Guidebook: how to set up an online Dropshipping store

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2020 Laurea

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Business administration
Bachelor's thesis
November, 2020

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli laatia ohjekirja verkkokaupan toteuttamisesta hyödyntämällä Dropshipping-toimitusketjun hallintamenettelyä. Tämä verkkokauppa luodaan Shopify alustalla, joka on Dropshipping-liiketoiminnan ensisijainen kaupankäyntialusta.

Tämän oppinäytetyön tarkoituksena oli kuvata Dropshipping-verkkokaupan täsmällinen sekä käytännöllinen luomisprosessi, joka on kaikkien ymmärrettävissä riippumatta aiemmasta IT osaamisesta. Opinnäytetyön toimeksiantajana toimi kirjoittaja itse.

Dropshipping eroaa normaalista jälleenmyynnistä siten, että toteutuksessa jälleenmyyjä ei hallinnoi itse varastoa. Vaihtoehtoisesti, tämän hoitaa kolmas osapuoli, joka myös hoitaa tilausten lähettämisen aina kun saa valmiin tilauksen, jonka välittää kyseisen Dropshipping-kaupan haltija.

Teoreettinen viitekehys tukee erilaisia Dropshipping-liiketoiminnan johtamisen menetelmiä. Esimerkiksi, se sisältää suunnitelman kuvauksen, markkinoinnin, brändäyksen ja yrityksen rakentamisen tämän bisnesmallin ympärille sekä yleisen selityksen verkkokaupan tarkoituksesta.

Opinnäytetyön tuloksena oli Dropshipping-verkkokaupan ohjekirja, joka olisi valmis julkaistavaksi.

Asiasanat: Verkkokauppa, Shopify, Oberlo, Liiketoiminta, Dropshipping

The objective of this Bachelor's thesis was to design a guidebook on how to implement an online store by utilizing the "Dropshipping" supply chain management procedure. This online store will be created on Shopify, which is a primary commerce platform for "Drop-shipping".

The purpose of this thesis was to depict a full visual and practical creation process of an online "Dropshipping" store, comprehensible for everyone, regardless of previous experience in E-commerce. The thesis was commissioned by the author himself.

"Dropshipping" is an order fulfillment process where the retailer does not hold any inventory. Alternatively, the retailer sells straight from the inventory of a third-party supplier, who then delivers fulfilled orders.

The theoretical framework supports various business management methods regarding the "Dropshipping" business and for example includes; a plan description, marketing, branding, and building a legal entity around the business as well as an overview of E-commerce.

The result of the thesis was a "Dropshipping" E-commerce guidebook, ready for publication.

Keywords: E-Commerce, Shopify, Oberlo, Business management, Dropshipping

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1   Introduction

The purpose of this Bachelor's thesis is to design a guidebook for the creation of an E-commerce business by utilizing a Dropshipping retail fulfillment model. The subject for this thesis was initiated by the author's interests in this era of digitalization. E-commerce is a very topical subject since it has its fair share in the present and future trading. The competence in E-commerce plays a huge role in the survival of businesses in the long-term prospect.

The thesis is actionable, but also fundamentally supported heavily by theory. The objective of this thesis is to describe E-commerce as an entity and then mainly focus on creating an online store by utilizing the Dropshipping business model, which is one of the sub-entities to E-commerce. This thesis will explain every step and various implementing methods regarding the creation of an online store with the Dropshipping retail fulfillment method.

The theoretical framework consists of designing and executing the online Dropshipping store. The theory is aimed to enhance the reader's pre-knowledge-base and how to manage the shop after the actual implementation process. All the information regarding this thesis is gathered from books and internet sources, but the fifth topic, which distinguishes from the source-based content since it includes also the author's own opinions.

The research questions in this thesis are: from what factors should the store owner be concerned when creating an online business? How the Dropshipping model function? How to manage the E-business? The author will display the whole process of creation with visual content included.

All topics but the fifth one can be concerned as theoretical planning, creating, and managing sectors, whereas the fifth one acts as a tangible example of implementing the store, supported by all the theory around it.

Very important to acknowledge: if and before the reader takes any action, the reader should go through the whole thesis, this guidebook is mostly focused on creating the online store, not managing it to the fullest potential, this is why the reader should consider other sources in addition to this as well. Also, E-business may seem to be very simple and easy, but it is more complex than that. The reader should comprehend before taking action. The author will explain everything unbiased and by doing that, the author seeks to maintain an as realistic approach as possible in this thesis regarding the creation of an online Dropshipping store.

2   E-commerce

The E-commerce market is estimated to grow globally up to 5 trillion dollars by 2021, which is an eminent increase from 2019's 3.5 trillion-dollar E-commerce market. Whereas, the retail market (E-commerce included) as an entity is estimated to hover around 27 trillion dollars by 2021. These numbers indicate that E-commerce is growing and bringing value to the retail market entirety. (Lipsman 2019.)

E-commerce is an abbreviation from "electronic commerce". It refers to all services and goods exchanged online. The most common E-commerce products are digital and physical products, affiliates (blogs or websites that perform affiliate linking), and services. (Merchant 2020.)

E-commerce products and services are sold in these three main categories: B2B (business-to-business), B2C (business-to-consumer), and B2G (business-to-government). In business-to-business, the E-commerce business sells products and services to other businesses e.g. manufacturers providing material to other businesses is considered as B2B. Similarly, in B2C but sales are targeted at consumers. For example, E-commerce retailers such as Dropshipping businesses can be included in these categories. Whereas, B2G targets government agencies and institutions e.g. in the B2G method, the E-commerce business could provide software programs for agencies. (Laudon & Traver 2019, 143-145.)

There are many alternatives for E-commerce businesses in terms of where the product can be sold. e.g. some of those E-businesses prefer to brand their stores by setting themselves up a store in a commerce platform, while others choose to utilize E-commerce marketplaces where the customer base is already established for them. (Merchant 2020.) In this thesis, the focus is concentrated on a branded E-commerce store, which is implemented on a Shopify commerce platform.

There are a few alternative commerce platforms, where the online Dropshipping store can be established: Magneto, WooCommerce, OpenCart, and BigCommerce. They are all similar to each other, which leads to competing by enhanced amenities of the platforms. The most predominant enhancements are; setup time and costs, E-commerce features, ease of use, scalability, and support. Before choosing the commerce platform for the business, the starting entrepreneur should always conduct research in order to find a commerce platform that is the most optimal for the entrepreneur at the time. (Lars 2020.) Shopify commerce platform was chosen in this thesis because of its cooperation with Oberlo (supplier provider).

2.1   Overview in Dropshipping

Dropshipping is a form of retail where the store owner does not own the products listed for sale on his store. Instead, the store owner sells the products directly through a manufacturer or wholesaler (third party). (Ferreira 2020.) This method exempts the store owner from the need of mailing the products by himself. Whereas, the third party has to do it instead. In this business model, the entrepreneur will not see the product that he is selling in any stage of the procedure, unless he orders a sample for himself separately. The most common commerce platform for Dropshipping is Shopify. (Newstex 2018.)

Figure 1 The Dropshipping business model (Trivedi 2018).

The figure above is an illustration of a Dropshipping business model income procedure. For example, if the price of the product set by the supplier is $750, the Dropshipping store could sell it at $1000 and make commission profits of $250. The realistic profit marginal hovers around 20-30%. These numbers are purely expressed without other additional costs, such as advertising and other business management fees (platforms monthly fees and application. costs). (Trivedi 2018.)

The Dropshipping business model can be utilized in various commerce platforms (in chapter 2 more about different platforms), but the idea is to choose the platform that meets the criteria set by the store owner. (Ecommerce guide 2020).

2.2 Shopify as a platform

Shopify is a cloud-based eCommerce platform created in 2006, which is a home of over one million online stores from all over the world. Shopify offers various monthly plans for a fixed price, starting from $ 29 per month, but eventually, when the Dropshipping business is growing, it is reasonable to update in more comprehensive plans in order to get access to more amenities and remain competitive. (Garrity 2020.) Also, Shopify offers a Stripe payment service (payment processing platform), which is completely integrated into the Shopify platform (Stripe 2020). and it provides a commission-free option to handle your payments. However, if the store owner prefers other external payment services, they will activate additional transaction fees of 0.5-2.0%, depending on the chosen plan. If the Stripe is not supported in every province, there are PayPal and many other payment services available. (Ecommerce guide 2020.)

Shopify offers a possibility to create a high-customized-stores with various marketing tools meshed, which gives an exponential reach to potential clients. Also, Shopify possesses the largest app-store, which empowers its competitiveness among the other similar platforms, and provides an opportunity to create and manage stores without previous IT experience. (Johnson 2020.)

The large application offering includes the Oberlo application (Garrity 2020.) which is a simplified marketplace that brings suppliers from all over the world at the store owner's reach. (Oberlo 2020). It requires just a few clicks to pick a product to the store, without contacting the supplier at all. Oberlo is currently owned by Shopify and it has a free monthly plan available. (Lazazzera 2019.)

At the overall level, Shopify is made to be apprehensible to everyone, it requires zero competence in coding or whatsoever. Also, it has competitive pricing, professional customer service available 24/7, and most importantly, it provides an opportunity to focus on the actual business at hand. Technology and other administrative tasks will be sorted out by Shopify itself (Ecommerce guide 2020.) But it is good to remember that there are also other commerce platforms with the same amenities, and as mentioned above, the store owner has to conduct research to find the right one for use.

