Fieldread

OCTOBER 9, 2026

COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Shopify

Shopify promotes fast, all-in-one setup, but collected accounts expose app costs, payment fees and support-access risks.

TOP COMPLAINT

72 of 576 records

Customization and platform limits

TOP STRENGTH

51 of 576 records

All-in-one commerce toolset

ENTRY PRICE

$29/mo

Shopify Basic, billed annually

Based on 383 review-site excerpts, 98 G2 reviews, 45 articles and reviews by third parties, 30 forum and social posts, and 20 Trustpilot excerpts, plus Shopify's own pages. Evidence collected October 9, 2026.

Prepared by Fieldread · fieldread.co

Executive summary

Shopify promotes fast, all-in-one setup, but collected accounts expose app costs, payment fees and support-access risks [1-8].

HIGH THREAT Shopify combines a 4.60 average across 100 G2 reviews with recurring first-hand praise for fast setup, ease of use and an all-in-one toolset [9, 18-20].

WHERE SHOPIFY IS EXPOSED

- Paid apps raise the subscription bill; rivals' built-in features merit a store-specific cost comparison rather than an assumed saving. [1-3]
- Shopify lists a 2% Basic fee for third-party payment providers; its FAQ says these fees may apply [3-5].
- Reports of AI support loops and held payouts suggest testing reachable human help as a competitive differentiator. [6-8]

WHERE SHOPIFY IS STRONG

- One small-business founder reports a professional-looking store in one day without coding, and two other small-business reviewers describe needing no coding or an easier setup than WordPress. [9-11]
- Hosted infrastructure eases backend work for reviewers comparing Shopify with WooCommerce. [12-14]
- Reviewers praise its app library; an article highlights integrations for subscriptions, wholesale and bundles. [15-17]

KEY FINDINGS

- **Held payouts cut merchants off from revenue.** 29 records concern held payouts and account lockouts, and App Store reviews describe revenue held for days and funds blocked during identity checks [7, 21, 22].
- **Merchants report billing after cancellation.** 24 records, 19 of them full reviews, describe billing continuing after cancellation, and the pricing page excerpt does not describe refunds [4, 23, 24].
- **The Plus step is steep.** Monthly billing goes from $399 on Advanced to at least $2,300 on Plus, and two mid-market G2 reviews call the Plus cost too high or a big jump [4, 25, 26].
- **Customization complaints come from satisfied users.** The largest complaint theme has 72 records, and the two cited G2 reviews of it each rate Shopify 4.5 stars [27, 28].

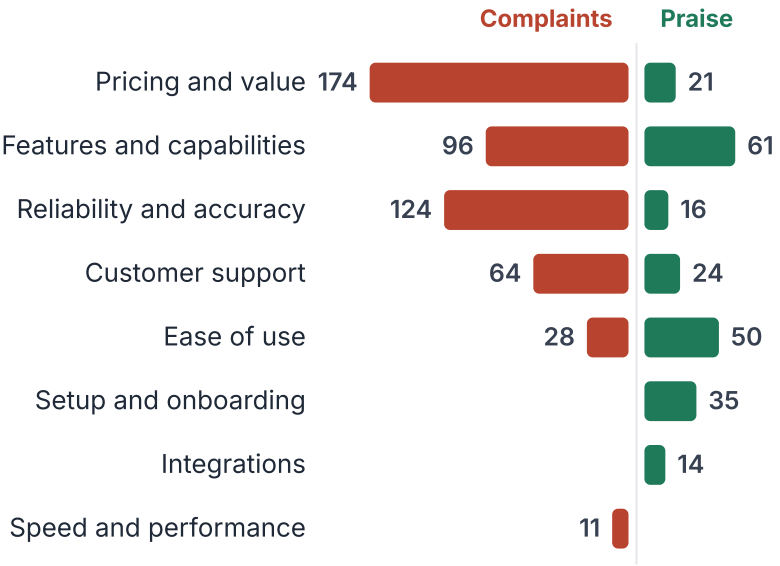
The collected feedback covers 576 relevant records, 426 first-hand, from reviews, Reddit and LinkedIn posts, and third-party articles, dated February 2017 to October 2026; Shopify's own pages supplement those records.

WHAT TO DO FIRST

1. Publish an all-in cost comparison for a typical small store that counts paid apps and transaction fees. product marketing, within 30 days
2. Make a human support agent reachable on every plan, and state the route in sales material. executive team, within 90 days
3. Publish plain payout timing and cancellation terms before a merchant signs up. founder, within 30 days

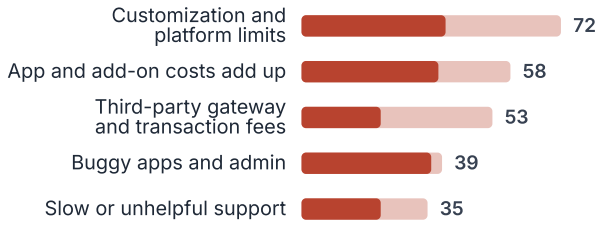
Shopify at a glance

COMPLAINTS AND PRAISE BY PRODUCT AREA



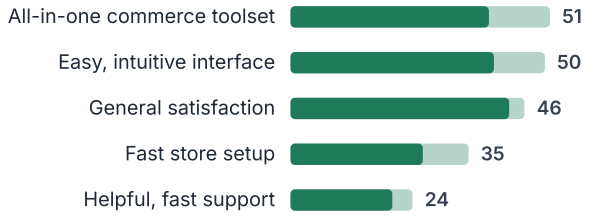
Distinct records with a complaint (left) or praise (right) about each area, out of 576 relevant records.

TOP COMPLAINTS



Records per theme; the solid part is first-hand accounts.

TOP STRENGTHS



Records per theme; the solid part is first-hand accounts.

G2 RATINGS

4.60

average of 100 recent reviews

47%

marked incentivized by G2

The 100 most recent G2 reviews (April 28, 2026 to October 4, 2026).

ENTRY PRICE

$29/mo

Shopify, Basic, billed annually

Cheapest paid plan on each live pricing page, Shopify read October 9, 2026. Shopify free option: Free 3-day trial, no credit card required; then $1/month for 3 months on most plans.

How to read confidence. High: at least 8 records from 2 or more source types, 5 of them full first-hand accounts. Moderate: 3 or more records. Low: one or two records, or an inference. Superscript numbers open the source.

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1 Who Shopify is

> **Bottom line:** Shopify is a hosted commerce platform that bundles store building, checkout, payments and an AI assistant under one subscription, with point of sale partly included and POS Pro sold as an add-on [4, 29]. A rival therefore competes against a whole bundle backed by strong security credentials, so a single-feature pitch will rarely be enough.

Shopify sells software that lets a business build an online store, take payments and sell from one dashboard [4]. Merchants can sell online, in person, on social channels and inside AI chat assistants [29]. Shopify hosts the store itself, so merchants do not run their own servers. Its pricing page lists unlimited web hosting, a custom domain and free SSL, the encryption certificate that secures a website [4]. The core parts are the following [4, 29]:

- An online store built from themes or with an AI store builder.
- A checkout, with Shopify Payments for card processing.
- A point of sale (POS) system for in-store sales.
- Sidekick, an AI assistant built into the store's admin area.

Its home page says the Shopify App Store holds more than 21,000 apps for specialized needs [29].

	Shopify
How it describes itself	An all-in-one commerce platform for building online stores and selling online, in person, across AI channels, social, and globally, with checkout, payments, shipping, POS, an AI assistant (Sidekick), and an app ecosystem.
Category	E-commerce platform
Sells to	Solo entrepreneurs; Small teams; Global-reach businesses
Pricing model	Tiered monthly subscription (Basic, Grow, Advanced, Plus) with a yearly-pay discount, plus card-processing rates, a POS Pro add-on and a $0/mo Agentic plan [4]
Entry price	$29 per month (Basic, billed annually) [4]
Free option	Free 3-day trial, no credit card required; then $1/month for 3 months on most plans

	Shopify
Evidence in this report	576 relevant records, 426 of them first-hand, including 100 G2 reviews

Shopify addresses sellers from solo founders to B2B brands

The pricing page aims its plans at solo entrepreneurs, small teams, businesses selling internationally and complex businesses [4]. Separate pages serve brick-and-mortar retailers through POS features [30]. They also serve B2B (business-to-business) sellers through buyer-specific catalogs, company profiles and volume pricing [31]. Developers get Hydrogen, which the page calls Shopify's headless commerce toolkit [29]. Sales channel integrations let merchants list products on TikTok, Instagram, Etsy and Amazon from Shopify [32].

