800) are now subject to duties, taxes, and fees.
- Requires additional skills and processes, such as photographing your work, shipping it, marketing activities
- Additional investment is required in packaging materials
- Need to accommodate for breakages during shipping
- Post COVID, in-person markets and selling events are rising in popularity, compared to online shopping

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Online Selling Platforms

Etsy

★★★★★

Ease of Use

- Big, built-in audience for handmade goods
- Easy setup, no technical headaches
- Secure payments
- Cons: listing and payment fees, competition, limited customization, low branding control
- Get started at https://www.etsy.com/sell

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Instagram Shops

Ease of Use

- Visual platform, perfect for pottery photos
- Easy to sell directly through posts & stories
- Social media reach
- No need for a separate website
- Cons: Need a strong following, not a full store
- Get started at About Shops on Facebook and Instagram or at Set Up a Shop on Facebook and Instagram

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Facebook Shops or Marketplace

★★★★

Ease of Use

- Facebook Shops and Marketplace are not the same thing. Facebook Mkt is a general platform for buying and selling whereas Facebook Shops is designed for businesses and brands to create dedicated storefronts
- Huge audience, easy to list
- Good for local buyers, social reach
- Marketplace cons: Less brand control, not artsy-feel, potential scammers
- Get started at About Shops on Facebook and Instagram, at Set Up a Shop on Facebook and Instagram, or at Marketplace

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Build Your Own Website

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GoDaddy

★★★★

Ease of Use

- Best suited for small businesses with basic e-commerce needs
- Designed for quick and easy setup
- Simple drag-and-drop builder
- Built-in marketing tools (SEO, email, social)
- Cons: Templates are less artsy, limited for big growth, requires technical setup, you are responsible for updates and security, marketing is 100% on you
- Get started at https://www.godaddy.com/en-ca

Shopify

Ease of Use

- Full e-commerce platform with lots of features
- Ultimate branding control
- Can integrate SEO, email, blogs
- Great for scaling a pottery business
- Cons: Pricier monthly fee, you bring your own traffic, requires technical setup
- Get started at https://www.shopify.com

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Square

Ease of Use

- Ultimate branding control
- Can integrate SEO, email, blogs
- Integrated with Square point-of-sale (POS) system, theefore great for selling online and in person
- Cons: Requires technical setup, you are responsible for updates and security, marketing is 100% on you
- Get started at https://squareup.com/ca/en/online-store

Squarespace

⭐⭐⭐
Ease of Use

- Beautiful templates, great for artsy branding
- Ultimate branding control
- Can integrate SEO, email, blogs
- All-in-one site + store builder
- Cons: Monthly fees, bring your own traffic, requires technical setup
- Get started at https://www.squarespace.com/ecommerce-website

Wix

★★★★

Ease of Use

- Good choice for users seeking a balance of ease of use and design flexibility
- User friendly for beginners, with drag and drop editor
- Suitable for small/medium businesses, can accommodate growth
- Creative templates
- All-in-one: site, blog, store, Wix Payments, shipping options
- Built-in marketing & SEO tools
- Ultimate branding control
- Cons: Requires technical setup, you are responsible for updates and security, marketing is 100% on you
- Get started at https://www.wix.com/ecommerce/website

WordPress

⭐⭐
Ease of Use

- Offers extensive flexibility and customization options via themes, plugins, and custom coding
- highly scaleable and capable of handling large-scale e-commerce operations with extensive product catalogs, using WooCommerce
- Ultimate branding control
- Can integrate SEO, email, blogs
- Cons: learning curve and/or requires technical knowledge to set up and maintain
- Get started at https://wordpress.com/

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Full Comparison

Platform	Built-in Audience	Branding Control	Costs	Ease of Use	Best For
Etsy	✓	✗ Low	Listings + fees	★★★★	Beginners, easy exposure
Facebook Mkt	✓	✗ Low	Free (ads optional)	★★★	Local pickup & casual sales
Instagram Shop	✓	✓ Medium	Free (ads optional)	★★★★	Social media-savvy sellers
GoDaddy	✗	✓ Medium	Monthly + fees	★★★★	Quick setup, small shops
Shopify	✗	✓ Full	Monthly + fees	★★★	Scaling business
Square	✗	✓ Medium	Free + fees	★★★★	Selling online and in person
Squarespace	✗	✓ High	Monthly + fees	★★★	Artists wanting elegant site
Wix	✗	✓ High	Monthly + fees	★★★★	Creative control, portfolio focus
WordPress	✗	✓ Full	Hosting/domain	★★	Full independence

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Cost Comparison

- Not possible to show an *apples to apples* cost comparison
- Instead, you need to research and take into account basic package offerings and potential hidden costs:
  - companies offer tiered packages, with monthly or yearly costs
  - some platforms have fees per each listing (e.g. on Etsy)
  - most payment systems have fees per transaction
  - there are free and paid templates and plugins, whereby paid options offer more functionality
  - cost of web development, hosting, security, and maintenance (e.g. for WordPress, if needed)
  - custom domain name

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