2.3 Dropshipping as a business model

The business model canvas template initiated by Alex Osterwalder (figure 2), is a development tool for existing and newly founded businesses. It consists of nine squares, where each of those are concentrated on a specific topic. These nine topics are named as follows; Key Partners, Key Activities, Value Propositions, Customer Relationships, Customer Segments, Key Resources, Channels, Cost Structure, and Revenue Streams. Every square

requires valid information and regular updating in order to remain relevant to the business. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16.) These nine topics are explained in conjunction with the Dropshipping business model underneath figure 2.

This business model canvas will be utilized to outline the Dropshipping business model as an entity i.e. all nine sectors are filled with information regarding the Dropshipping business. The aim of conducting it in this way is to facilitate the comprehension of the Dropshipping business model to a reader. This Business model canvas figure below is a general overview of the Dropshipping business model, from the perspective of a store owner who utilizes the Shopify commerce platform. Other commerce platforms may have variables in some of those sections e.g. costs can change. The content of this business model canvas template (figure 2) is filled by the author itself.
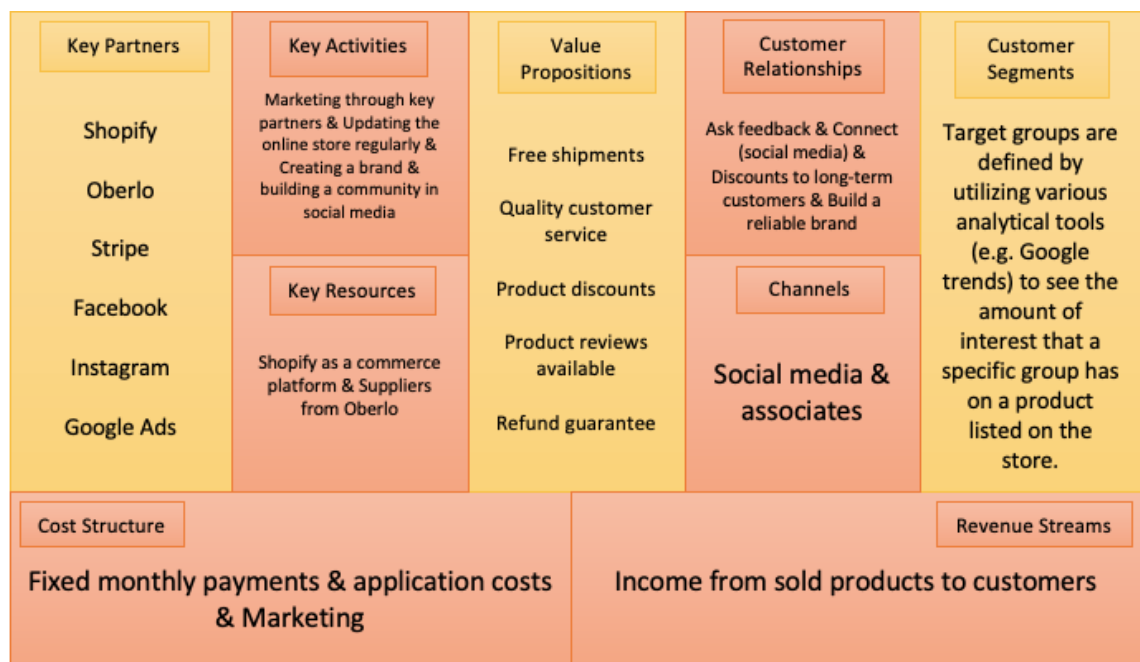
Key Partners	Key Activities	Value Propositions	Customer Relationships	Customer Segments
Shopify Oberlo Stripe Facebook Instagram Google Ads	Marketing through key partners & Updating the online store regularly & Creating a brand & building a community in social media **Key Resources** Shopify as a commerce platform & Suppliers from Oberlo	Free shipments Quality customer service Product discounts Product reviews available Refund guarantee	Ask feedback & Connect (social media) & Discounts to long-term customers & Build a reliable brand **Channels** Social media & associates	Target groups are defined by utilizing various analytical tools (e.g. Google trends) to see the amount of interest that a specific group has on a product listed on the store.

Cost Structure	Revenue Streams
Fixed monthly payments & application costs & Marketing	Income from sold products to customers

Figure 2 Business model canvas template (Value Proposition Design 2014).

Key Partners are connections such as other businesses and different entities that are assisting your business to prevail. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In the Dropshipping model, key partners consist of suppliers, manufacturers, and marketing tools. In this case, the most important key partner is Shopify, which is the commerce platform for the online store. (Rothstein, T. 2019).

Key Resources are the most vital assets to make the business work, such as products, services, and principal. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In Dropshipping, the most vital providers are Shopify (where everything regarding trading takes place) and Oberlo (suppliers & products). (Rothstein, T. 2019).

Cost Structure consists of all the expenditures while running the business. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In Dropshipping the most common expenses are those paid for application costs and fixed monthly payments. Also, there are advertising costs in the marketing sector, but it is variable, depending on how you are planning to perform it. (Rothstein, T. 2019).

Key Activities are the actionable parts that businesses have to implement in order to meet the value propositions set for their businesses. In the Dropshipping, key activities are marketing, branding, and continuous measures to keep the online store profitable. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16.)

Revenue Streams means all income that the company is receiving. It is very important for businesses to identify different revenue strategies (study the market you are entering) and utilize various tools in order to generate the maximum income for the company. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In the Dropshipping model, all income consists of products sold to end-users, because of this, it is vital to keep the store updated regularly. (Rothstein, T. 2019).

Customer Relationships are affairs established and preserved with different customer segments. In order to succeed, businesses are required to take care of already acquired customers and keep them satisfied, with privileged offers. But most importantly, they have to be efficient in reaching constantly new potential costumers (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In the Dropshipping model, it is all about branding, and remaining interactive with the costumers. (Shopify 2020).

Value Propositions are the fundamentals of creating value in the business towards the customers. The company has to declare why and how its products and services differ from the rest of the competition, and what values those services bring to the customers. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In the Dropshipping, a value proposition is created through quality customer service, discounts, the social media community, and trust (refund guarantee, reviews & interaction). (Ecommerce guide 2020).

Customer Segments are arrays of people or various entities, that would be profitable for the businesses to serve or reach. It is vital to recognize the top tier components to fulfill an efficient sales year. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16). In the Dropshipping, target groups are defined by utilizing different analytical tools (e.g. Google and Facebook analytics) in order to reach the full efficiency sales-wise. (Ecommerce guide 2020).

Channels are ways of communication and approach towards the customer segments, in order to provide business's value propositions. (Bernarda, Osterwalder, Pigneur & smith 2014, 16).

In the Dropshipping, the most common channels are social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) and associates (e.g. if you utilize influencers). (Lazazzera, R. 2019).

This business model canvas above is designed to raise awareness of the Dropshipping business model, it is explained on a general level to give insights into the business. Also, this business model canvas should aid in comprehending the topics further in this thesis.

2.3.1 Pros

The most attractive element in the Dropshipping business model is the modest principal required. People save up to thousands of dollars because there is no inventory to stock. Compared to the standard retail business, where the business has to hold an inventory without any guarantee of getting products sold, the Dropshipping model becomes an even more convenient choice for beginners. As there is no need for upfront inventory, The Dropshipping business can be operated location-free, it requires only an internet connection and a computer (Hayes & Youderian 2013, 2.)

The store owner is able to test products with minor risks; if the item is not selling, you can remove and replace it within minutes, which produces more innovation and leverage to the business. Also, the order fulfillment costs are low because of the third party who will manage everything from retention to shipping. This leaves the store owner only with a responsibility to make sure that orders will go forward to the third party. (Sanford, C. 2020.)

2.3.2 Cons

Although Dropshipping may seem lucrative, there are always risks involved similarly as in the other business models. In the Dropshipping, the store owner has less control regarding the order fulfillment and delivery because of the outsourcing to the third party, whom the store owner has to rely on. In other words, the store owner is willing to risk its own reputation by trusting its product-control to the foreign supplier. (Pekarek, L. 2020.)

The easy entry to the Dropshipping business increases competition, which creates difficulties in branding because everything you have available, competition has too. There are also challenges with order fulfillment because not every product in the store is supplied from the same supplier, which causes disjointing in bulk orders that include a few products from various sources. The most common annoyances are; multiple packages for one order made, additional shipping costs for the store owner, and differences in shipment times. (Sanford, C. 2020.)

3   The fundamentals of branding

Every entrepreneur in the Dropshipping business model or E-commerce in general should always be aware of the importance of branding. The most eminent reason for branding in this sector is the ability to save money in advertising costs. When consumers are aware and interested in the specific online store, due to successful branding, the store owner does not have to put the same money on advertising costs anymore because the strong brand is always speculated in various channels, and at the same time receiving free exposure. The branding can be perceived in many forms, but it is important to determine how it will aid to build a successful online store, and most importantly, how the store owner is going to utilize the power of branding e.g. it could be saving on costs, creating an online community or a philanthropy matter. The store owner can freely choose the matter behind the brand.

Branding put simply; Brand is a presentation, promise, and the identity of your company. It implies, who you are, why you do it, and how you do it. Branding is an efficient way to differ from the competition because people are more willing to engage with the company when they identify the company's brand and the story behind it. (Brown, S. 2016, 3, 8.)

The determination of a brand is a voyage of discovery. It is challenging and it takes a lot of time, but step-by-step by identifying the most common factors such as the company's mission, the value proposition of the product or service, the current public-status of the company, and how the store owner would like the audience to perceive the company. (Tybout & Calkins 2019, 20-22). There are many variables in order to understand the human purchasing-behavior and because of that, it requires a study to be able to find the right target groups to pursue on. (Brown, S. 2016, 11).