This breadth matters for the reader's positioning. A narrower product should define the segment it serves well instead of trying to match Shopify's coverage feature by feature.

The pricing page is built around self-serve sign-up and a short trial

Shopify's pricing page offers a free 3-day trial with no credit card required [4, 33]. After the trial, most plans cost $1 per month for the first three months, and then standard monthly pricing applies [4].

The page lists plan prices, optional add-ons, card-processing fees and third-party transaction fees [4]:

- A tiered monthly subscription.
- Card-processing rates on each sale. A merchant who uses a payment processor other than Shopify Payments also pays a third-party transaction fee.

Core store plans run from Basic, at $39 per month billed monthly or $29 per month billed annually, to Plus for complex businesses, starting at $2,300 per month billed monthly [4]. Agentic lists a $0 monthly subscription for AI-channel selling, with online card rates starting at 2.9% + 30¢ USD [4]. Product and pricing covers the full plan ladder.

The pricing page also states its own limits. Shopify Payments is available only in certain countries, so pricing and payment options differ by location [4]. Feature availability also varies by plan [34].

Security credentials and merchant financing mark an established vendor

The pricing page states that Shopify is certified Level 1 compliant under PCI DSS, the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard [4]. It adds that stores on the platform are PCI compliant by default [4]. Shopify's security page says the company has been issued SOC 2 Type II and SOC 3 reports, which are audit reports on its security controls [35]. Through Shopify Capital, the home page advertises loans of up to $5M US [29]. The admin is available in many languages, including English, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish and French [33].

Shopify is also widely discussed by the people who use it. This research collected 927 records about Shopify. Of these, 576 were relevant and 426 were first-hand accounts.

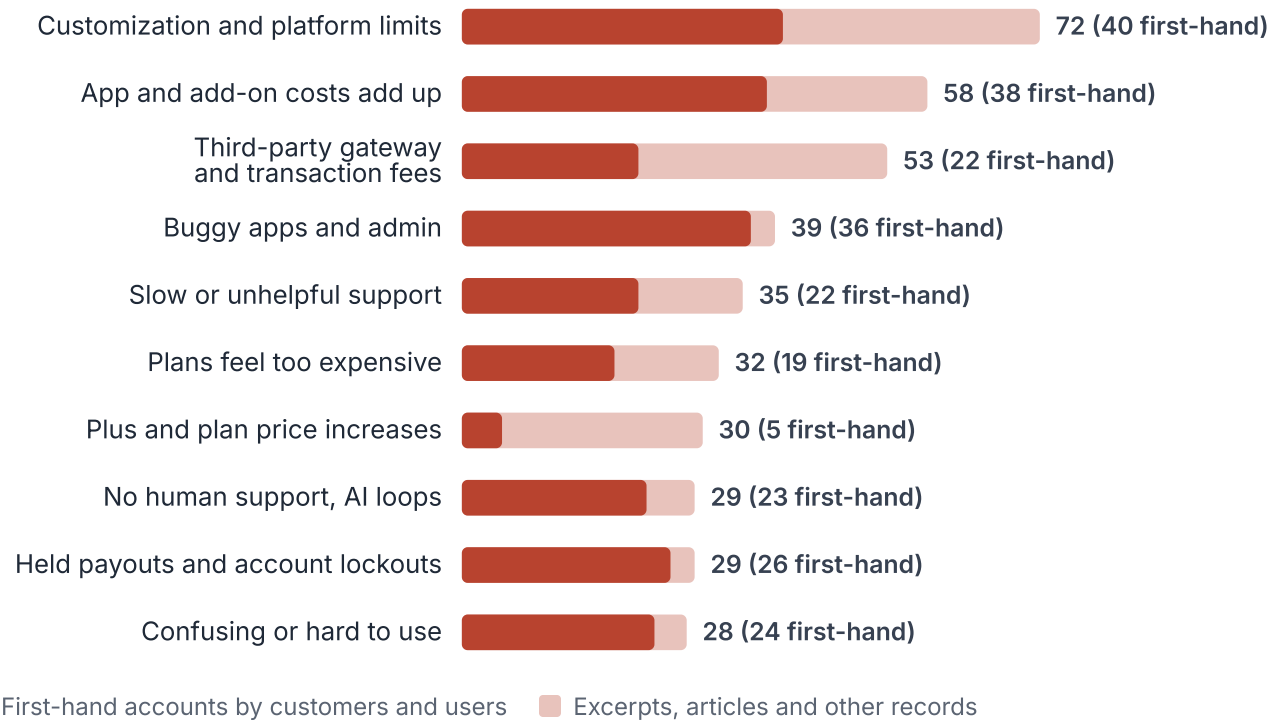
These signals describe a mature vendor. A rival is unlikely to win on stability credentials or breadth at launch. The openings lie in what merchants report after launch, which Where customers struggle with Shopify and Product and pricing cover.

2 Where customers struggle with Shopify

> **Bottom line:** Shopify's weak points show up after launch, when merchants need a person to fix a problem, need access to their payouts, or depend on the mobile app and point of sale hardware. Customization limits are the most frequent complaint, but they come largely from users who still rate Shopify well, so on their own they give a prospect little reason to switch.

Complaints concentrate in two product areas. Price-related praise appears in 21 records and reliability-related praise in 16, and the cited reviews describe held funds, stacked costs and a video upload bug [2, 7, 47]. Support follows with 64 complaint records against 24 praise records [48, 49]. Ease of use goes the other way, with 50 praise records against 28 complaint records [18, 50]. Pricing complaints, including app costs, gateway fees and billing after cancellation, are covered in Product and pricing. This section covers the four non-price themes that most affect whether a merchant stays: customization limits, AI-led support, held payouts and app bugs. The most severe complaints come largely from App Store reviews, which tend toward strong reactions (see What this evidence does not establish). The first chart below ranks the ten largest complaint themes, including negative price reactions. The second chart compares complaints with praise in each product area.

Figure 1. The complaints that recur most in the collected evidence



Distinct records that mention each theme. Base: 576 relevant records about Shopify. A record can mention several themes. These counts describe what is public and collectable, not how common each experience is among all customers.

Customization limits draw the most complaints, mostly from users who still rate Shopify well

High confidence · 72 records, 40 first-hand · February 2019 to October 2026 · 49 of 59 dated records in the last 12 months

The complaints center on two constraints. The first is checkout control. One third-party article says checkout customization is limited on Basic, Grow and Advanced and is full only on Plus [51]. The pricing page lists a fully customizable checkout among the Plus inclusions [4]. The second constraint is Liquid, Shopify's own template language for storefronts. One designer on G2 dislikes it [28]. Another reviewer says setting up the sitemap and robots.txt files is complicated and wishes the SEO tool did not require modifying the Liquid theme [52]. Other records mention limited blogging, B2B and dealer-network features that are less intuitive than the retail side, and payment features that are unavailable in some countries [53-55]. One LinkedIn post cites Shopify's own notes as saying that Canvas, its store design workspace, does not yet support app blocks, Markets or translations [56].

Third-party articles and G2 reviews carry this theme, and the 20 G2 reviews in it average 4.5 stars. None of its records is flagged as a dealbreaker. Of those 20 G2 reviews, 15 come from companies with 50 or fewer employees. One small-business founder named cost as the biggest downside and added a smaller one: "Some basic customizations are also limited unless you use an app or have some technical knowledge." [27]

The evidence traces the limit to Shopify's hosted model. One article says Shopify's reliance on Liquid keeps developers from using modern frontend frameworks like Next.js unless the store moves to a complex headless setup [57]. Shopify does offer a headless route through Hydrogen, its headless commerce toolkit [29]; its pricing page lists 1 headless storefront on the plan card it shows [4]. One LinkedIn author described reaching this ceiling with custom checkout and product logic:

> *Everything has to fit inside Liquid and Shopify's rules.*
>
> LinkedIn post · August 17, 2026[36]

What this means for the reader: Customization limits make a weak opening argument with small merchants, because the people raising them are mostly satisfied. The argument carries more weight with designers, agencies and merchants who need custom checkout logic below the Plus tier. If your product gives that control without an enterprise contract, lead with it only when a prospect names the need.

