

# Why Choose Open Source Tools To Run Your Ecommerce Store

Choosing the right e-commerce platform for your business is not easy. The growth of your sales depends on the choice you make. But for companies operating within the firearms industry, there are other considerations to take into account. The volatile political landscape, for example, and inoculating your business from the inherent risk it poses.

Choosing the wrong platform for your website could spell trouble down the road. Don't risk having your site deleted with no advanced notice like several businesses in this industry have been [in the past](#).

There are countless providers to choose from, and each one seems slightly different from the next. Additionally, there are other factors to consider within each platform that affect pricing, ease of use, customizability, and portability. Getting your head around it is the first step. Then making a clear, informed decision is the natural next step.

There are a few different eCommerce platform technologies you will discover as you scour the web for the one that fits your needs. We'll cover two such choices in this article: Open source software and Software as a Service (SaaS).

Let's dive in.

## What is Open Source eCommerce

Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's first understand what we mean by Open Source eCommerce.

In an Open Source model, the user has complete, unrestricted access to the e-Commerce engine's source code. That means every last pixel of your site is customizable. If a feature or functionality you need doesn't exist, you can create it; if it doesn't work the way you want it to, you can customize it so that it does. That's the power of Open Source eCommerce, in a nutshell.

Another quality of Open Source platforms is that usually, the user will need to host, manage, and provide their own security for their website. That requires a significant amount of resources and personnel to accomplish. You will need to hire a certified developer or team of developers to complete those jobs. Messing with the source code is very complex, and it's best to leave it to someone who knows what they're doing.

Keep in mind that there are companies out there – like Patriot Commerce – that operate on Open Source platforms, and will host, build, customize, and manage your website for a reasonable fee. More on that later.

## Why choose an Open Source model?

Suppose you own a restaurant. You can knock down all the walls, rip out the plumbing, and strip the place down to its bare bones. From there, you can turn that space into anything you have the time, energy, and resources to make.

Open Source eCommerce platforms function in a similar way. They are best for businesses with more advanced requirements that have outgrown limiting templates. It takes a clear vision and skilled personnel to see it through, but the fruit of that labor is well worth it.

Some examples of providers that have Open Source versions include Magento, WooCommerce, OpenCart, and CS-cart. Magento's Open Source version is free, while they also have a licensed version that starts at \$22,000 per year.

## Software as a Service (SaaS)

As the name suggests, SaaS platforms provide their users with access to ready-made websites for a monthly fee. That means you can select from a long list of pre-built websites and get started selling right away. Think Shopify and BigCommerce. What you see is what you get, and if you want to add anything they don't already offer, well, tough luck.

The benefit here is you can get your site up and running and products listed quickly using pre-built templates. There is not much room for growth and no opportunities for customization, but it does appeal to businesses that don't need all the extra bells and whistles.

Not the firearms crowd though, as Shopify is [notoriously hard](#) on merchants in this sector.

Another signature characteristic of SaaS providers like Shopify and BigCommerce is that they take a percentage of every sale. Shopify, for example, takes 2.4% + .30 per transaction of each transaction on top of the subscription fee.

For businesses that have annual online sales of, let's say, \$500,000, Shopify gets to keep roughly \$19,250. That's not horrendous, right? For businesses that size, SaaS is often a very attractive option.

However, for a business that earns \$5 million annually, Shopify will take home \$142,000. That's a lot of money to be paying for a platform with so many limitations. The limitations of which are especially unsavory for businesses in the firearms industry. And particularly when, for a fraction of the cost, you can set up your website on an Open Source platform that is custom suited to your company's needs.

The table below summarizes the comparison between the two platforms, Open Source and SaaS.

	Open Source	SaaS
Optimizable for businesses in the firearm industry	✓	✗
Portable (ability transfer from platform to platform)	✓	✗
Fully customizable	✓	✗
Self-hosted, managed and secured	✓	✗
Easily scalable	✓	✗
Readymade website with minimal development needed	✗	✓
Platform charges a percentage of your sales	✗	✓
Monthly fee	✗	✓

## Enter Patriot Commerce

Our company runs on Magento's Open Source platform. That means that whatever vision you have for your website, we can make it happen. Instead of worrying about going out and hiring a team of developers to build your site from scratch, we have over fifty features to choose from to plug into your store immediately.

[Patriot Commerce](#) can be hosted on any cloud server, and our whole platform is content-agnostic, so the technology providers we partner with don't know (or care) what you are selling. If they did start caring, we can pack up and move with minimal disruption. Unlike SaaS providers like Shopify, we will minimize technology discrimination against your business.

And that only scratches the surface. Keep in mind that you are not limited to these features. Over the years, we have listened to our clients and built up a cache of customizable elements that we know will serve your store well. If, however, your needs go beyond what we already have on offer, we will custom create whatever you can think of.

On top of our features and limitless capacity for customization, Patriot Commerce manages the full technology stack to keep your site 99.99% available. We keep things fast, reliable, and secure. Around-the-clock monitoring, detailed reporting analytics, on top of advanced proactive alerting, make our platform second to none, especially for companies in the firearms industry.

## Final Word

While all the platforms out there offer something for someone, some businesses need more from their website than SaaS platforms are designed to provide.

If you fall under the category of business that wants to get the most out of your website and make it perform exactly the way you envision it, then by now, it should be clear why Open Source eCommerce is the right model for your company.