When the brand is determined, the store owner wants people to hear the story behind it. It can simply begin from a logo, which must be attached everywhere to raise awareness of your brand. There are many ways of empowering the brand, here are few; **the brand** can be integrated into the business module e.g. by conducting your engaging with the customers in a specific way. **The brand** can be built on the statement that the company stands on. **The brand** can consist of colors, looks, meaning, and everything that brings value to it. When marketing, all those components mentioned before, must be consistently performed in order to form customer relationships. (Keegan, J. K. & Green, C. M. 2020, 332-335.)

3.1 Why branding matters

When the company has an established brand, it gives an immense competitive advantage by differentiating it from the rest of the companies in the marketplace. The key factor that causes a competitive advantage is the possibility to focus on the branded company's uniqueness, whereas the mainstream companies operate with their already existing values. (Behrer & Bergh 2016, 43-44.)

With branding, the company can clarify their objectives, impress the people they engage with, prioritize their values, and most importantly increase their sales by providing a unique purchasing-experience, which leads to selling products consistently at premium prices. A company with a recognized brand has always a better conversion rate than a company without a without one. (Armstrong, Harker, Kotler & Brennan 2019, 20-25.)

When the company is transparent and identifiable, it assists the new potential clients or partners to decide whether they would like to cooperate or engage with that specific enterprise. When the company's values are clearly perceivable, it diminishes misunderstandings and leads to more convenient relationships. (Armstrong, Harker, Kotler & Brennan 2019, 20-25.)

3.1.1 Brand canvas for marketing communications

In the Dropshipping model, it is good to focus on a certain niche e.g. kitchen accessories, which has a year-round demand and it eases branding to have a niche store instead of a general one. (Dollah 2019). Because of this, we are going to utilize the kitchen accessories niche in this brand canvas. Everything displayed in this brand canvas is hypothetical, this brand canvas is meant to be an example of how to utilize the Brand canvas in the Dropshipping business. The Brand canvas template is filled by the author itself.

Every starting and existing business should consider the implementation of a marketing and brand strategy. Therefore, the Brand canvas is utilized in this thesis, which is a visual framework utilized to create, comprehend, and innovate the online store's branding strategy, regardless of previous experience in the marketing sector. The brand canvas consists of three different sectors (story, symbols, and strategy), and within each of them, there are sub-sectors to specify the overall purpose. (Nielson 2016.), these sectors will be explained underneath figure 2 coupled with our chosen niche.

Story 📖		Symbols ✓		Strategy ⌛	
Name	Iron Kitchen	**Typography**	Professional & easily apprehensible	**Awareness**	Social media & associates
Positioning Statement	Iron Kitchen provides easy access to kitchen accessories year-roundly	**Persona** The target groups consist of 18-50 years old, who are looking to find all kitchen accessories in one place.	**Color Palette**		**Sale**	Year-round products with competitive prices
Promise	Choose the best among the rest	**Storyboard**	**Logo**	IRON KITCHEN	**Delivery**	The third-party covers it
Personality	Reliability, positivity, and openness	Happiness comes through the kitchen	**Imagery**	Actionable and consistent with the rest of the page feed	**Post-Delivery**	Instagram & Facebook communities

Figure 3 The Brand Canvas template for the Dropshipping business.

Story sector

Name choosing can be challenging, but it should not take ages to think of. Here are a few tips on how to come up with one; observe your competition, list words that are relative to your niche, make it distinctive, keep it short and succinct. (Nielson 2016.) Here we have chosen Iron Kitchen as the name of the online store.

The Positioning Statement is a company's value proposition in the form of an expression where the store owner promises to bring value in a way that competitors from the same niche will not. (Woods 2020, 95-96). Our online store's statement is; Iron Kitchen provides easy access to kitchen accessories year-roundly. This indicates that the store is very simple and that it includes various kitchen accessories.

The Promise is a slogan for the brand. When people engage with the company, they expect to meet the promised value in the slogan. (Nielson 2016). Here we promised to be the best among the rest. **The Personality** is a brand's interaction scheme, often initiated and extended from the store owner's own personality. (Nielson 2016). In this sector, we chose positivity, reliability, and openness for our brand.

The Persona is a clarification of a target group, the mission is to find whom of them would be most likely interested in a given specific product. Target groups are defined by demographics and interests. (Woods 2020, 95-96). We are targeting almost all ages with comprehensive interests because kitchen accessories are a must for everyone. **The Storyboard** is a succinct and short story, that the store wants to be remembered by customers after an engagement. (Nielson 2016). Our story; happiness comes through the kitchen.

Symbols sector

The symbol sector includes; **typography (**page output), **color palette** (colors that represent the brand), **logo** (visual symbol for the brand), and **imagery** (feed that is in conjunction with the brand story) i.e. it is a visual part of the brand. (Nielson 2016). For typography, we chose professionality and easy apprehensibility. Our color palette is bright and attractive, which embodies the chosen logo. The imagery is chosen to be consistent with the whole brand entity.

Strategy sector

The purpose of the strategy sector is to define **awareness** (channels utilized to raise awareness), **sale** (methods in presenting the product), d**elivery** (delivery times), and **post-delivery** (post interaction with customers). (Nielson 2016). In this online store, awareness is raised through social media. The sale section is focused on year-round kitchen accessories with competitive prices. Delivery is covered by the third-party usually the delivery takes 2-4 weeks. The long delivery time is not in your control, and because of that, you can compensate your branding with promising high-quality products at competitive prices. The post-delivery experience will be enforced by creating communities in social media platforms where the interaction with customers will take place (Pekarek 2020.)

The brand canvas is an excellent tool if the store owner is seeking to save money by creating a branding strategy without utilizing marketing consulting firms. However, the store owner should be cautious with integrating every sector in the store's branding, because it all depends on what type of online store the store owner is implementing. E.g. if the store owner ends up with a general store, the story section is not that vital. But if the store owner chooses a one-product store or a niche store, the store owner should want to create a strong story to empower the brand.

4   Plan description

Now that the Dropshipping business model and its brand managing is comprehensively explained. It is time to take an overview of how to implement a guidebook in theory, which facilitates the reader's ability to comprehend the whole entity. Right after that, begins the practical implementing of an online store.

The visual implementation of an online store begins with registering to the Shopify commerce platform and then deciding the type of a store alongside with the theme settings because theme settings are in conjunction with the type of a store. E.g. if a niche store is chosen, then it is important to choose a theme that supports it. Then the focus shifts on application downloading on the store. These applications are created to bring more exposure, enforce marketing, and to implement products through them. E.g. the Oberlo application is utilized to search products (suppliers) for the online store. The brand canvas is created to assist in these chapters.

Then the required pages for the online store will be introduced, and instructions on how to edit the content of a page. Also, the general and legal settings for the online store are displayed explicitly to avoid faults and legal issues. As for the last part of the store implementation, there is guidance on how to search for the most convenient products that fit the brand and how to import them to the online store.

After finishing all previous phases, the store is publishable. However, a store without exposure does not bring any revenue, and that is why the eCommerce marketing methods are included in this thesis in a form of an overview. When the marketing goes well and the business is doing decent money, it is time to scale up the business in order to prevail, Scaling the business topic includes an explanation of different company types and how to create a legal entity around the Dropshipping business. Note that this content mostly concerns people living under Finnish business regulations. As the last phase, there are conclusions that do determine the most vital aspects of this entity.

How to implement a guidebook

A guidebook can be for an instant an instruction manual for a program or device, a procedure manual for handling something specific. The guidebook may be inherently a recommendation or suggestion, but it may also be binding. (Parker 2019.) For example, this thesis should be observed as a suggesting-instructional manual.

The most eminent issue in creating the guidebook is the lack of interesting appearance, which causes people to drain away and when this takes place, the misunderstanding will be present. Readers will more likely be consistent and interested in a guidebook, which is visual and

succinct. (Guidebook. 2016.) In this thesis, visual work is heavily utilized, as well as its concise and clear explanation within it.

When creating a manual, it is important to write in chronological order, because in some cases the nonconsistency can be misleading. The effective guidebook is based on an assumption where the reader knows nothing about the topic within it. (University of BATH 2020.) In this thesis, the chronological order is vital in order to comprehend the manual and make various functions work correctly.

As with all writings, the instructions within a guidebook should clearly state at the outset what the instruction is about and for whom it is intended. The purpose of the manual is not to be an advertisement, because of this, it should no longer display how great the product is, but to focus on its functions. A well-made manual can serve the same purpose as an advertisement; it increases product sales e.g. if the consumer buys something he most likely would want to comprehend what he is buying, but this is possible only with a great and apprehensible guidebook. (Parker 2019.) The guidebook within this thesis is non-profit and it aims to assist in creating an online store in an unbiased environment.

There are often conditions included in a guidebook; some things only need to be done if a condition is met. For example, the reader is required to work hard only if he seeks to build a highly converting online store one day. If not, he does not have to work hard. These objective conditions must be presented in such a clear and precise manner that the reader is able to infer or calculate whether the condition is fulfilled in his situation. Conditions can also be subjective, depending on the user's wishes. E.g. a commerce platform can be used for a wide variety of purposes, and some of the instructions for using the platform depend on what the user wants to do. (University of BATH 2020.) In this thesis, conditions are both, subjective and objective, because the main purpose of it is just to display how to build an online store, not to manage it to the fullest potential.

5   Instruction manual: Implementation of an online store

Starting an online store is relatively facile in the modern-day environment because of various commerce platforms, that are offering an online store creating tools for everyone regardless of previous experience. However, establishing a high-converting online store requires a lot of resources, dedication, and most importantly, consistency. A prevailing online store consists of conservative business management e.g. products selected prudently, inventory management (in Dropshipping, the third-party handles it), business plan, profitability calculations, customer experience management, and efficient marketing. (Carmichael 2020.)