Merchants describe support as AI chat loops that are hard to escape

High confidence · 29 records, 23 first-hand · September 2025 to September 2026 · 25 of 27 dated records in the last 12 months

Authors describe a support chat run by AI that makes them repeat the issue, offers no escalation path and makes a human hard to reach [48, 58, 59]. One App Store author objected that support access is limited by plan and said they did not want to talk to an AI [60]. Another author said escalated email requests on Basic took more than five days to answer [61]. Web articles report that merchants find it nearly impossible to speak to a human, and one cites a merchant on hold for four hours [62, 63].

App Store reviews supply 20 of the theme's records, and the rest come from Trustpilot, Capterra, Reddit and web pages. None of the G2 reviews collected falls in this theme. The pricing page lists 24/7 live chat support on Basic, enhanced live chat on Advanced and priority 24/7 phone support on Plus [4]. The complaints therefore concern what happens inside the chat channel, not whether a channel exists. Two articles offer an explanation. One says lower plans get chat that handles common issues, while complex problems are harder to resolve without Plus or a partner agency [64]. The other describes Shopify support, app vendors and theme developers each pointing to one another [65]. To be fair to Shopify, support also draws praise, with G2 and Capterra authors describing fast and helpful staff [49, 66].

One App Store author linked the chatbot to the moments when money or store access is at stake:

> *Support is a chat bot that loops you until you give up.*
>
> Apple App Store · rated 1 of 5 · September 7, 2026[6]

What this means for the reader: Some Shopify merchants describe being stuck with a bot during serious problems. A company that can put a person on payment and account issues quickly can turn that into a

concrete point of difference. Make the claim only with proof such as published response times or a named contact, because a promise of human help that your team cannot keep would repeat the complaint.

Held payouts and verification delays cut merchants off from their revenue

High confidence · 29 records, 26 first-hand · April 2023 to October 2026 · 24 of 29 dated records in the last 12 months

One Trustpilot reviewer reports a payout put on hold with no updates or explanations [67]. One author describes sales revenue held for 5 business days by an automated rule while the account was in good standing [7]. Another describes daily payouts on a new account delayed by about 7 business days [21]. One App Store author describes identity verification blocking access to funds after setup [22]. Two authors say their money was held for a year, and the excerpts give no further explanation [68, 69]. A third-party article adds that a counter-notice to a DMCA takedown can take days or even weeks to work through, and says Shopify may take a store down first while the dispute is settled [70].

App Store reviews supply 19 of the records, and the G2 sample holds only one. That pattern suggests the problem surfaces mostly among authors writing at the moment of the problem. The authors point to automated rules and new-account status as causes, and one says the delay was not made clear upfront [7, 21]. The pricing page says Shopify Payments is available only in certain countries and that fraud analysis requires it [4]. Shopify's pricing page says third-party transaction fees may apply when a merchant uses a third-party payment provider instead of Shopify Payments (see Product and pricing) [4]. The pricing notes collected do not describe payout timing or hold rules [4].

One small-business founder on G2 named the delay that kept the store from operating:

> *...the very long Shopify Payments setup/verification timeline...*
>
> Founder / Business Owner, small business, 50 or fewer employees · G2 review · rated 1 of 5 · August 27, 2026[37]

What this means for the reader: This theme supports the strongest trust argument a competitor can make, because the harm is direct: merchants describe revenue they cannot reach. Publish payout timing, hold conditions and verification steps in plain terms. Raise them with new merchants who depend on daily cash flow. Do not claim that Shopify holds funds as a rule, because these records describe individual accounts.

App and admin bugs interrupt daily store tasks

High confidence · 39 records, 36 first-hand · March 2024 to October 2026 · 31 of 34 dated records in the last 12 months

The bugs touch tasks merchants perform every day. Authors report the following problems in the mobile app:

- Video uploads to products fail [47].

- The verify button stops working after the emailed code is entered, which blocks login from a phone [71].
- Listing category fields are forgotten every week [72].

In the admin, authors report being logged out during inventory updates and an app that is unstable and slow to load [73, 74]. One Capterra reviewer says some issues have been around for years and remain unresolved [75]. App Store reviews carry 23 of the records, and Capterra carries 6. The three G2 authors in the theme describe milder problems and still give five stars [73, 76, 77]. Outages and disruptive updates are separate themes listed in the table below. Point of sale hardware draws the sharpest complaint, which one Capterra reviewer described this way:

> *The receipt printer and barcode scanners disconnect daily and require manual resets...*
>
> Capterra (search excerpt) · page dated September 29, 2026[38]

What this means for the reader: These bugs mainly affect retailers who run point of sale hardware and owners who manage the store from a phone. Ask prospects which daily tasks they handle at the counter or on mobile. Make in-store and mobile reliability a demo point only if your own product holds up under that test.

The table below lists every other complaint theme with its counts, its confidence level and one example quote, including slow support, billing after cancellation, outages and disruptive updates.

Complaint	Records	First-hand	Confidence	Example
Slow or unhelpful support	35	22	**High**	*"They do not care when you get ripped off and won't help you do anything about it."*[39]
Confusing or hard to use	28	24	**High**	*"...at times the air chat doesn't really do everything I ask it to."*[40]
Basic features need paid apps	23	15	**High**	*"Some basic features really should be included instead of needing another app.."*[41]
Fraud, scams and chargebacks	20	17	**High**	*"...decisions are repeatedly made in favor of the customers, even when there is sufficient evidence supporting the seller."*[42]
Outages and 500 errors	19	7	**High**	*"I can't make a transfer or process an order without getting a page load error..."*[43]

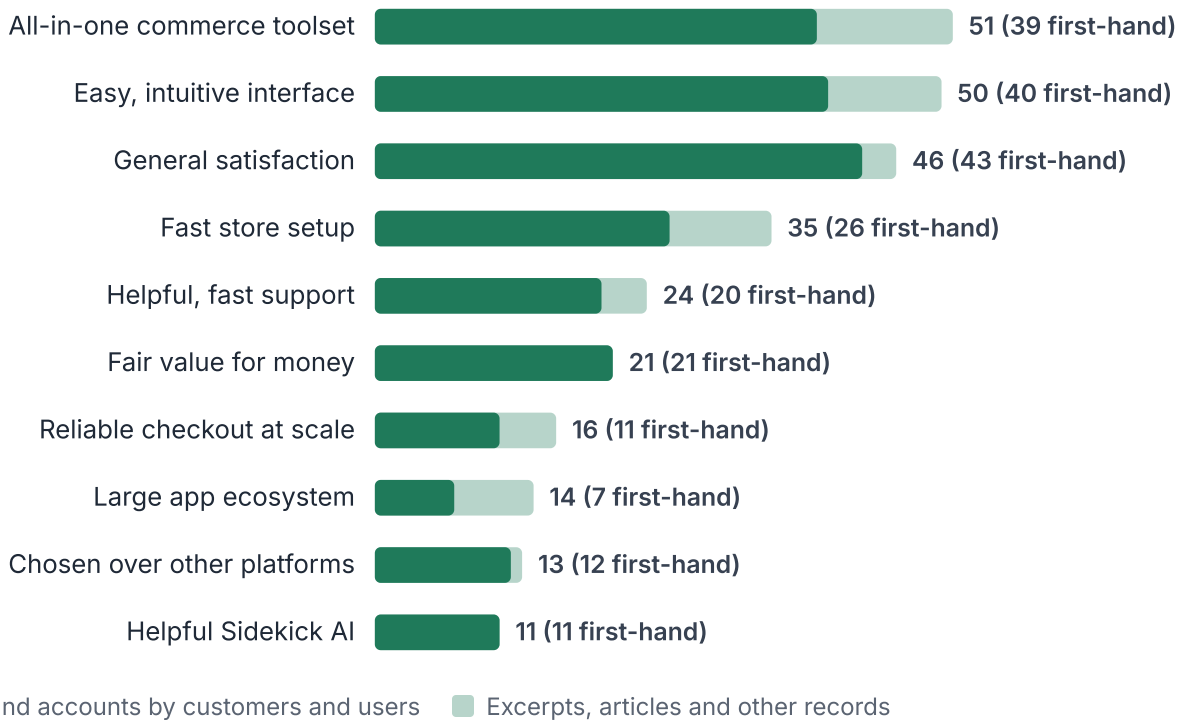
Complaint	Records	First-hand	Confidence	Example
Disruptive updates and redesigns	19	19	**High**	*"Can't buy & print labels in app anymore, can't create draft orders in app anymore..."*[44]
Slow store and admin	11	9	**High**	*"Timeouts and apparent bandwidth issues."*[45]
Reporting and analytics gaps	9	9	**High**	*"Some filters are not included so we still need to work on some of the reports outside the platform..."*[46]

3 Why customers choose Shopify

> **Bottom line:** Shopify wins merchants without technical skills because they can launch quickly and then run inventory, orders and marketing from one admin. A rival should concede these strengths and compete on what happens after launch.

