

Stockashop Client FAQ

If you have any other questions please contact us +44 (0)1273 279784

GETTING STARTED

What's the difference between a web site and an online shop?

A web site is a collection of information and images that is available via a web site address (also known as domain name) such as www.mywebsite.com. An online shop is an extended web site that allows your customers to buy your products while they are browsing your web site.

What does Stockashop offer?

Stockashop can offer you an online shop, which includes a fully content managed web site. "Content management" means that you'll be able to change the text, images, products, navigation menu and many other aspects of your web site simply by filling in a few password protected forms. It is very easy, and all you'll need is a web browser (like Internet Explorer).

How do I get an online shop?

First you have to contact us and let us know which type of shop you would like, and your preferred domain name (such as www.mywebsite.com). We will then register (or transfer) your chosen domain name and arrange for a design consultation (see below). When you are happy with your shop's appearance, we will issue you with a password so you can login and start adding products.

Do I have to sell stuff?

No, not necessarily. We can set you up with an "enquiry form" instead of a full blown shop. In this case, customers can browse your web site, view your products, and then add them to an enquiry form which is then emailed to you. Please ask if you are interested in this option instead of a full blown shop. (Note that the rest of this FAQ applies to shops.)

What if I already have a domain name?

This is rarely a problem. We ask you to "point" your existing domain name at the Stockashop server. You will need to send your internet host an email requesting a domain transferral. In that email you will need to mention your web site address and ask for it to be redirected to IP address 217.160.177.120. This is Stockashop's server address. We can help you with this, but we will have to charge you our hourly rate for this service. We will just need to know which company you registered the domain (or web site) with and potentially your domain's user name and password.

Can I keep my existing web site and just add a shop?

There are various possibilities that will enable you to do this. It depends how much of your existing web site's content and functionality you would like to keep. Please contact us to discuss these issues.

What about email?

We can also set up several email addresses for you using your domain name, such as info@mywebsite.com. Whenever an email address is created, we will send you the user name, password and the incoming and outgoing mail servers. You can use this information to set up your email software (such as Outlook Express) to collect email from your new address.

How will I get the money from the products I sell?

In addition to signing up with Stockashop, you will also have to sign up with an online bank or payment processor. It may be that your existing bank will allow you to take payment online (Barclays and HSBC do for instance), or you can sign up with a company like PayPal or WorldPay. We will help you through this process, making it as clear and easy possible, and once you have signed up, we will link your new shop to your chosen payment processor.

Depending on the method chosen, the money from your sales may be deposited directly into your own bank account, or into a new bank account (less any commission that they charge – Stockashop do not take any commission). Note that your site will never ask for or store a customer's credit card details directly. This will be handled entirely (and securely) by your payment processor.

What will my shop look like?

The look and feel of your shop is completely up to you. As part of our service we offer up to one hour of design consultation. Using this time, we can take your logo (or just your ideas) and create a simple brand for your shop. Your shop will broadly follow a template – with a logo at the top, then navigation options, then the text and images, and a footer at the bottom – but the fonts and colours and logo will be ultimately chosen by you. If you would like more design time than this we will charge our hourly rate.

How do I change my shop?

Soon after registering, we will issue you with a password (and sometimes a corresponding email address). You will be asked to visit www.stockashop.co.uk and login to the client area. Logging in here will automatically forward you to your new web site's management area. The rest of this FAQ deals with the types of changes you can make to your shop.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

How will customers find my shop?

Before discussing how to create your wonderful new shop, we'll reveal how customers will find and use it. Once your shop is ready, it is up to you to advertise it by letting your existing customers know, and by other traditional means. Stockashop will also (if desired) add your shop to the examples gallery on www.stockashop.co.uk, and we can submit your shop to Google, so that customers can find it in this popular search engine.

How will customers buy things from my shop?

Your shop will be organised into informative web pages, product categories, and product pages. When a customer views a product, they can click "add to basket" to add the item to their "shopping basket". When they are finished, they will click "check out" and fill in their name and address details. After confirming their order, they will be sent to your payment processor (such as PayPal) to enter their credit card details. Upon successful payment, your will receive an email of the successful order, and your shop's order database will be updated to reflect it.

Do customers have to pay by credit card?

It depends on your payment processor. But, in general, yes, your site will only accept payment by credit card. If they have found what they are looking for, your customer can of course bypass your shop, and contact you to place an order and pay directly (over the phone for instance).

MANAGEMENT AREA AND NAVIGATION MENU

How do I get into the management area?

Now, we'll discuss how to manage your shop. When you first login to your shop, you arrive at the main management area screen. On the left is a link which will always return you to this screen, and a "Log out" button. Even when you are visiting the public pages in your site, you will still see these options, but don't worry, nobody else will.

How do I change the menu?

When your shop is created, it is given a default set of menu options: Home, About us, Products and Contact us. You can click on the Navigation Menu link to view the structure of your web site.

From the "Navigation Menu" page, click on the name of a page (such as "About us") to make changes. This brings you to the page editing screen. From here you can change the title of the page (in different languages if you have purchased other languages), and then press the Save button at the bottom. You will be directed to the page you have just saved, and your menu will automatically reflect your change. Use the management links in the left column to return to the management area.