The implementing process in this thesis begins with choosing the commerce platform, which is in this thesis Shopify. After it, the focus is centralized on choosing a type of a store, alongside with picking a fitting theme setting for it and integrating applications to it. There is also going to be visual explanations on content editing, general and legal settings, and how to search and implement products for the store.
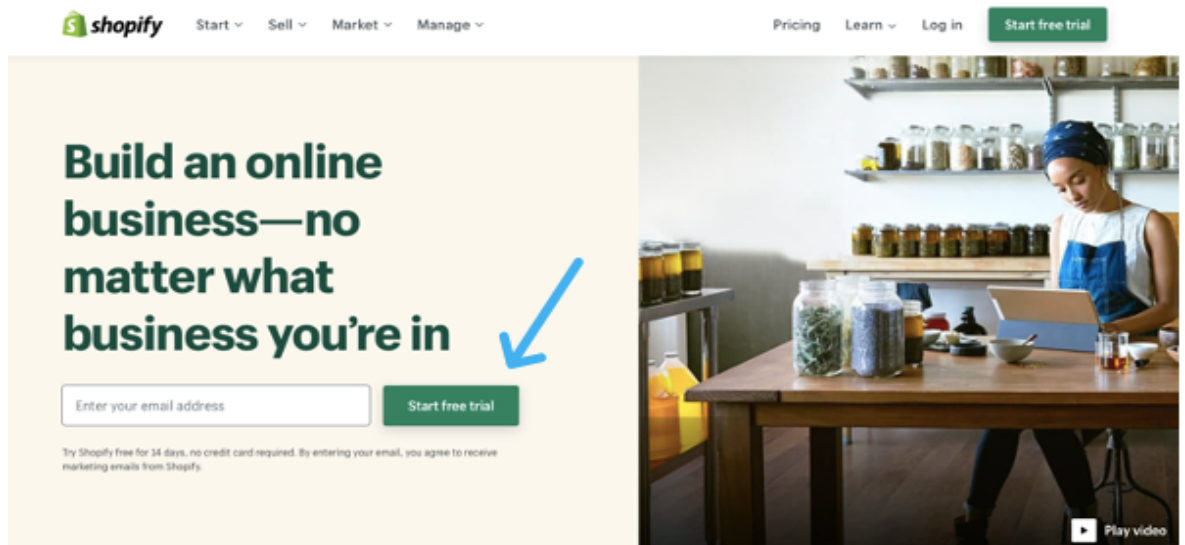
5.1   Registering to Shopify

Figure 4 Registering process (Shopify.com)

Note that the free trial is worthy of practicing during it, when the user is integrated enough to Shopify's functions, begins the phase where the user would be ready to choose a paid monthly plan that fits the best for the user.

The First step is to go to the official webpage of Shopify and to start a 14-day free trial. This free trial can be terminated if desired. Also, this free trial does not bond the user to any further commitment. The next step includes submitting basic profile information and the name for the store (can be changed later on). The whole registration process should take a

few minutes, and after everything required is submitted, the user will land on the control page (shown in the next sub-chapter), from where everything regarding the store is initiated on (Figure 4.)

5.2 Theme settings

This is the control page where the user will land after registration. The following step is to click the online store button, which opens a selection of components of the store, from which the button "themes" should be chosen. The beginner can start with free themes, as the arrow points out, when clicking "explore free themes", the user is enabled to see all free themes and to choose the most pleasant for use. Every theme has its own description from where the user can see the difference between the chosen one and the rest. But if the user desires to have paid one, the button "visit theme store" works as a link to a theme store when one can be bought (Figure 5.)
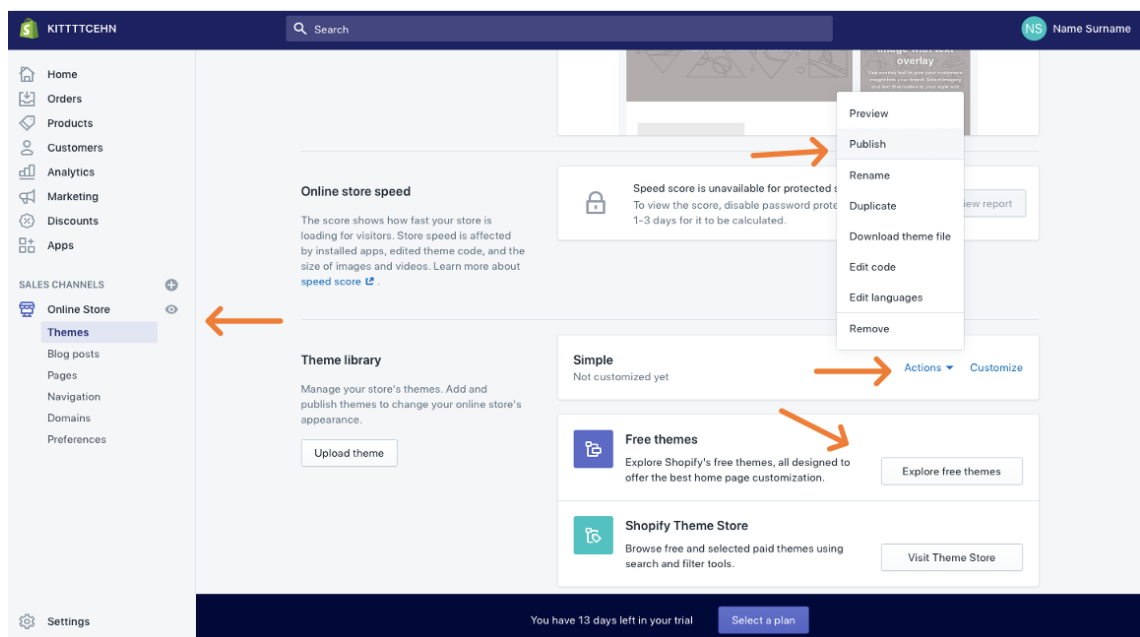

Figure 5 Theme settings (Shopify 2020).

When the user has chosen the theme, it appears right above the "explore free themes" button. In this case, the optional theme is named "Simple", which must be also activated if it is meant to be used. The activating is done by clicking the button "actions", and right after it "publish" button. When the theme is published, the user can edit the page by clicking the "customize" button. Or instead, the user can just use the debut theme, which is the initial setting when opening the store, in this solution, the user is not required to choose among the themes, the user can move straight to the theme customization part (Figure 5.)
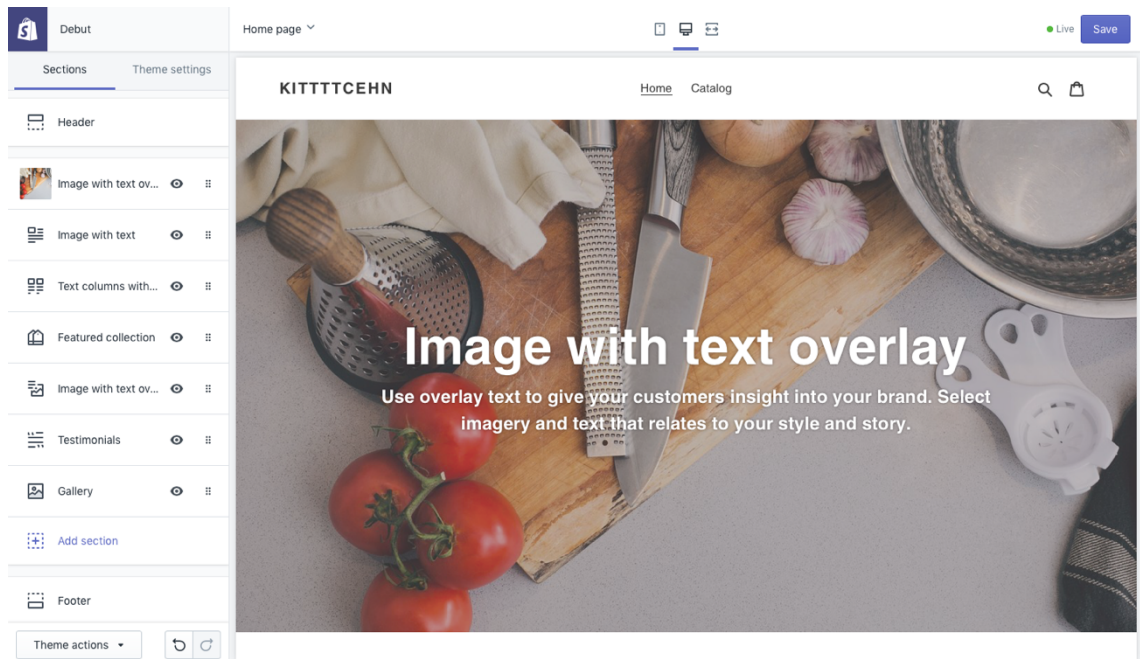
Figure 6 Customizing the outlook of the store (Shopify 2020).

As can be seen from the left upper corner, the theme "debut" is being customized in this figure. The main buttons are "sections" and "theme settings", placed right below the theme name "debut". In the "sections" sector, there is every component listed regarding the outlook of the store. The "theme settings" sector focuses on colors, typography, social media links, and notification settings. The user should go through every component because all of them include a very strict and apprehensible explanation of the usage. However, below there is a succinct explanation of those components (Figure 6.)

The "header" button lets the user edit or remove the section above the kitchen picture. The following two buttons are for implementing pictures throughout the store, those pictures can be uploaded from the user's behalf or just picked by Shopify's own offering for free. The "feature collection" in other words means, choosing a collection on the front page for first impressions. The rest of the components work as their name implies. Also, the user can always utilize free Youtube videos as guidance if it becomes a struggle (Figure 6.)

