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BLOG | SHOPIFY APP DEVELOPMENT

# 6 New App Ideas That Need To Be Made in Shopify

Deciding what to develop next can often be nearly as difficult as building the app itself. But what truly makes a great app is when developers address the challenges merchants face on a daily basis. Learn the kinds of challenges merchants face, and spark great app ideas.



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Powering **millions of businesses** in over 175 countries, the best Shopify apps are the ones that address common merchant challenges and enable them to serve a global customer base.

Some of Shopify's most intriguing apps even start as side projects of web developers trying to grow their skills over time consistently. However, before coding and testing and an eventual launch can happen, every Shopify developer starts at the same place: the application ideas phase.

For many, this part of the process can be the most demanding. From assessing both merchant pain points and the current state of the marketplace, to brainstorming concepts for hours, days, or months at a time, planting the right seed for the next great Shopify app is no small feat.

But, if you've already scoured the internet for new app ideas and feel like you've come up empty-handed, don't despair.

The Shopify Apps Team recently had a meeting of the minds and identified a selection of the most significant obstacles faced by merchants. More importantly, the group also discussed the best app ideas the Shopify developer community can leverage to solve those problems.

Considering what's missing from the [Shopify App Store](#) and what types of new apps can best complement that existing roster, this blog post will share some key insights and tips for creating apps that need to be made in Shopify.

by Matt Fish  
Apr 29, 2016

## Web app ideas

Web apps are popular for a reason—all you need to access them are a web browser and a reliable internet connection. Web apps enable merchants to log on and view key information related to their business anytime, anywhere, and on any device.

The possible app ideas for software solutions are endless.

### 1. Orders and shipping



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Fulfilling orders and navigating corresponding shipping details are two scenarios where web apps can be a lifesaver for merchants. Great app ideas can enable them to assess stock, sizes, weights, domestic and international rates, and maximize both convenience and profit.

These mechanics become even more important in the age of rapid **dropshipping** adoption, where merchants purchase items from third parties and have them shipped directly to customers. Let's say you run one such online storefront, a hub for all things sci-fi movie and TV memorabilia. Business is booming, and larger orders are coming in, many from across international borders.

This means the flat rate that used to cover your shipping costs for most orders is no longer going to cut it. You need to dive into your order data and determine what rates to charge for different order sizes and destinations. A web app would make this process much more manageable.

#### Build an app that:

- Helps merchants calculate the shipping box size needed per order and the cheapest available rates
- Integrates with regional/international shipping carriers to service Shopify merchants working around the globe
- Offers integrations with popular shipping services for local pick-up points

## App organization ideas

Running a successful online **ecommerce business** hinges on how effectively you organize each aspect of your operations. Automating these behind-the-scenes processes by building a Shopify app can bolster any merchant's growth potential.

### 2. Inventory management



One of the most critical and complex aspects of a retail business is **inventory management** and planning. Simple app ideas, especially ones that keep a merchant's inventory well-organized, can help streamline budgets, customer service, and more.

Imagine you're a business owner who sells tea. In an ideal world, you'd like to launch with 50 tea jars, and you want to offer four different flavors, but each jar only holds 50 grams of tea. That means that you must purchase:

- 50 jars
- 625 grams of flavor one
- 625 grams of flavor two
- 625 grams of flavor three
- 625 grams of flavor four
- 50 labels

The catch: You can only order your tea flavors by 500 grams, leaving you with extra supplies. To avoid wasting significant time and energy calculating which flavor to produce more of to reach your target amount or when you'll need to place a new order of jars to replenish stock, an app can automate this process.

#### Build an app that:

- Instantly calculates the supply quantities a merchant should order
- Notifies merchants to place an order when certain supplies are running low (possibly using order date and received date to pinpoint stock lifecycles)

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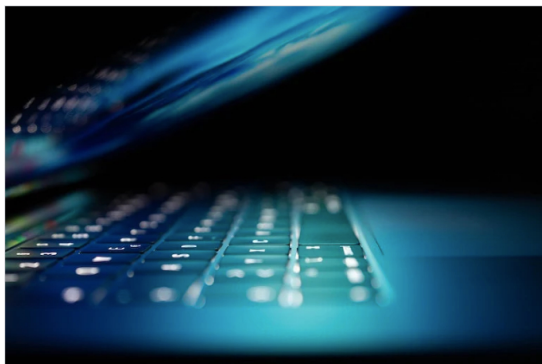
- Cross-references stock amounts with physical inventory

You might also like: [Building Shopify Apps: 9 App Developers Share Their Experiences](#)

## App creation ideas

Software business or startup ideas can be the digital bedrocks that shift entire retail sectors or industries. Sometimes it's the most straightforward solutions to merchant pain points that become the best ideas for making apps, particularly those that address the intangibles some business owners may not have the time to devote enough attention to.

### 3. Trust and security



When it comes to software business ideas or business startup apps in ecommerce, trust and security are an underserved aspect of both the customer and merchant experience. The former wants to know their sensitive information, such as payment details, are protected, while the latter needs to build trust to solidify a positive reputation in the marketplace.

To protect your online store and its reputation, you could create an app that automates the process of analyzing orders to weed out spam, fake accounts, or other suspicious activity. The activity can then flag or block fraudulent or malicious acts from occurring.