From the "Navigation Menu" page, you can also add new pages, sections and product categories (depending on your shop type). Any pages or sub categories which you add will not appear in the main menu at the top of your shop. Instead they will appear on the left side of the screen when you are browsing your site.

How do I edit the text on a page (or section or category)?

You can change more than just the title of a page. You can also change the text and add an image. When typing in the text for the page, you can style the text by making it bold, underlined or italicised. You can also add a link to another page (the button with the globe) and insert tables and lists. (This fully featured editor operates much like a Word processor. It is called FCKEditor, and you can visit www.fckeditor.com to find out more about it.)

How do I see my changes?

As above, whenever you press the Save button, you will immediately see the change you have made, just as your customers would see it (except they won't have the management options on the left). You can continue to edit the page by pressing the "edit this page" link in the management options.

How do I add an image to page?

Below the editor, are the image uploading options. You can upload GIF or JPG images and (depending on your shop type) Macromedia Flash (SWF) files and Quicktime movie (MOV) files.

For GIFs and JPGs you can automatically shrink and crop the image to the appropriate size. This saves you having to learn how to use an image editing program like Adobe Photoshop. The first box will shrink your image to the specified number of pixels (there are about 70 pixels per inch, though it also depends on your screen's resolution). You can then crop (chop) the image to the specified width and height. If you upload an image wider than 400 pixels (about 6 inches, 14 centimetres) it will be shrunk so that it fits onto your web site.

How do I change the order of my menu?

If you edit the Home page, there will be a section at the bottom called "Order my sub sections". This allows you to change the order of the things beneath the Home page in your Navigation Menu (i.e. About us, Products, Contact us). You can use the same facility to change the order of product categories in your Products section.

How can I change the buttons (such as "add to basket")?

From the main Management Area, click "Text and translations". This allows you to change any of the other buttons and text which appear throughout the site. This includes the title and instructions of the shopping basket and check out. If you have multiple languages enabled you can also change the translations here.

PRODUCTS

How do I add products?

Adding and editing products are quite similar to adding and editing pages to your shop. From the main "Management Area", click on "Products" and you will a list of all your products. Click "add a new product" to go to the product editing screen. There are additional options here – such as the product category, code, supplier, weight (used to determine shipping costs), stock management, price and product options. (The code and supplier are for your reference only.)

How do I add new product categories?

When adding or editing a product, you are asked to specify its category. The available categories come from your Navigation Menu. So you must first go to the Navigation Menu and press the "add category" button next to the "Products" section.

Do I have to enter a weight?

No, it depends on how your shipping costs are computed. This is discussed later in this FAQ.

What is stock management?

You can use your site to (roughly) keep track of your stock. It is only "roughly" because your shop will only know about orders that are completed and paid for online, and not about any other methods you use to sell your products.

If you turn stock management on, then you should also enter the "number in stock". If you leave it as zero, then your shop will display the product, but there won't be an "add to basket" button, so people won't be able to buy it. If you enter a number here (like 10), it will be reduced whenever this product is sold. And when the stock reaches zero, the "add to basket" button for this product will vanish.

What are the product options?

You can sell variants of your product by setting up "product options". For example, you can call the option "size" and put "small", "medium" and "large" in the choices box (one choice per line). Then customers will be able to specify the size when they buy your product. Note that these options can not affect the product's cost. If you want to sell small and large items at different costs, you will have to enter them as separate products.

SHOP ADMINISTRATION

Where can I see my customers and orders?

Every time a customer buys something, you will be emailed with the contents of the order. In addition to this, you can view your customers and orders in the Management Area. If you have purchased the “export data” feature, you can click on “export data” in the Management Area and download your customers and orders as comma delimited spreadsheets (which can be opened in Microsoft Excel).

Can I set up discounts for certain customers?

Yes, if you have purchased the feature which allows customers to login to your site. With this feature, customers will see a “My account” button showing their details and order history. And within the Customers page, you will be able to click on the customer’s name and change their login details and membership level. The corresponding discounts for different membership levels are applied in the “Site Properties and Loyalty Discounts” page. So, if you specify that a customer is a “silver member”, you can then give all silver members a %20 discount on all the products in your shop.

Can I view the contents of an order?

The Orders page shows all the orders in your system. By clicking on the order ID number, you can view the order contents, and change the status (to delivered or archived).

How do I set up my shipping charges?

From the Management Area, click Shipping. This page allows you to specify how shipping should be charged and to which countries you will ship.

The options available depend on your shop type. All shops allow you to specify different shipping prices to the UK, Europe and the rest of the world. For simpler shops, you can specify a fixed price. For the most advanced shop, you can charge by weight.

How does my shop handle VAT?

Form the Management Area, click on Site Properties. One of the options here is “tax type”, which determines if you charge VAT, and wether or not it is included in the price.

Which features do I have?

Click the “Features” link within the Management Area to see which features your shop has, and give an idea of what is available.