5.2.1   Type of store

When the theme is chosen, the user should decide if it aligns with the product offering. E.g. if the store is meant to be a niche store, the user should read the theme description to make sure that the theme supports the chosen store type. As well, if the user decides to open a general store or one product store, the theme should be always in conjunction with the store.

The niche store is centralized to offer certain products to a specific market need (niche). E.g. if the store targets dogs, it offers accessories related to dogs, such as dog mugs, plates, and toys. I.e. Everything that falls under the chosen category. A niche store makes branding more facile because the consumer interested in this niche, trusts, and forms a relationship with the store that is concentrated to serve the specific niche, which is meaningful to the consumer. The one product store works profoundly similar to the niche store, but it offers only one product from the chosen niche. (Mladjenovic & Sudol 2019, 97-100.)

The general store is similar to Amazon or any store that offers products from general topics. E.g. the general store can offer home improvement accessories which include everything from kitchen knives to a lawnmower, and simultaneously it can also offer beauty and health products. The user can choose between the various store types, but the niche store might be good to start with because the aim is to prevail long-term, not to compete with Amazon. (Mladjenovic & Sudol 2019, 97-100.)

5.3   Pages for the store

A beginner should include "about us" and "contact us" pages, in addition to the home and product pages, which already should be there as initial settings. Or if the user is not sure how to build the page content, the user could observe from already successful stores and take hints from those. The pages mentioned above are optional, but the store must include the legal pages, which are "privacy policy", "terms & conditions", and "return policy" pages. The relief with the legal pages is the opportunity to copy and paste the autogenerated content from the Shopify platform to those pages, which of course can be edited, but there should be no need for that because those should be already valid.

When creating those optional pages, the user should conduct the same strategy plan that is established above in the Brand canvas - by doing this, the user remains consistent in planning and implementing e.g. the "about us" page should be there to tell why consumers should buy from this store instead of the other options.
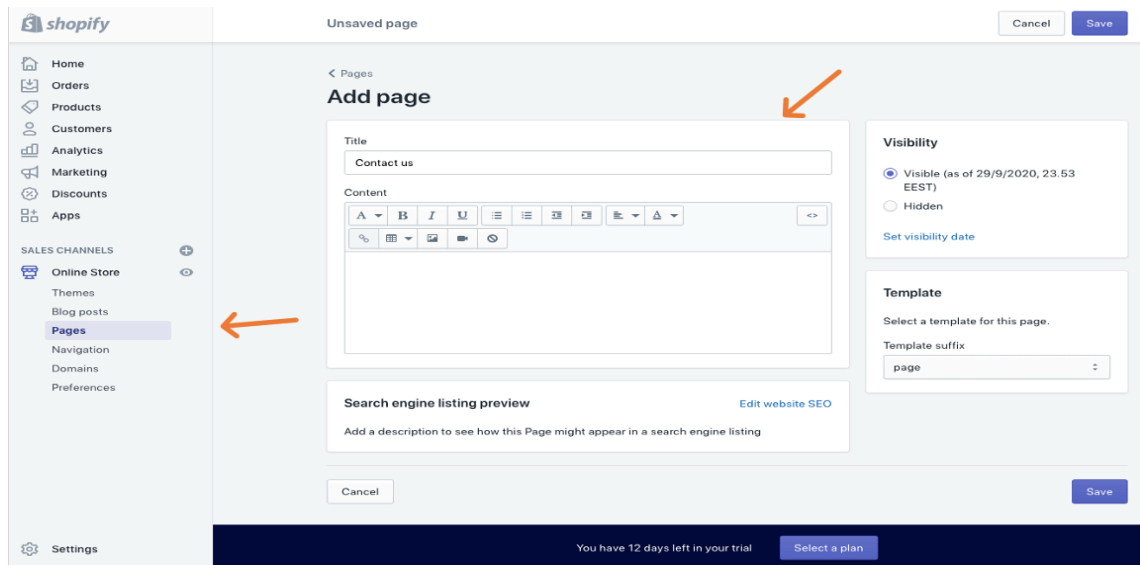
Figure 7 Page adding (Shopify 2020).

To add pages, the user needs to click the "online store" button and head to the "pages" button, after clicking the "pages" button, the user is able to create a new page. The user has to write the title e.g. "contact us" and fill the content section, which in this case could be only an email for the beginning. Every page will be created similarly, the legal and nonlegal ones (Figure 7.) For the legal pages, the autogenerated content is available by pressing the "settings" button, and right after it "legal" button, it links the user to the page where the user can create and copy the autogenerated content for legal pages (Figure 8), and insert it in the content section similarly as the figure 7 illustrates.
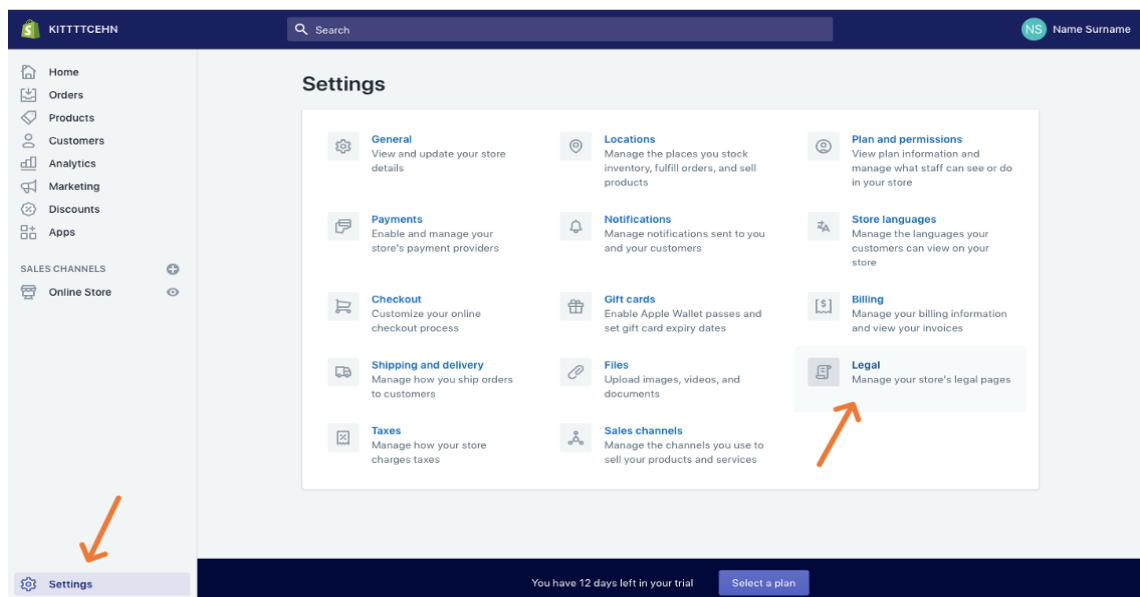

Figure 8 Legal content (Shopify 2020).

When all the required and desired pages are created and done properly, it is time to navigate those pages in optimal places in the store. It happens by clicking the "online store button", and then the "navigation" button, which leads the user to a page where those created pages can be placed wherever the user desires by clicking titles pointed by arrows. For example, by clicking the "footer menu" title, it links created pages in the bottom section of the store where are the legal pages are optimal to set in. Whereas, the "header" title works as a link for the upper section where are the optional pages are convenient to place in (Figure 9.)
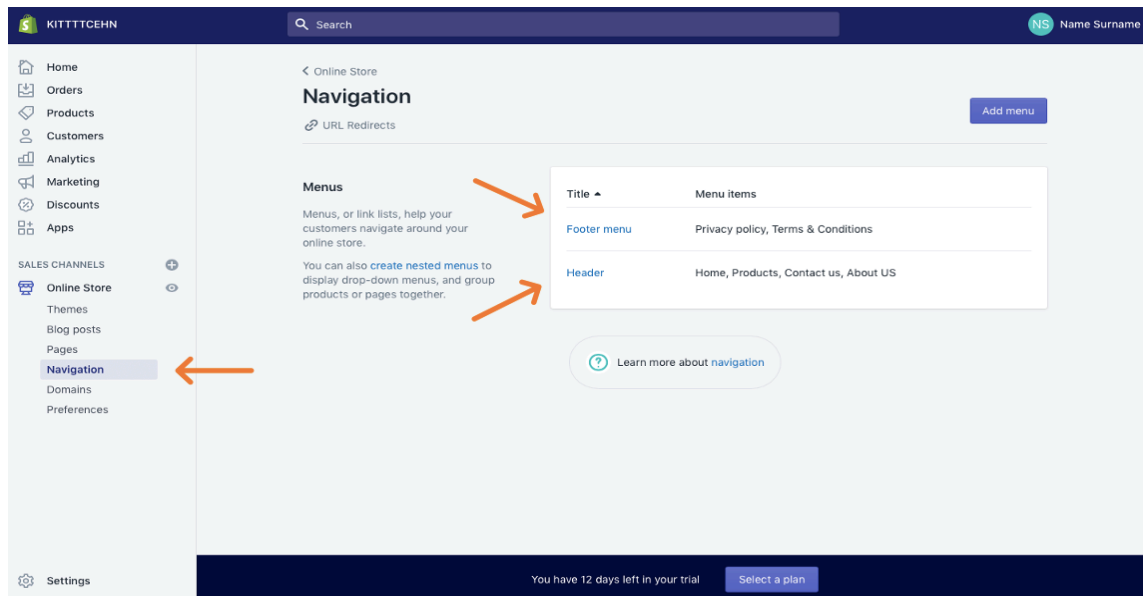

Figure 9 Page navigation (Shopify 2020).