The praise is broad and comes mostly from first-hand reviews. The 100 G2 reviews collected average 4.60 stars, but 47% of them were incentivized, so the size of the praise deserves some discount. The direction of the praise holds across App Store reviews, G2 reviews and third-party articles [83-85]. The chart below shows the ten largest strength themes by records. This section covers the three largest themes that give a specific reason, and it sets aside general satisfaction without a stated reason.

Figure 2. The strengths that recur most in the collected evidence



Distinct records that mention each theme. Base: 576 relevant records about Shopify. A record can mention several themes. These counts describe what is public and collectable, not how common each experience is among all customers.

Merchants run inventory, orders and marketing from one admin without a developer

High confidence · 51 records, 39 first-hand · July 2024 to September 2026 · 44 of 48 dated records in the last 12 months

Shopify's broadest strength is that daily commerce work happens in one place and does not need a developer. This praise rests mostly on full first-hand G2 and App Store reviews rather than on articles. One research analyst at a small business says the team can change a product price, create a discount or update a landing page without developer help [20]. A small-business G2 reviewer likes that inventory tracking prevents overselling, and a managing director singles out product and order management [86, 87]. A marketing manager values sales data broken down by product, customer behavior, region and conversion [88].

Third-party articles extend the praise to selling across several channels. One article says inventory syncs across the store, Amazon, eBay, TikTok Shop, Instagram and Facebook with little friction [89]. Shopify's features page says inventory syncs in real time across point of sale (in-person checkout), the online store and every sales channel [30]. One App Store reviewer described how the pieces work together:

> *The inventory management, built-in marketing tools, and secure checkout work together beautifully...*
>
> Apple App Store · rated 5 of 5 · September 3, 2026[19]

The authors who give this praise also name where it stops. The same research analyst who edits prices without a developer says that managing and paying for many apps quickly becomes hectic [90]. The bundle covers the core of the store, and paid apps fill the gaps around it (see Product and pricing).

What this means for the reader: Prospects who already sell on Shopify will judge your product against an admin they use daily and like. Your product must match core order, inventory and discount tools before any other argument lands. A credible attack starts where the bundle stops and paid apps begin.

Non-technical owners find the admin easy to learn

High confidence · 50 records, 40 first-hand · June 2023 to October 2026 · 46 of 50 dated records in the last 12 months

Ease of use is the strength reviewers most often describe in terms of newcomers learning the admin. The praise comes mostly from full first-hand reviews on the App Store and G2, and every record in the theme is dated. One App Store reviewer who says they are not comfortable with technology still finds it easy to build and run their business in the app [18]. A small-business G2 reviewer says the store is easy to set up and manage even for someone who is not very technical [84]. Another small-business reviewer can change the back end of the website without hiring help [91]. A small-business founder manages products, prices, collections and orders on a daily basis without a developer [92]. A social media marketing specialist at a small business described the starting point this way:

> *I don't have any coding experience, and it didn't require a complicated setup.*
>
> Social Media Marketing Specialist, small business, 50 or fewer employees · G2 review · rated 4.5 of 5 · September 17, 2026[10]

Ease of use is contested, though the praise outweighs the complaints. A smaller complaint theme describes the platform as confusing or hard to set up, as in two App Store reviews where the authors found setup confusing or could not work out how to finish it [93, 94].

What this means for the reader: Simplicity alone will not separate your product from Shopify, because non-technical owners already describe Shopify as easy. Claim simplicity only where you can demonstrate it on a specific task the owner does every week.

Merchants describe launching a store within days, without developers

High confidence · 35 records, 26 first-hand · February 2026 to October 2026 · 31 of 31 dated records in the last 12 months

Fast setup turns ease of use into a speed advantage at the moment a buyer chooses a platform. One non-technical founder at a small business added a logo, uploaded products and made the site look professional in one day [9]. That reviewer rates Shopify 3 of 5 overall, which shows that setup praise survives even in a mixed review [9]. A small-business software engineer credits guided setup and templates [95]. Two mid-market G2 reviewers praise Shopify's ease: one calls setup very easy, the other says selling is easy but rates initial setup 3 and says knowledge is required [96, 97].

Third-party articles explain the speed by the hosted model. In that model, the vendor runs hosting, SSL (the certificate that encrypts site traffic), checkout and core operations [85, 98]. Even an article published by a competing vendor says Shopify suits sellers who want to launch quickly without managing hosting, security or checkout themselves [99]. One LinkedIn post states the claim most directly:

> *You can go from zero to a live store in a day, no dev team needed...*
>
> LinkedIn post · August 3, 2026[78]

The theme mixes full G2 reviews with articles. The articles explain why setup is fast, and the first-hand reviews confirm that authors experienced it.

What this means for the reader: Concede speed to launch when a seller wants a store live this week. Compete on the months after launch, where the cost and support themes concentrate (see Battlecard: competing with Shopify).

The table below lists the other strength themes in the evidence, with counts, confidence and one example quote each.

Strength	Records	First-hand	Confidence	Example
General satisfaction	46	43	**High**	*"A must have to run my business..."*[79]
Helpful, fast support	24	20	**High**	*"...she was professional, patient and genuinely tried to escalate my case..."*[80]
Reliable checkout at scale	16	11	**High**	*"Shopify Plus helped soothe our compliance risk, while providing the robust capacity the marketing team required..."*[81]

Strength	Records	First-hand	Confidence	Example
Large app ecosystem	14	7	**High**	*"...there are plenty of apps and integrations available to expand your business..."*[16]
Chosen over other platforms	13	12	**High**	*"My store used to be on BigCommerce, which feels like Joomla by comparison."*[82]

4 Product and pricing

> **Bottom line:** Shopify's plan prices set only a floor, because paid apps and a fee on outside payment processors sit on top of every tier. A rival's strongest pricing argument is an all-in monthly cost that a small store can see before it signs up.

Tiers separate on fees, staff, locations and checkout control

Shopify sells four main subscription tiers. It lists POS Pro at $89 per location per month, billed monthly, and Agentic at $0 monthly for AI-channel selling, with sales fees extra [4]. The table below lists every plan with its prices and key limits.

Product	Plan	Monthly	Annual	One-time	Key limits
Shopify	Basic[4]	$39 USD/mo (pay monthly)	$29 USD/mo (pay yearly)	-	Up to 3 B2B catalogs; 10 inventory locations; Standard API rate limits
	Grow[4]	$105 USD/mo (pay monthly)	$79 USD/mo (pay yearly)	-	Up to 5 staff accounts; Up to 3 B2B catalogs; 10 inventory locations
	Advanced[4]	$399 USD/mo (pay monthly)	$299 USD/mo (pay yearly)	-	Up to 15 staff accounts; Up to 3 B2B catalogs; 10 inventory locations

Product	Plan	Monthly	Annual	One-time	Key limits
	Plus[4]	from $2,300 /mo (starts at $2,300 USD/mo)	-	-	Includes 20 POS Pro locations; up to 200 with Shopify Payments; 200 inventory locations; 25 headless storefronts
	POS Pro (add-on)[4]	+$89 /mo (per location)	-	-	Priced $89/mo per location on Basic, Grow and Advanced
	Agentic[4]	$0 /mo	-	-	Only pay when you make a sale; Card rates from 2.9% + 30¢ USD online

Prices as shown on the live pricing pages (Shopify read October 9, 2026).

Each step up lowers two percentage fees. Online card rates fall from 2.9% + 30 cents on Basic to 2.25% + 30 cents on Plus [4]. Merchants who do not use Shopify Payments, Shopify's own processor, pay a third-party transaction fee of 2% on Basic, 1% on Grow, 0.6% on Advanced and 0.2% on Plus [4].