Better yet, why not proudly display a banner or badge on the storefront, letting customers know, no matter where they're ordering from, their transaction information and any other details they choose to share are protected from possible cyber threats?

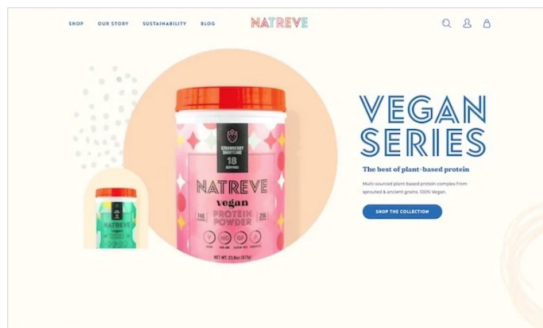
**Build an app that:**

- Automatically checks for suspicious order, payment, or account activity
- Blocks bots or scammers from accessing data or placing spam orders
- Bolsters a merchant's marketplace reputation as a trustworthy vendor

## App building ideas

An essential ingredient to consider as part of your various app development project ideas is solid, dynamic functionality. The app needs to work correctly and consistently, yes, but getting the job done with some style and flair is also a terrific way to capture a business owner's attention.

### 4. Store design



Smart, engaging visual store design, like excellent startup app design, must take a

host of structural factors into account. Compliance regulations, file type, size, and accessibility measures can help make an ecommerce hub inclusive for all customers.

Many design elements that fall into the latter category, including proper color contrast ratios between text and backgrounds or within images, may be the last thing on a merchant's mind when designing their store. Another angle: organizing on-page text with screen readers in mind.

While it's difficult for many to know what steps to take to meet specific standards, an automated app creation idea could detect related issues and suggest quick fixes that could help expedite the time required to maximize accessibility for online retailers.

**Build an app that:**

- Scans a store's design for accessibility issues, such as contrast, alt text, or other structural issues
- Highlights the steps merchants can take to ensure accessibility standards are met
- Performs scans repeatedly for a year to keep up with evolving online recommendations

## App campaign ideas

A robust ecommerce campaign can boost sales, optimize checkout conversion rates, and generate sustained buzz around a specific product, service, or brand. As such, campaign-based software startup ideas can help ensure this process is seamless for merchants to navigate.

## 5. Marketing



The word "campaign" is intrinsically tied to the marketing side of online retail. This encompasses getting the word out and letting both existing customers and prospects know about the latest store additions, discounts, promotions, and, for this example, exclusive offers.

Leveraging the power of exclusivity is most noticeable as the fulcrum for customer referral programs. The logic is simple—the more new business your existing buyers help generate, the more they benefit long-term, with members-only pricing or, if a merchant's willing, freebies.

Let's take that idea and connect it with another ecommerce staple: affiliate marketing. What if, by amplifying the exclusivity factor and gamifying a customer-based affiliate program, you could help merchants automate the process of transforming positive word-of-mouth into skyrocketing sales numbers?

**Build an app that:**

- Enables customers to create profiles and earn points for reaching specific affiliate marketing milestones
- Delivers discount codes, special promotions, and more to members who cross certain point or tier thresholds
- Makes it easy for program participants to share links and help grow the community over time

**You might also like:** [How to Get More App Downloads in the Shopify App Store](#)

## Subscription app ideas

Netflix, Spotify, Amazon Prime—the list goes on. Many successful retail brands now run on subscription-based models due to the built-in convenience, scalability, and innovation opportunities they offer both merchants and developers.

Because of this, new app development ideas are often subscription-based.

Before you get started, learn more about building subscription apps for Shopify in

[our developer documentation.](#)

## 6. Finances



Managing, assessing, and balancing the books can be the most challenging part of being a business owner. With so many details to account for, merchants may feel overwhelmed when it comes to keeping track of revenues and costs, understanding fees and tax implications, and, ultimately, how they can increase profits.

Imagine an app that facilitates the process of demystifying those finances. Instead of traveling to a local branch for an appointment, what if you could bring high-quality financial services to merchants?

Business owners can subscribe to an app where financial expertise is at their fingertips whenever they need it for a monthly fee. From guidance on revenue and cost best practices to online tax services that help merchants get the most out of their returns, the audience for a subscription app for finances is out there.

In terms of enterprise software ideas that solve major pain points, this subscription-based model delivers lasting value and convenience.

### Build an app that:

- Enables business owners to access financial guidance from industry experts, all for a reasonable monthly rate
- Helps demystify the process and best practices related to filing taxes
- Empowers merchants to take a proactive role in their organization's finances and, with better knowledge, increase their profit margins

## Building apps that address merchant needs

With all sorts of ideas for new apps that need to be made in Shopify, we hope this blog has inspired the universe's web developers to build the community's next chart-topping tool for merchants worldwide.

Whether you're looking to support marketing campaigns, enhance storefront design, or streamline inventory or financial management, understanding the average merchant's wants and needs is crucial. Identify those pain points and provide solutions geared towards efficiency and growth.

Once you've planted the seed of a great idea, all that's left to do is code everyone's soon-to-be new favorite app. We can't wait to see it in action!

### Read more

- [How to Build a Shopify App: The Complete Guide](#)
- [Checkout Extensibility Opens New Ways to Customize Checkouts on Shopify](#)
- [How to Build Powerful In-App Surveys: Put the User First](#)
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by **Matt Fish**

Published Apr 29, 2016

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