When all the pages are set to the right or desired places, it is time to see how those pages are linked in the store. The eye icon, on the right from the "online store" button, is a link to a preview of the store. As described above the optional pages are linked in the upper section and the legal pages in the bottom section. The figure below illustrates how it should look like. However, the user can determine the right places for the pages or construct the store as the user prefers to. By clicking those page links, those should open the content that the user has inserted in them in the previous phases e.g. if the user clicks the "about us" button, it should show the content previously deployed by the user, which can be edited by following previous guidance (Figure 10.)

The placing of pages is vital because some of the costumers prefer simplicity and inserting 10 different pages is not going to work well with that. The key factor here is to mitigate complexities and to focus on simple solutions, which help the costumers to navigate more facile through the store (Carvalho & Montagna 2020, 160.)
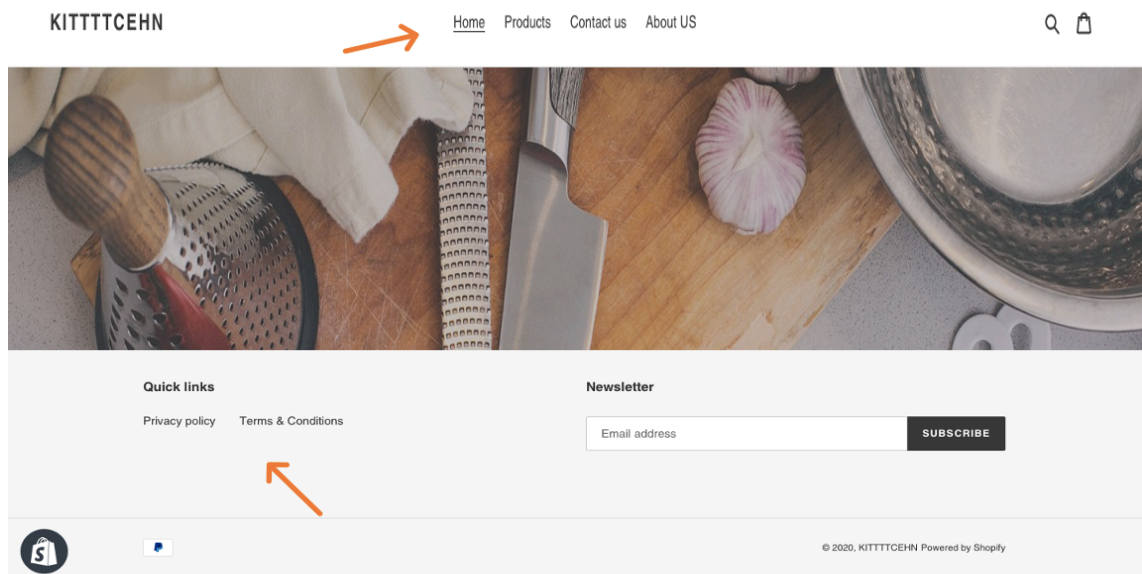
Figure 10 Outlook of the store (Shopify 2020).

The domain (the address of a web page) for the store can be bought by clicking the "online store" button, after it, the "domains" button, which lands to a page where the domain page can be bought. The domain indicates professionalism, which is important to the store's outlook. If the user decides to proceed without one, the store's URL will appear with "myshopify.com" as an extension to the store's name. The domain costs up to $20 for a year of usage. The user should consider buying the domain after the shop is ready for publishing, it may help to end up with the right domain name for the store (Figure 11.)

Figure 11 Domain Set up (Shopify 2020).

5.4   Settings for the store

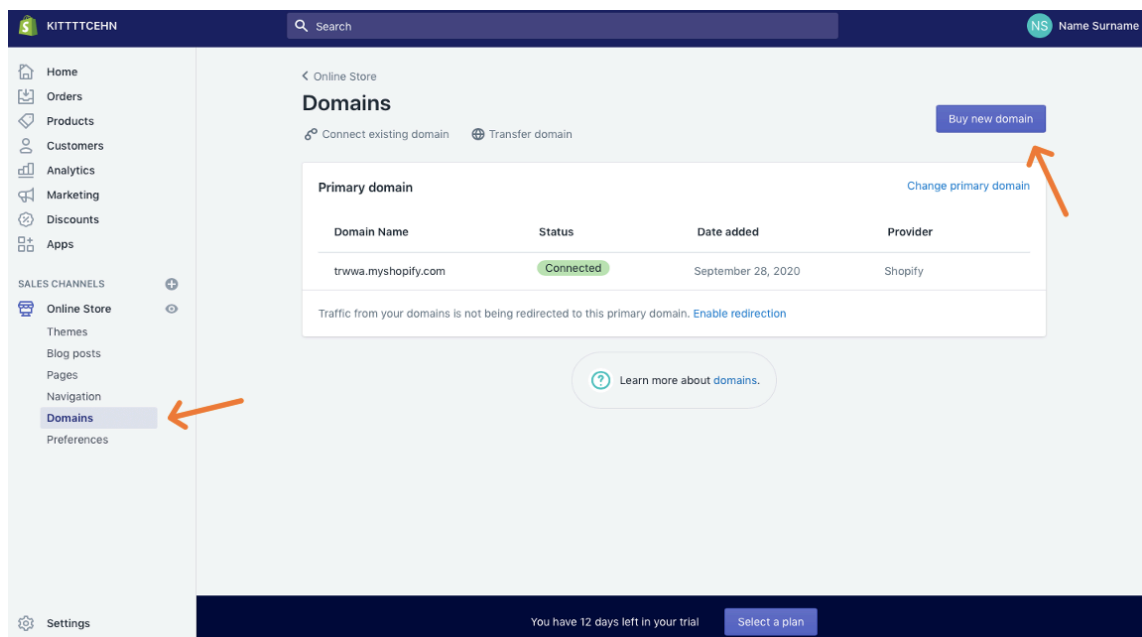The Shopify platform is well-automated. However, the settings must be set manually as the user wishes them to be. There are many variables involved regarding the settings, those variables will be explained below the figure. To get to the same stage as illustrated in the figure, the user has only to click the "settings" button.
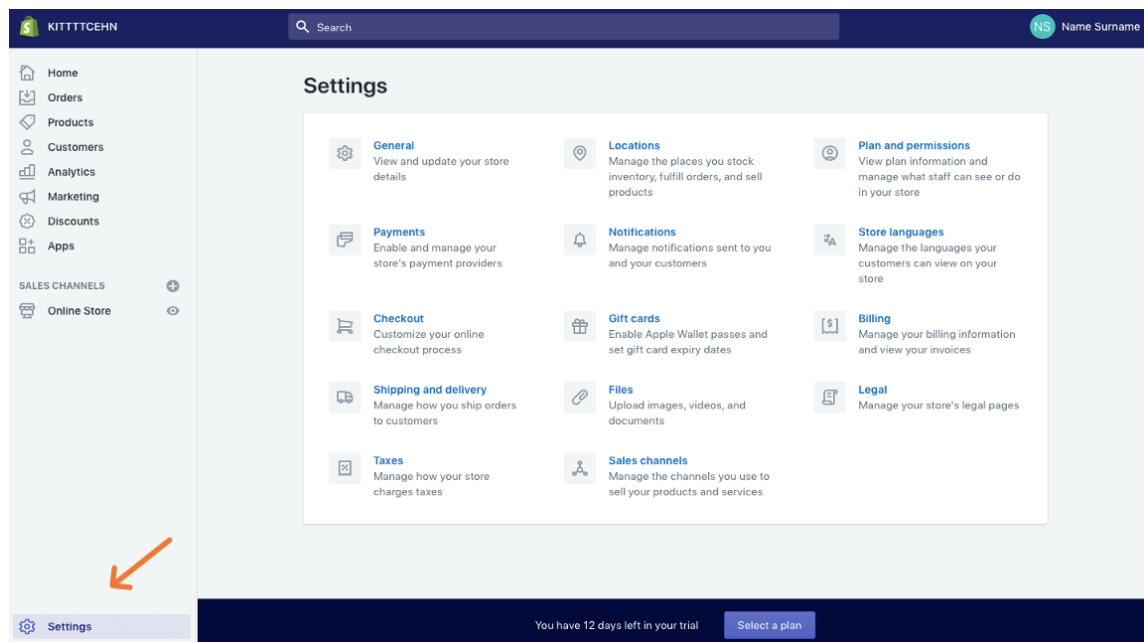

Figure 12 Store settings (Shopify 2020).

In the "**General**" section, the user is able to change the store's name, set a customer email where all the inquiries will be received, set the store industry, which can be left in the option "other", if the industry is not definable, and modify personal information such as, address, phone number, which can be changed if there is an amendment occurred. Also, the user is can change the time zone to match the user's province, and similarly the unit system, and default weight unit. Lastly, the user has to define the store's currency, the most common currency is USD. The currency cannot be changed anymore after the first sale.

The **"payments"** section lets the user decide a preferred payment service for the store. here the user can choose the Stripe or PayPal payment services or other offered alternatives. The **"checkout"** section is for setting the checkout requirements e.g. the user can demand a full name and contact information to facile the interaction with the customer if there are complications with the order. In the same section, the user is able to decide whether the store shows to a customer a sign-up option for email marketing at the checkout. The **"billing"** section is where the user can add the preferred payment method for paying the bills initiated by Shopify. The user can also view the upcoming bills in the same section.

The **"taxes"** section could be left on the pre-settings, which means that the user can leave the section untouched. But once again, the user should contact the tax authorities of the user's place of residency, to find the accurate handling manner of taxation in that specific province. The **"sales channels"** section is for integrating the Shopify store with other platforms, such as eBay and Amazon, which is not a primary concern for a beginner. But subsequently, it can be a more topical option. The **"plan and permissions"** section is where the user can grant rights to virtual assistants or other employees to operate in the store. Also, in the same section, the user can close the store by clicking the "close your store" button.