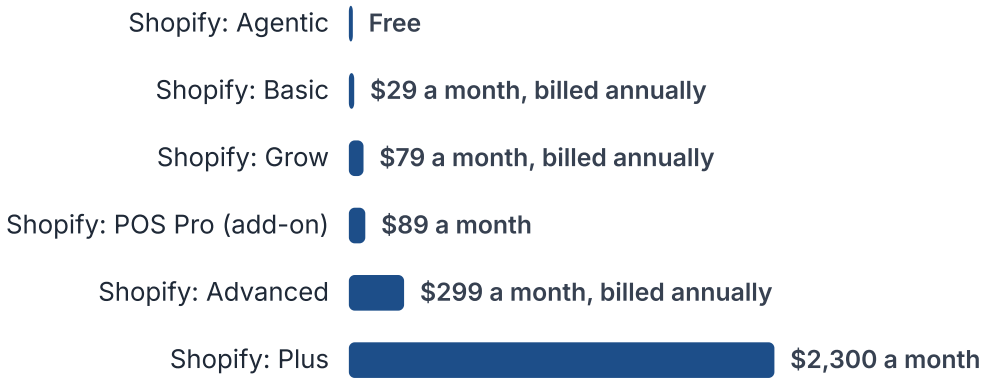
The tiers also differ in what they unlock:

- **Grow** adds full data access for custom apps, which Basic limits [4].
- **Advanced** raises staff accounts from up to 5 on Grow to up to 15, and it includes live third-party shipping rates [4]. The pricing notes list those shipping rates as an add-on on Basic and Grow [4].
- **Plus** brings the largest jump. Plans below Plus cap merchants at 10 inventory locations and 3 B2B (business-to-business) catalogs [4]. Plus lists up to 200 POS Pro locations, unlimited B2B catalogs, unlimited staff accounts and a fully customizable checkout [4].

The chart below places every plan on one price scale and shows the distance between Advanced and Plus.

Figure 3. Price ladder

Price per month (annual billing where offered)



From the vendors' live pricing pages. Subscription plans show the price per month for annual billing where the page offers it, otherwise the monthly price. One-time prices are per purchase; a range is drawn at its upper end.

Upgrade pressure comes from growth in staff, locations, wholesale catalogs and outside-processor volume. A merchant choosing Plus to exceed Advanced's 15-staff-account limit moves from $399 per month on Advanced to at least $2,300 per month on Plus, both billed monthly [4]. That step is where a rival's mid-market offer has the most room.

The entry plan is modest until fees and apps are added

These scenarios use monthly-billed prices unless noted. They assume the merchant's country supports the features named, because the pricing page says Shopify Payments is available only in certain countries [4].

- **Solo seller with one online store.** A seller who needs a hosted store and checkout qualifies with Basic at $39 per month billed monthly, or $29 per month on the card for annual billing [4]. Most plans start with a free 3-day trial and then $1 per month for the first three months [4]. If the seller uses an outside processor, the pricing page says third-party transaction fees may apply, and the excerpt read does not state that rate [4].
- **Store that needs live third-party shipping rates without an add-on.** The cheapest qualifying plan is Advanced at $399 per month billed monthly, or $299 per month on the card for annual billing [4]. Basic and Grow reach the same output only through an add-on, and the pricing notes collected do not state its price [4].
- **Business that needs a fully customizable checkout.** The cheapest qualifying plan is Plus, from $2,300 per month billed monthly [4].
- **Seller that only wants to list products in AI chat channels.** Agentic costs $0 per month, and the seller pays card rates from 2.9% + 30 cents online when a sale happens [4].

Customer reactions to these prices run against Shopify. The four negative price themes below hold 58, 53, 32 and 30 records, against 21 records that call the pricing fair. None of the 19 mid-market G2 reviews

praised value, against 10 of the 81 other G2 reviews. The mid-market price comments that do appear concern Plus and the higher tiers [25, 26, 103].

Paid apps push the real bill above the plan price

High confidence · 58 records, 38 first-hand · April 2021 to October 2026 · 45 of 49 dated records in the last 12 months

Small-business G2 reviewers who still rate Shopify well describe a total cost that rises as paid apps are added, with one naming shipping, payments and marketing apps [104-106]. One LinkedIn author says the app stack ended up costing more than the Shopify plan itself [1]. One App Store reviewer put the effect this way:

> *...apps stacked on apps until the "cheap" plan isn't cheap...*
>
> Apple App Store · rated 1 of 5 · September 7, 2026 [2]

These complaints coexist with high ratings, which makes them a cost argument rather than a reason customers leave. A rival with common store functions built in can show the difference in a side-by-side bill.

Outside payment processors carry an extra fee

High confidence · 53 records, 22 first-hand · April 2021 to October 2026 · 39 of 45 dated records in the last 12 months

This theme rests mostly on search excerpts and third-party articles, with fewer full reviews. A Software Advice reviewer says that skipping Shopify Payments means "you're hit with additional transaction fees, which can eat into the margins of a small business" [5]. A third-party article lists the fee by tier [107]. The fee matters most to sellers who need a different processor, which is exactly where a rival with no gateway surcharge can compete.

Some small sellers question the subscription itself

High confidence · 32 records, 19 first-hand · April 2021 to September 2026 · 20 of 29 dated records in the last 12 months

A Capterra reviewer calls the monthly cost expensive for a new store that does not yet sell regularly [108]. A G2 reviewer objects to paying the subscription in months without a sale [109]. One App Store reviewer ended the subscription because the store lost more money than it made [110]. A third-party article says the 3-day trial leaves little time to evaluate the platform before paying [111].

Plus costs draw complaints, and the archives do not confirm a Basic increase

Moderate confidence · 30 records, 5 first-hand · January 2023 to October 2026 · 21 of 27 dated records in the last 12 months

Two cited first-hand accounts are from mid-market G2 reviewers criticizing Plus costs, one describing a big jump to gain a few helpful features [25, 26]. One third-party page says higher-volume Plus merchants pay a variable fee for which "Shopify publishes no percentage or threshold" [112]. The reported thresholds disagree, as covered in What this evidence does not establish.

One article alleges a Basic price increase, but omits the billing basis [113]. The archived pricing pages show Basic at $29 per month billed yearly in both October 2024 and October 2025 [102, 114]. The live Basic card lists $29 per month billed annually, unchanged from the archives, versus $39 per month billed monthly [4]. The archive summaries list only yearly-billed prices, so they do not confirm the article's claim.

A smaller group finds the price fair

High confidence · 21 records, 21 first-hand · June 2021 to September 2026 · 13 of 16 dated records in the last 12 months

Small-business G2 reviewers describe the pricing as "pretty affordable" or excellent for what they get [115, 116]. One G2 reviewer finds it acceptable because few fees are attached [117]. A Capterra reviewer says "It's absolutely worth the cost." [118]. The praise comes mainly from small stores with simple needs.

Some merchants report charges after canceling

High confidence · 24 records, 24 first-hand · March 2026 to October 2026 · 21 of 21 dated records in the last 12 months

Most of these accounts are App Store reviews. Authors say they kept being billed after canceling, including a $105 monthly charge after canceling before the due date [23, 24]. Others describe canceling as harder than signing up [119, 120]. One Capterra reviewer described a charge tied to the POS Pro add-on:

> *...after we cancelled Plus, they kept billing us for one of its features (POS PRO)*
>
> Capterra (search excerpt) · page dated March 13, 2026[100]

The pricing page says 1- or 3-year Plus subscriptions can be canceled when the term expires [4]. The pricing notes collected do not describe refunds. Clear cancellation terms are therefore an open point of contrast for rivals.

Shopify states limits on payments, regions and plans

Shopify's own pages name several limits. Shopify Payments is available only in certain countries [4]. Fraud analysis, local currencies and shipping insurance require Shopify Payments [4]. The products page says feature availability varies by plan [34]. Another page says some featured products may not be available in

all regions [121]. The pricing notes list the advanced tax platform as an add-on [4]. On Basic through Plus, marketplace syncing is free for 50 orders monthly, then costs 1% up to $99/month [4].

Taken together, a merchant outside Shopify Payments loses those features and also pays the third-party fee.

Plans and fees have shifted around the core tiers

The chart below shows the dated product and price changes found in the changelog and archived pricing pages.

Figure 4. What Shopify changed recently

October 8, 2026	Automatically generated policies[101]
October 6, 2026	Purchase order analytics[101]
October 6, 2026	Pay suppliers internationally from Balance[101]
October 5, 2026	Faster checkout, carts synced via Shop[101]
October 2, 2026	Admin supports Arabic, Urdu, Hebrew[101]
October 2, 2026	Rollouts for scheduling and testing discounts[101]
October 1, 2026	Canvas bespoke store design[101]
September 29, 2026	Shop web moved to shop.com[101]
September 28, 2026	Local delivery orders in POS[101]
September 25, 2026	Tax on return shipping fees from Oct 23, 2026[101]
September 15, 2026	New admin look[101]
October 5, 2025	Pricing: Basic $29, Grow $79, Advanced $299 per month billed yearly; Plus from $2,300/mo on a 3-year term; $1/month for first 3 months; Starter $5/mo and Retail $89/mo alternatives.[102]

From the vendor changelog and archived pricing pages (Wayback Machine).