In the **"shipping and delivery"** section, the user can determine if the orders involve costs. Usually, it is better to not have separate shipping costs, instead, the shipping costs can be integrated into the product price by increasing the price. The customer could appreciate it more when there is only one payment apparent, which leads to more sales. To eliminate already existing shipping costs, the user has to click the "edit rate" button and delete all the numbers set there. But, If the user wants to add shipping costs, it is done from the "add rate" button. The user should also pay attention to shipping zones e.g. if the user seeks to ship to somewhere else than the options initially available, the user must create a new zone and edit it similarly to the already existing zones (Figure 13.)

Figure 13 Shipping (Shopify 2020).

The above-listed sections are the ones that the beginner should pay attention to. All the rest unexplained sections do not require clarification because those do not include further action at the beginning of setting the store and can be comprehended by explanations offered by Shopify itself. The user should invest time in every sector until everything becomes familiar enough, and after it, proceed with implementing the store.

5.5   Applications

The user should download the Oberlo application, which allows the user to import products to the store. There is a variety of applications to download in order to enhance the functions of the store, but it is important, to begin with only the eminent and free plan including ones such as the Oberlo. The rest of the applications can be downloaded to the store when the user is more competent in running one. Most of the applications are chargeable. However, the applications include a 14-days trial, where the user can exploit those and consider if the applications are worth keeping after the trial. Every application has its description available in the Shopify App Store, from where the user can perceive the intended use of the specific application.

To download applications, the user has to click the "apps" button, then "visit the Shopify app store" button, which leads to a selection of applications. From there, the user needs to search for the Oberlo application, and click the "Add app" button. After executing this procedure, the application should be all set and ready for product searching and implementing (Figure 14.)
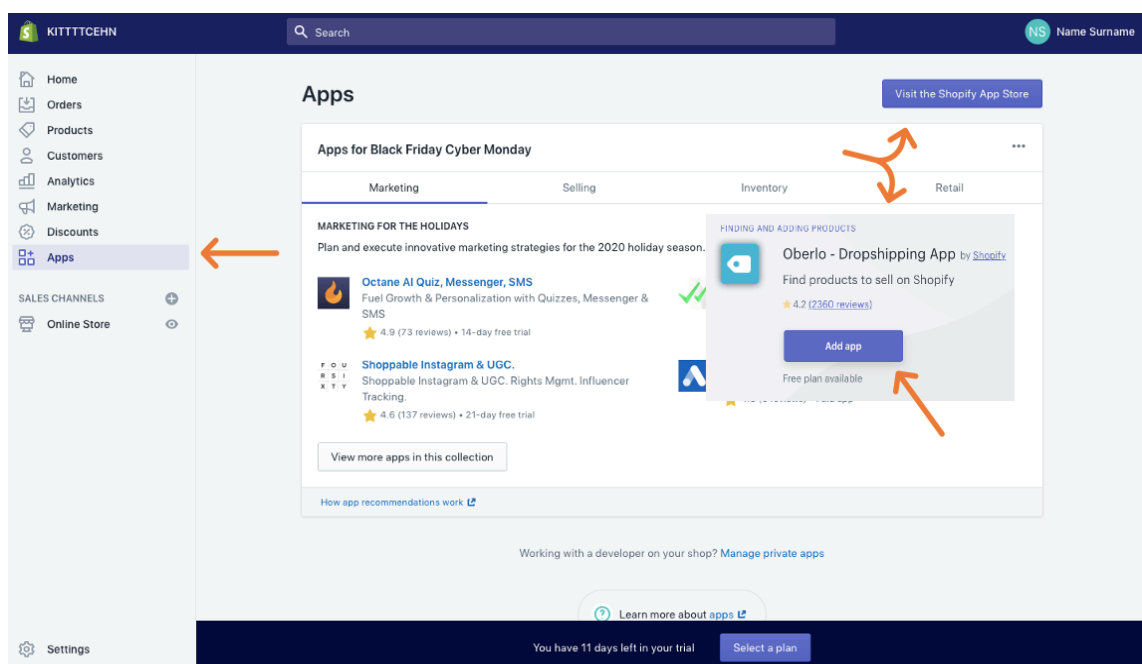

Figure 14 Applications (Shopify 2020).

5.6   Products

The first thing to do when searching for products in the Oberlo application is to pin the "ePacket" button in the filter sector. The ePacket is a global courier service, which is a convenient choice for the user because there are fewer variables when all shipments are handled by the same company. Otherwise, the Oberlo application is apprehensible and well guided regarding every aspect, from finding products to implementing them to the store. However, the user should know, where and how to search for products by utilizing other sources as well.

When searching for products for the store, the user should conduct research on offerings of the world's biggest retail companies. For example, the user could go on Amazon (Amazon 2020). or Walmart (Walmart 2020). and view the bestselling products there, and search for the same products in the Oberlo application. Or the user could visit the AliExpress (online commerce for retailers) webpage for product ideas and similarly seek for bestselling or rising products, which can be found also in the Oberlo application. Also, the user should always go through the product reviews to be able to fully comprehend the pros and cons of the products. The user should also utilize the Brand canvas, to be more conservative with the product offering.

But if the user wishes to differentiate from the competition and wishes to find something unique that has not already saturated the market, the user could use a Google trends webpage (Google trends 2020). and insert there a name of the specific product group name and view how much it is trending worldwide, which not only will aid in finding good products, but shows to the user that where the continental interest is peaking the most.

When pricing, the user should not focus only on other Dropshipping stores, but on the retail giants also, such as the Amazon because it is a high-volume platform. The idea is undercut high-volume platforms by setting scarcely lower pricing from the user's behalf and grow the store's volume by offering products at competitive prices. But also, when observing pricing in other platforms, the user receives directions regarding the own pricing. When the brand is built and strong, the pricing can be set higher because the store has established deep roots with the consumers, where the price becomes a second thought.

After the store publishing, when the user receives the first order, there will be a notification initiated from the Shopify and Oberlo, after receiving the notification, the user has to handle the order fulfillment, which is a matter of minutes, and very comprehensively explained on the behalf of a Shopify.

6   E-commerce marketing

The E-commerce industry is rapidly growing, which causes even tangible stores to turn into E-commerce. For example, in 2020, over half of the in-store trades are impacted by digital commerce. This indicates that if the tangible store neglects E-commerce solutions, it could be losing the reach on over half of its potential income. (D'alessandro & Lopez-Martinez 2020, 1-2.)

E-commerce marketing methods include social media, search engine optimization, digital content, and email marketing. The ultimate goal of E-commerce marketing is to direct attention to the E-commerce business. (Chaffey, Edmundson-Bird & Hemphill 2019, 344-345.)

In the online dropshipping store (E-commerce), at the starting phase, it is vital to emphasize marketing because it is a part of the voyage in building the brand. E-commerce advertising can be costly nowadays because of the high competition in the market. However, when the brand is embodied by strong notoriety, the advertising costs will not be as high as they were in the beginning. (Chaffey, Edmundson-Bird & Hemphill 2019, 344-345.) People often go back if the online store is attractive and has an interesting story to back the action. I.e. the objective is to focus on branding and maintain the relationships with the costumers already on board. By doing this, the conversion rate of an online store will remain profitable high. Even if the brand becomes strong, there should still be always a little budget for advertising because people are impulse buyers, if they see something convenient passing by online, they might as well buy it. Not to forget the value it brings to the online store, to gain a new customer. (D'alessandro & Lopez-Martinez 2020, 3-5.)

In the worst-case scenario, the store owner pushes money out of the window, by focusing only on exposure, instead of the brand itself. I.e. a strong brand saves and brings money, and non-branding does not do either of those. For example, if the store owner sells a $50 product with $100 = $50 profit minus the $40 advertising costs, it does not make that much sense. But when somebody comes for a second round to visit the online store and buys the product without advertising costs needed, the store owner will remain much more profitable.

But before going in-depth with reasoning, it is conservative to recognize the vitality of E-commerce marketing, especially at the beginning of the business because what kind of value brings a well-organized online store without the audience. (Kingsnorth 2019, 43, 56, 67-69).

When starting planning E-commerce marketing, the target groups should be well determined because when the target audience is narrow, it increases the possibilities of finding the right customer groups, and it also is marketing-efficient because the money spent on advertising could more likely increase the conversion rate if the target groups are more specified. In the

following sub-chapters, the aim is to process different marketing methods for E-commerce. (Kingsnorth 2019, 43, 56, 67-69.)

6.1   Search engine optimization

The objective of Search engine optimization (SEO) is to enforce the appearance of E-commerce in Google search rankings by improving the organic visibility, which on the other hand brings more traffic to the page. Often people do not bother to search for the specific webpage if it is not ranked on the first result page of Google. (Papagiannis 2020, 3-5.)

SEO begins with keyword mapping, in which the webpage owner has to decide the keywords with which the webpage should become visible in Google i.e. which could be the preferred words that the customer is more likely to search for in order to find the specific webpage. For example, the store owner should utilize very searched words while creating textual content on the page. Every product name and description, and page titles should consist of words that are very searched on the internet because it increases the possibility to be found more facile. (Papagiannis 2020, 3-5.)

6.1.1   Google ads

Google AdWords (Google search engine ads) is close to SEO regarding the end result, which is exposure. But simultaneously it differs a lot from SEO because Google ads are a profit-oriented service, which means that the user of it can pay for the number one slot on the Google result page. The ads issued by utilizing google ads, run on an auction basis, where the creator of the ad is obliged to pay only when someone clicks the ad. (Wordstream 2020.)

When utilizing the Google ads, the first step is to determine an advertising budget - the more E-commerce owner pays, the more visibility an online store receives by being higher in rankings. But the budget is the webpage owner's, to choose, all visibility is momentous. The second step is to choose the target audience, the ad can be set to run according to place, time, or language. The last phase is to write the ad text itself, which consists of three parts: the URL, the description, and the title. (Econsultancy 2018.)

6.2   Social media

Social media marketing is recognized as the internet marketing that consists of developing and distributing content through various digital platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube, which are some of the most eminent platforms for social media marketing because of the amount of exposure they provide to the user. Also, the business owner could just simply utilize social media influencers to promote the product, the creativity in advertising is always initiated by the business itself. (McGruer 2020, 38-39.)

There should always be a plan, or a strategy conducted when creating marketing campaigns, the goals of the business must be recognized and in conjunction with the marketing. For example, if the goal is to build a digital community, it must be reflected from the advertising, or if the aim is just to initiate short-term engagement, the advertisement should always comply with the strategy behind it. When marketing, the business owner should define the target audience and ways how to reach them. (McGruer 2020, 40-43.)

The most common marketing method utilized in the Dropshipping business model is Facebook advertising because it being the biggest tool to gain exposure extensively and rapidly. This is vital for businesses in the beginning. Later on, when there is consistent income, the business can utilize alternative advertising methods mentioned above. Or just simply, the business owner could utilize the methods that are convenient budget-wise for the business, such as google ads and SEO. (Ecommerce buff 2020.)

As mentioned above, the content should always be consistent with the brand Which means that the content can differ a lot, but the reasoning should remain the same: create engagement and achieve a high conversion rate. The content could also be organic, not that much of a replicated advertising. The buying-behavior shifts time-to-time, that is why the business owner must be aware of every ongoing trend. But most commonly, consumers are satisfied, if the advertisement includes the reasoning, why the product or service is the right one for them, and how it will help them in everyday life, which leads to a long-term engagement with the online business. (Deiss & Henneberry 2020, 137-139.)

6.3   Email marketing

Email marketing is considered as direct marketing by utilizing email interaction to promote services or products. It is often used to remind already acquired customers about the new updates and to offer exclusive discounts to them. (Mailchimp 2020.) Email collecting should be optional to the costumers, if they agree to the terms and policies of the page and decide to enroll in the email list by subscribing to the newsletter, the store owner can be in interaction with them without harassing being an issue. Even email listing being optional, the store owner should always utilize it because it can be profitable in the long-term, and it aids in building the brand. Social media and email marketing can be utilized in conjunction if the store owner attaches the newsletter subscription form (email collecting) to the social media channels with high engagement rates. The newsletter should be designed based on the brand. (Mladjenovic & Sudol 2019, 147-149.) The next chapter covers the process of scaling the business.

7   Scaling the E-business

A successful business requires scaling i.e. outsourcing. The business scaling occurs in conjunction with the growth, where the parameters of capability and capacity are measured. Before shifting into a scaling mode, the business has to be profitable and well-organized, and the scheme of the business must be ready for growth adjustments. (King 2020, 13-14.)

In the Dropshipping business model, the scaling consists of defining if the business is ready for growth e.g. hiring new employees to match incoming duties, in a way where the business remains profitable. Usually, when the business receives a consistent amount of order fulfillments on a daily basis, it is ready for hiring virtual assistants.

A virtual assistant (VA) is a person who can be hired to assist remotely in E-business's daily tasks, such as marketing, fulfilling orders, scheduling, and managing events - everything that can be done digitally can be laid upon a virtual assistant. (Eboch 2020, 6-8). Here are a few platforms offering virtual assistant services; Fiverr, Upwork, and WoodBows. Just by typing "virtual assistant" in Google search, should provide a variety of platforms that are listing virtual assistant services. The business owner has to conduct research to find the most optimal VA-platform for utilization.

One of the benefits of hiring virtual assistants is the lower financial burden. VA works as a freelancer, which means a work in a form of projected hours i.e. the business pays only for the hours that are assigned to the virtual assistant. Hiring a VA is cheaper than an ordinary employee on payroll because a VA is solely liable for insurances and everything regarding the work environment. Also, the business owner is able to make adjustments more efficiently and facile, if the done work is not meeting the criteria set for it. (Eboch 2020, 12-14.)

The objective in the Dropshipping business model is to automate duties partly, or an amount sufficient enough to spare business owner's time that can be utilized in other tasks, such as product research and things that cannot be assigned to virtual assistants. But of course, if the store owner chooses to hire somebody other than a virtual assistant, it is possible also. (Bootstrapping Ecommerce 2019.)

7.1   Legal entity for a Dropshipping business

The following content is not meant to be legal advice. This is solely information from general sources, before you take any action, please reach to your province's business counselors or people authorized for the subject (taxes, business entities, intellectual property).

Everyone that decides to set up a business should protect themselves from legal liabilities by creating a legal entity around the business. Not to forget, that many suppliers and manufacturers cooperate only with legal entities. (Mansuco 2019, 6.)

In the Dropshipping business model, the store owner has not liabilities regarding the delivery of products. However, the store owner is responsible for the product itself. (Haley 2020). E.g. according to Finnish law, product liability rests with the company that sells or markets it. (Finlex 2020). But, with a legal entity, the responsibility is separated from the store owner, which makes the business itself liable. The business might go down, but not the person behind it. (Mansuco 2019, 6).

The most common business forms for the Dropshipping are; sole proprietorship (not legal entity) and limited liability company (legal entity). Both of them could be useful in their own way in the Dropshipping business, it all depends on the store owner's preferences. (Haley 2020.)

The sole proprietorship could be more useful at the beginning of the Dropshipping business because of its low implementation fees, and if the business does not work out, it is more convenient to dissolve. (Ward 2020). Whereas implementing a limited liability company is more costly and it is more difficult to dissolve. Limited liability company solution is great when the business is making consistent income, which refers that it could be implemented later on, not on the first steps of businesses. However, the choice is up to the store owners to make, because both of them include their pros and cons. (Mansuco 2019, 10.)

The sole proprietorship is the plainest business form to utilize and set up. However, this cannot be considered as a legal entity because the business owner will remain liable for its business's debts, which means if the business goes through financial problems, they are also problems of the business owner. (Sjostrom 2019, 3). For example, if the store owner who utilizes sole proprietorship business form sells a defaulting-product that causes harm in the consumer's end, the consumer could sue the store owner who then would be held accountable for it. But as already said, this business form is easy to implement within low fees and if the business does not work out, the termination process is facile. Also, it can be converted into a limited liability company when the income is consistent. (Ward 2020.)

The limited liability company is considered as a legal entity because it is distinguishable from the owner's legal liabilities. E.g. if somebody sues your business regarding the Dropshipping or any other reason, only the business is accountable, the owner's assets are safe. (Reuting 2019, 21). Or if the business is no longer profitable and drifts to financial problems, those problems will not fall on the owner's shoulders. I.e. the limited liability company, business is divided into a separate legal person from the owner. (Mansuco 2019, 6). This would be a convenient option to all Dropshippers, but the implementing fees and bureaucracy within it are eminently more challenging, and if the Dropshipping business does not work out, it leaves the store owner with losses and a limited liability company ready for terminating, which may take many months, depending on the province. (Murray 2019.)

In the beginning, the sole proprietorship may be a better solution if the owner wishes to avoid further commitment to the business and enjoy pedantic implementing costs, but there is a lot to think about because the store owner is held accountable for his business actions. The limited liability company will eventually be implemented when there is consistent cash flow, but some people may do it right from the start, before opening the shop, it may not be the most optimal choice at the beginning because of the reasons explained above, but the choice is always the store owner's to make. There are risks and rewards in both options. (Mansuco 2019, 10.)

For people obtaining Finnish residency (Finnish tax liability): regarding the business entity implementation, there is legal counseling from professionals offered at "the Patent and Registration office" web page (PHR 2020). Also, regarding the Finnish taxation, there is legal counseling offered at Finland's official tax administration web page (Vero 2020). **For people living in other provinces:** There should always be legal counseling with people of authority in your province regarding any business forms or ventures that are about to take place.

8   Conclusions

The objective of this thesis was to create a comprehensible guidebook explaining the fundamentals of the Dropshipping business model and how to create an online store by utilizing the Dropshipping retail management method. This thesis generates information on the following topics: E-commerce, Dropshipping, implementation of an online store, E-marketing, and business management regarding E-commerce.

The main takeaway from this thesis should be a comprehensive offering to the world of E-commerce because the methods explained in this thesis are also valid in different forms of E-commerce. The Dropshipping business model is not necessary when creating an online store, the user can instead utilize different retail fulfillment methods, but still, manage the online store with similar principles to the Dropshipping.

This thesis is a plenteous source of information for a beginner when entering in E-commerce. All the information is explained in a succinct way, that a person who has never encountered with E-commerce business models, comprehends the content, and is able to stand in line with it. However, the reader must understand that this thesis is a quick "course" on how to create and maintain an E-commerce business, which indicates that the reader should enforce this information received from this also with other sources available regarding the subject.

The last statement for this thesis would be; the reader should always think rationally when absorbing new information regarding the E-commerce because the subject is full of affiliate marketing and frauds, it can be very confusing and misleading at the beginning, which is why the reader should go through as many sources as possible to empower the conservative thinking and to be able to identify fairy tales from reality. If the reader pays for courses, they should be initiated by valid institutions. For example, if the reader wishes to progress in Google advertising, the reader should buy a valid course from Google itself.

Disclaimer

The content in this thesis is solely information from general sources and the author's own opinions. This content cannot be considered as legal advice nor counseling. Always consult with people of authority when conducting business. The author of this content disavows any liability for this content.

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