October 2024 archive. The archived page listed Starter at $5 per month and Retail at $89 per month [114]. It also advertised Starter and Retail's $1 first month [114].

October 2025 archive. It showed Basic, Grow and Advanced at $1/month for three months after trial, and Plus from $2,300/month on a 3-year term [102].

Live pricing page. The live plans collected do not list Starter or Retail [4]. They list POS Pro at $89/location/month, billed monthly, and Agentic with no monthly subscription fee but charges on sales [4].

Changelog. It says Shopify Tax will automatically tax return shipping fees in the United States starting October 23, 2026 [101]. Product marketing should track these changes, because each one moves the all-in cost a rival compares against.

---

5 Positioning and messaging

> **Bottom line:** Shopify sells itself as one platform for selling everywhere, and customer setup praise supports its speed message [4, 96, 121]. A rival's opening lies in the distance between the all-in-one story and the paid apps, extra fees and AI-led support that some merchants describe [48, 122, 123].

Shopify sells breadth and reach, and supports its speed and cost claims with its own research

Shopify's pricing page describes it as an all-in-one commerce platform for building a store, taking payments and selling on social channels and in person from one dashboard [4]. Its home page extends this reach to AI channels, where shoppers can check out inside a chat [29].

Three performance claims sit on top of this message:

- **Checkout:** the pricing page says its checkout converts 15% better on average than other platforms [4].
- **Total cost of ownership (TCO):** its page claims up to 33% better TCO from commissioned research surveying U.S. and Canadian enterprises with $10M+ revenues [124].
- **Time to value:** another page cites EY research for the best time to value and 20% faster migration [121].

No customer review or third-party article in the evidence measures these figures, so they remain vendor claims. Shopify names solo entrepreneurs, small teams, businesses selling globally, complex enterprise brands, B2B manufacturers and wholesalers, and brick-and-mortar retailers as its customers [4, 31]. The collection found no Shopify pages written to target the reader's category directly.

Customer reports qualify three of Shopify's messages

None of the following gaps proves a claim false. Each one shows where the customer experience differs from what the message implies.

All-in-one. The core store tools are built in, but G2 reviewers say some basic features depend on paid third-party apps [4, 41, 122]. The pricing page itself lists the advanced tax platform as an add-on [4].

Total cost. The TCO page compares Shopify with Adobe, BigCommerce, Salesforce and WooCommerce on platform, implementation and operating costs [124]. One article warns that introductory pricing understates ongoing costs: subscriptions, apps and processing fees can build a much larger monthly bill [123]. The TCO research does not address the monthly bill a small store pays, and the article describes that bill.

Support. The pricing page lists priority 24/7 phone support on Plus, and its comparison table lists live chat, not phone, for Basic [4]. App Store authors describe a chatbot that loops and a human who is hard to reach [6, 48]. Chat that is available around the clock can still be AI-led, so the gap lies between availability and resolution (see Where customers struggle with Shopify). One App Store author described the problem this way:

> *It's incredibly difficult to reach a human being for help.*
>
> Apple App Store · rated 1 of 5 · August 4, 2026[48]

Speed. One claim holds up. The time-to-value message matches customer reports, with G2 reviewers describing setup as simple and fast [95, 96, 121]. A rival should concede this point in sales conversations instead of disputing it.

Shopify is compared with both hosted builders and self-managed stacks

High confidence · 31 records, 18 first-hand · July 2024 to October 2026 · 26 of 29 dated records in the last 12 months

In collected 'chosen over' records, WooCommerce leads, followed by BigCommerce and Wix, then WordPress, then Square and Squarespace [3, 12, 125, 126]. The comparisons lean critical: two App Store reviewers advise other sellers to try Square or Etsy, and one is considering a move to WordPress [127, 128].

Shopify compares well against WooCommerce on managed hosting and on how smoothly apps integrate [13, 129, 130]. It compares less well against WordPress on cost and data ownership [126, 131]. One web source calls Shopify's SEO options average next to Wix [132]. One article finds its templates less customizable than Squarespace's [133]. One third-party article says BigCommerce builds in features that Shopify handles through apps and charges no gateway transaction fees [3]. Several records show real moves toward Shopify, from WooCommerce, BigCommerce, Wix and Squarespace [12, 82, 125, 134].

These comparisons suggest two separate attack angles. A self-hosted rival competes on ownership and recurring cost. A hosted rival competes on built-in features and fees.

Departures are too few to show where customers go

Moderate confidence · 8 records, 2 first-hand · March 2022 to August 2026 · 6 of 8 dated records in the last 12 months

The evidence holds too few real switches away from Shopify to show where departing customers go. One App Store author canceled and moved to an unnamed free app after failing to set up a store [135]. Another deactivated their store over payment processing and strict rules without naming a destination [136]. The remaining records come from a search excerpt on moving to WooCommerce and from two articles by competing vendors, which attribute departures to control, alleged undisclosed fees and app costs [137-139]. Search summaries of Reddit threads mention a move to ikas and larger stores moving to BigCommerce over API limits [140, 141]. These are summaries rather than first-hand accounts, so they add context but no proof.

Customer words worth reusing

The following customer phrases express what merchants fear and what they value:

- On stacking costs: "My tech stack was costing more than my Shopify plan." [1]
- On what a hosted platform removes: "it smoothly replaces Woocommerce which didn't scale well and required backend management" [12]
- On reliability under load: "During high-traffic product launches and seasonal sales peaks, the checkout system remains completely flawless with zero latency." [142]

The first quote supports a rival's cost message. The other two describe value that a rival must match before it can win the deal.

6 Battlecard: competing with Shopify

Use this card when a prospect runs Shopify today or is weighing it against you. The evidence behind each line sits in the earlier sections.

Shopify

Battlecard · evidence collected October 9, 2026

HOW TO RECOGNIZE SHOPIFY IN A DEAL

- The buyer mentions Sidekick, the AI assistant built into the Shopify admin, or Canvas, its store design workspace [29, 101].
- The buyer mentions Shopify Payments, Liquid (Shopify's template language) or the Shopify App Store [4, 28, 29, 143].
- The buyer pays for a Basic or Grow plan, at $39 or $105 per month billed monthly, plus app subscriptions [1, 4].

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE BUYER

1. How many paid apps run your store today, and what do they add to the plan price each month?
   - App and add-on costs lead the price complaints, and one author's app stack cost more than the plan [1, 105].
2. Which payment processor will you use, and have you priced Shopify's extra fee on outside gateways?
   - The pricing page lists third-party transaction fees of 2% on Basic, 1% on Grow and 0.6% on Advanced [4].
3. If a payout is held or billing continues after you cancel, how would you reach a person?
   - App Store reviewers report payout waits of five or about seven business days and charges continuing after cancellation [7, 21, 23, 24].

WHAT THEY SAY, AND WHAT TO ANSWER

What Shopify fans say	Honest answer
Some users report a day's setup without developers [9, 78].	Acknowledge those experiences, then ask what the monthly bill becomes if paid apps are added [105, 106].
One article says support is available around the clock by phone, chat and email [143].	The pricing page lists priority 24/7 phone support on Plus, while App Store reviewers describe chatbot loops and trouble reaching a human [4, 6, 48].
The pricing is fair for the functionality and support [144].	Outside payment processors carry a 2% third-party transaction fee on Basic, falling to 0.2% on Plus [4].

WHERE YOU WIN

- All-in cost: reviewers say Shopify's bill climbs as paid apps stack up, which is a cost angle for alternatives with built-in features [1, 105].
- Payment choice: merchants using outside processors pay an extra transaction fee, 2% on Basic per the pricing page [4, 5].
- Trust after launch: if you offer reachable human help, contrast it with reported chatbot loops and difficulty escalating payout questions [6, 7].

WHERE SHOPIFY WINS

- One non-technical owner describes building a professional-looking store in one day without technical knowledge [9].
- Shopify hosts the store, and reviewers who left WooCommerce cite escaping backend management and hosting work [12, 14].
- Its site lists 21,000+ apps, while one article says Squarespace offers a few dozen third-party apps [15, 29].

WALK AWAY WHEN

- A non-technical seller may mainly want a simple setup; one G2 reviewer without coding experience said it did not require a complicated setup [10].

7 Recommended actions

The proposed moves focus on costs and service failures that some merchants describe after launching on Shopify. They also concede the launch itself, where Shopify is strong. Paid apps and outside-gateway fees are the largest negative price themes in collected records, at 58 and 53 records respectively (see Product and pricing) [2, 5]. Examples of complaints about support, payout delays and billing after cancellation come from first-hand App Store reviews, which are self-selected accounts rather than independently verified findings [6, 7, 23]. Customization limits form the largest complaint theme in this collection, but the supplied statistics do not establish dealbreaker status. That theme draws on third-party articles and on G2 reviewers who still rate the product well, so it justifies an investigation before any build [27, 28].

The ranking below puts cost transparency first because app costs and transaction fees are the largest negative price themes. Support and payout terms follow because they address trust failures rather than features. Setup parity ranks lower as a proposed priority: Shopify earns setup praise, but comparative costs and performance remain unverified.

#	Action	Owner	When	Why (the finding)	How to tell it worked
1	Publish an all-in cost comparison for a typical small store that counts paid apps and transaction fees.	product marketing	30 days	App and add-on costs (58 records) and third-party gateway and transaction fees (53 records) are the two largest negative price themes [1, 4, 5].	Sales uses the comparison in deals against Shopify, and win rate in those deals rises.
2	Make a human support agent reachable on every plan, and state the route in sales material.	executive team	90 days	Complaints about AI support loops (29 records) and slow or unhelpful support (35 records) recur, and the examples we read are first-hand App Store reviews [6, 48, 61].	Tickets reach a person within a stated time, and lost-deal notes cite support less often.
3	Publish plain payout timing and cancellation terms before a merchant signs up.	founder	30 days	Held payouts and account lockouts (29 records) and billing after cancellation (24 records) recur, and the examples we read are first-hand App Store reviews [7, 21, 23, 24].	Prospects raise fewer payout and cancellation questions in late-stage calls.
4	Build guided setup that gets a non-technical owner to a live store within one day.	product	180 days	Ease of use (50 records) and fast setup (35 records) are broad Shopify strengths, and one author built a professional-looking store in one day [9, 10, 84].	Median time from signup to live store falls, and trial conversion among non-technical sign-ups rises.
5	Interview prospects who need more control over checkout and customization before committing roadmap work.	product	90 days	Customization limits are the largest complaint theme (72 records), and a fully customizable checkout is listed only on Plus [4, 36, 51].	A written go or no-go decision exists, backed by prospect interviews.

What would change these recommendations

- If win-loss interviews show that lost deals turn on launch speed or app breadth rather than monthly cost, move action 1 below action 4.
- If your own support data shows that prospects rarely ask how to reach a person, keep the human route but drop it from the lead sales message.
- If later App Store collections show far fewer complaints about held payouts and post-cancellation billing, treat action 3 as routine policy hygiene instead of a competitive message.
- If time-to-live data shows your setup already delivers a one-day launch for non-technical owners, move the action 4 budget to action 2.
- If interviews show mid-market prospects rule Shopify out because of checkout limits, promote action 5 to a funded roadmap item.

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8 What to watch

> **Bottom line:** Shopify's recent releases point toward AI-led store building and selling, and toward larger B2B and enterprise merchants. Its fee rules need the closest watch, because a small change there alters any all-in cost comparison your company publishes.

Shopify builds more of the store and the sale through AI

High confidence · 11 records, 11 first-hand · May 2026 to September 2026 · 11 of 11 dated records in the last 12 months

The praise has limits. One G2 reviewer says the "air chat" does not always do what is asked [40]. A LinkedIn post notes that Shopify's own notes list app blocks, Markets and translations as unsupported in Canvas for now [56].

- **Signal:** Canvas gains those missing features, or Sidekick or Agentic gains usage limits or paid tiers.
- **Your response:** Test your onboarding against Canvas and Sidekick, and show in demos where AI building stops and manual work begins.
- **Owner:** Product, with a quarterly changelog review.

Shopify widens the fees around the plan price

Shopify's fee structure already extends past the subscription. For Basic, Grow, Advanced and Plus, the pricing page lists 50 free synced marketplace orders monthly, then 1% capped at $99/month [4]. One third-party page says orders paid with store credit or gift cards can be charged third-party transaction fees on that amount [145]. Another page says Shopify publishes no percentage or threshold for the variable Plus fee [112].

- **Signal:** New fee lines on the pricing page, or changes to the third-party transaction fee percentages.
- **Your response:** Update your total-cost comparison in the same month (see Recommended actions).
- **Owner:** Product marketing, with a monthly check of the pricing page and changelog.

Shopify pushes upmarket into B2B and enterprise

Shopify is building for larger and wholesale merchants. Its B2B page describes catalogs assigned to specific buyers [31]. The changelog added purchase order analytics and international supplier payments on October 6, 2026 [101]. The pricing page promotes a Plus trial and lists up to nine free expansion stores for Plus [4]. Its compare pages make vendor-commissioned total cost of ownership and time-to-value claims aimed at enterprise buyers [121, 124].

- **Signal:** The cap of three B2B catalogs on Basic, Grow and Advanced rises, or new compare pages appear.
- **Your response:** If you sell to mid-market or B2B buyers, prepare answers to the cost claims using your own customer cost data, because the evidence does not test these claims.
- **Owner:** Product marketing and sales leadership, with a quarterly check of the compare pages.

A Company fact sheet

Shopify

Pricing model: Tiered monthly subscription (Basic, Grow, Advanced, Plus) with a yearly-pay discount, plus card-processing rates, a POS Pro add-on and a $0/mo Agentic plan. **Free option:** Free 3-day trial, no credit card required; then $1/month for 3 months on most plans.[4]

Pricing notes

- Trial then $1/month for first 3 months, then standard monthly pricing; no credit card for trial[4]
- No setup fees; third-party transaction fees apply when not using Shopify Payments[4]
- Plus subscriptions on 1- or 3-year terms can be cancelled at term expiry[4]
- Marketplace synced orders: 50 free per month, then 1% up to $99/mo[4]
- Advanced tax platform and 3rd-party calculated shipping rates (Basic/Grow) are add-ons[4]

Who it says it is for

- Solo entrepreneurs
- Small teams
- Global-reach businesses
- Complex businesses and enterprise brands
- Manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors (B2B)
- Brick-and-mortar retailers

What it claims

- Checkout converts better than other platforms[4]
- All-in-one commerce platform[4]
- Sell everywhere including AI channels[29]
- Fastest time to value[121]

Limits it admits

- Shopify Payments availability and features vary by country[4]
- Fraud analysis, local currencies, and shipping insurance require Shopify Payments[4]
- Shopify does not decline orders on merchants' behalf; acceptance rate varies by store[146]
- Feature availability varies by plan[34]
- Some products not available in all regions[121]

What it says about competitors

- **Competing commerce platforms (TCO):** Shopify has better total cost of ownership per commissioned research[124]
- **Adobe, BigCommerce, Salesforce, WooCommerce:** Competitor costs are higher in key TCO categories[124]
- **Other platforms (migration):** Migration to Shopify is faster per EY research[121]

Recent changes

- **October 8, 2026:** Automatically generated policies[101]
- **October 6, 2026:** Purchase order analytics[101]
- **October 6, 2026:** Pay suppliers internationally from Balance[101]
- **October 5, 2026:** Faster checkout, carts synced via Shop[101]
- **October 2, 2026:** Admin supports Arabic, Urdu, Hebrew[101]
- **October 2, 2026:** Rollouts for scheduling and testing discounts[101]
- **October 1, 2026:** Canvas bespoke store design[101]
- **September 29, 2026:** Shop web moved to shop.com[101]
- **September 28, 2026:** Local delivery orders in POS[101]
- **September 25, 2026:** Tax on return shipping fees from Oct 23, 2026[101]
- **September 15, 2026:** New admin look[101]

B What this evidence does not establish

This evidence shows what merchants and writers say about Shopify. It does not measure the market, and several of its signals point in opposite directions.

- **Market share, churn and revenue impact are out of reach.** The collection cannot show how many merchants use Shopify, leave it, or lose money on it. Theme counts measure how often a topic appears among the 576 relevant records, not how many merchants experience it. One person can also appear in several records.
- **The sample leans toward strong reactions.** Several of the sharpest complaint themes come mainly from Apple App Store reviews. Examples include a held-payout review, an AI-loop support review and a fraud-loss review [6, 7, 147]. App Store reviews are self-selected, and 47% of the 100 G2 reviews collected were incentivized, which can inflate praise.
- **Switching and segment evidence is thin.** The theme on leftover cost, support or rules holds 8 records, and the switching tally names only one destination, an unnamed free app [135]. Only 5 of the 100 G2 reviews come from enterprise companies, which is too few to judge that segment.

- **Some advantages lack independent validation here.** In this collection, Shopify pages claim 15% better checkout conversion and 33% better total cost of ownership on average, plus fastest time to value; these claims are not independently verified here [4, 121, 124]. The status page and job boards returned no records, so uptime and hiring direction are unmeasured. The GitHub and Stack Exchange records collected were not relevant.
- **Ease of use and support draw mixed evidence.** On ease of use, 50 records praise the product while 28 call it confusing [18, 94]. On support, 24 records praise it while 35 describe slow or unhelpful help [49, 61].
- **Basic's reported price rise is unverified here.** One article claims an increase; current cards show $29/month annually or $39/month monthly [4, 113]. The archived pricing pages show Basic at $29 per month billed yearly in October 2024 and October 2025, which matches the live annual card. The archives therefore do not confirm the claim [4, 102, 114].
- **The Plus variable-fee threshold is unclear.** One page puts the threshold at about $800,000 in monthly sales, and another puts it at roughly $1 million [148, 149]. A third page says Shopify publishes no threshold for this fee [112].

C How this report was made

Evidence was collected on October 9, 2026 from public pages only: the vendors' own websites and archived pricing pages, review sites, forums, search engine results, and news. No accounts or logins were used, robots.txt rules were followed, and requests to each site were spaced out. Reddit was reached only through search engines, and Trustpilot only as short excerpts returned by search. Reviewer names and handles were removed.

Every record was read by a language model that recorded each distinct statement about the product (a complaint, praise, a price reaction, a switch), with a verbatim quote and the passage that supports it. Code compared each quote and passage with the record, ignoring differences in spacing and quotation-mark style, and dropped any that did not match. Statements were grouped into themes, a second check removed statements that did not fit their theme, and code counted distinct records per theme, per source, per month and per product area. The counts, dates and prices given to the writer come from that code; the writer's numbers were then compared with those values.

Confidence levels follow fixed rules. High: at least 8 records from at least 2 source types, including at least 5 full first-hand reviews or posts. Moderate: at least 3 records. Low: fewer than 3. A pattern with 1 or 2 records is called a one-off signal.

The report was planned and written by Anthropic's Claude Opus. Each cited sentence was then checked against the passages behind its citations by a model from a different company (OpenAI's GPT), which also compared absences, comparisons and recommendations with the vendors' own pages. Code flagged numbers that do not appear in the computed values and quotes that do not appear in the cited record. These checks reduce errors; they do not guarantee that every sentence is free of them. Of 441 sentences and table rows, 52 were flagged and corrected, and 1 that could not be supported were removed.

Shopify: 927 records collected, 576 relevant, 426 of them first-hand records written by customers or users (one person can appear in more than one record). 90% of relevant records carry a date, and 93% of the dated ones are from the last 24 months.

What was collected, by source

- Shopify: site pages: 23 records
- Shopify: pricing history (Wayback): 2 records
- Shopify: search (Claude and OpenAI indexes): 450 records
- Shopify: Exa (page text and Trustpilot highlights): 66 records
- Shopify: G2 reviews (Bright Data): 100 records
- Shopify: Hacker News: 200 records
- Shopify: Stack Exchange: 73 records
- Shopify: GitHub: 50 records
- Shopify: App Store: 250 records
- 6 other searches or sources returned no records.

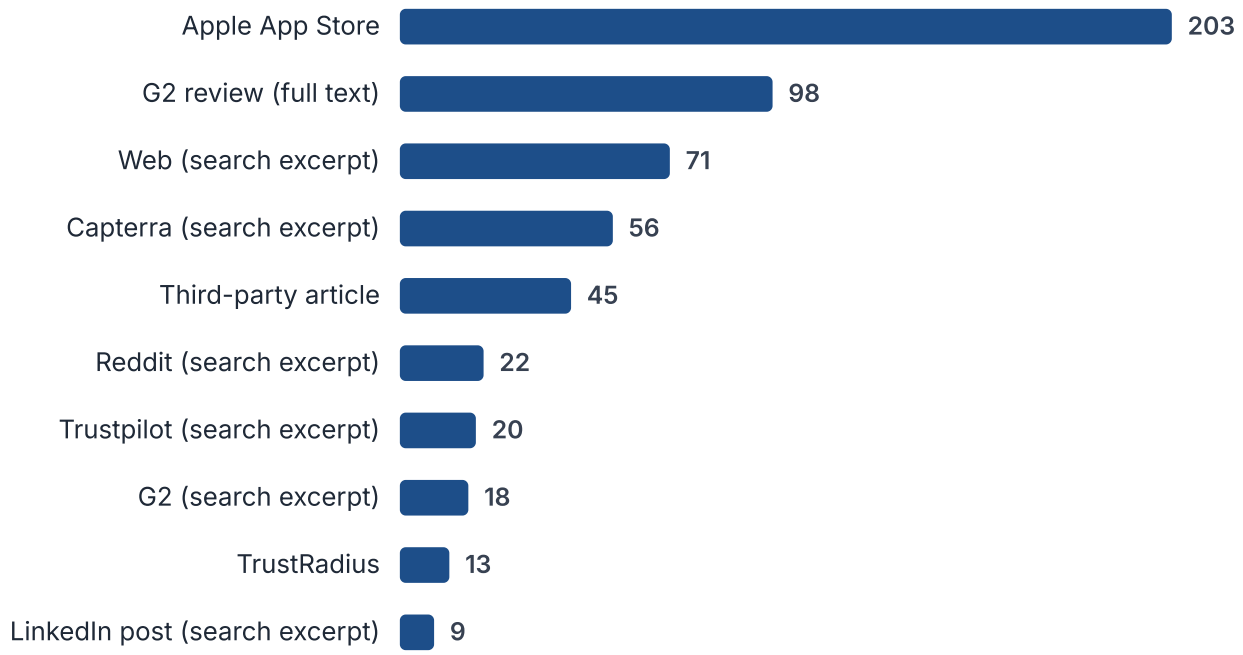
Evidence inventory

Product	Source	Collected	Relevant	Dates of relevant records	Kind
Shopify	Apple App Store	250	203	February 2026 to October 2026	full review
Shopify	G2 review (full text)	100	98	April 2026 to October 2026	full review
Shopify	Web (search excerpt)	105	71	January 2023 to October 2026	search excerpt
Shopify	Capterra (search excerpt)	70	56	August 2025 to September 2026	search excerpt
Shopify	Third-party article	61	45	April 2023 to October 2026	article
Shopify	Reddit (search excerpt)	109	22	June 2021 to September 2026	search summary
Shopify	Trustpilot (search excerpt)	28	20	April 2021 to October 2026	search excerpt

Product	Source	Collected	Relevant	Dates of relevant records	Kind
Shopify	G2 (search excerpt)	27	18	July 2020 to October 2024	search excerpt
Shopify	LinkedIn post (search excerpt)	12	9	July 2019 to October 2026	search excerpt
Shopify	TrustRadius	11	8	February 2017 to June 2025	search excerpt
Shopify	PeerSpot	7	5	March 2026	search excerpt
Shopify	TrustRadius	5	5	February 2019 to October 2025	discussion post
Shopify	LinkedIn post	5	5	March 2026 to August 2026	discussion post
Shopify	Software Advice	4	4	May 2026 to October 2026	discussion post
Shopify	Capterra	2	2	September 2026	discussion post
Shopify	Quora	2	2	undated	discussion post
Shopify	Product Hunt	2	1	June 2026	search excerpt
Shopify	GetApp	1	1	September 2026	discussion post
Shopify	Product Hunt	1	1	undated	discussion post
Shopify	Stack Exchange	73	0	undated	discussion post
Shopify	GitHub	50	0	undated	discussion post

Product	Source	Collected	Relevant	Dates of relevant records	Kind
Shopify	Social media post	1	0	undated	discussion post
Shopify	Hacker News	1	0	undated	discussion post
Both	Vendor websites and archives	25	-	Read on the dates shown in the sources, or archived	vendor page

Figure 5. Where the evidence about Shopify comes from



Relevant records by source. Base: 576 relevant records about Shopify.

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Fieldread

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