

CHECKLIST



**How to Know If Your
Ecommerce Brand Is Ready
for a Physical Store**

The background image shows the interior of a bakery. At the top, a sign reads "FRESH BUNS". Below it, on the left, is a sign that says "START HERE" and "So how does it work? It's EASY!". In the center, a sign lists "Hiring" with roles "-Baker", "-Barista", and "-Cakes". To the right of the hiring sign is a box labeled "Matcha Dream" with an illustration of a matcha drink. Further right is a box labeled "Rainbow Unicorn" with an illustration of a unicorn cake. A person is visible on the left side of the image, and another person is partially visible on the right. The floor is made of light-colored tiles.

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BUSINESS VALUES & VISION

YES

NO

1. Align Physical Space with Brand Identity:

Does the design, ambiance, and overall feel of the physical store reflect your brand's values, identity and vision?

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2. Store as an Extension of Purpose:

How will your store embody the core purpose of your business (e.g., community-driven, eco-conscious, innovation-focused)?

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3. Sustainable Materials:

Will your store design use sustainable, ethical materials that reflect your commitment to ESG principles?

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4. Reflection of Values in Service:

Are your employees trained to deliver a customer experience that reflects your brand's values, like inclusivity or superior service?

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ROAD MAP TO PHYSICAL EXPANSION

YES

NO

5. Purpose-Driven Objectives:

Have you clearly defined the purpose for moving into physical retail, and how will it align with long-term business goals?

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6. Detailed Project Plan:

Do you have a step-by-step project plan for every phase, from property search and lease negotiations to store opening?

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7. Resource Allocation:

Have you outlined how to allocate financial, human, and operational resources for the store opening?

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8. Expansion Strategy:

Is the opening part of a larger strategy that will scale the brand across more locations, or is it a one-off experiment?

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COMPETITOR & MARKET ACTIVITY

YES

NO

9. Competitor Physical Presence:

Have you analysed which competitors have a physical presence and how successful their transitions have been?

☐☐**10. Market Gap Identification:**

Can your store fill an untapped gap in the market that competitors have not yet addressed?

☐☐**11. Competitive Advantage in Store:**

What will your store offer that makes it distinct from competitors – customer experience, product range, or community engagement?

☐☐**12. Benchmarking Store Performance:**

Have you benchmarked competitor performance (foot traffic, in-store purchases) to set realistic KPIs for your own store?

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LOCATION & CORE VALUES

YES

NO

13. Location Alignment with Brand Values:

Does your chosen store location reflect your brand values (e.g., community involvement, sustainability, accessibility)?

☐☐**14. Community Fit:**

Is the store location in a neighborhood that matches the demographics and psychographics of your target customer base?

☐☐**15. Local Partnerships:**

Will your store be able to partner with local businesses, suppliers, or artisans to foster a sense of community?

☐☐**16. Two-Way Mutual Benefit with Landlord:**

Is there a mutual benefit between you and your landlord? Will the lease agreement allow you to fully execute your core values, such as flexibility in store design, event hosting rights, ESG operational alignment like tapping into renewable energy, responsible water management and tenancy deficit/refit repurposed or reusable?

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CUSTOMER JOURNEY CONSIDERATIONS

YES NO

17. Seamless Omni-Channel Experience:

Have you planned how to integrate your online and in-store shopping experiences for consistency (e.g., inventory tracking, loyalty programs)

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18. Personalised In-Store Experience:

Can you leverage customer data to provide a personalised experience in-store that complements your online strategy?

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19. Click-and-Collect:

Do you offer click-and-collect services for a seamless transition between digital and physical retail?

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20. Real-Time Inventory Integration:

Is your physical store equipped with technology that syncs with your online inventory for an accurate shopping experience?

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21. Shopper Flow:

PERSONALISED

Have you considered how customers will navigate through your store, ensuring the layout supports smooth foot traffic and enhances the overall experience?

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MARKETING STRATEGY

YES NO

22. Consistent Brand Messaging:

Does your marketing strategy maintain consistent messaging across both digital and physical platforms, reinforcing your brand identity?

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23. Store Launch Campaign:

Have you developed a multi-channel marketing campaign to create excitement around your store opening?

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24. Targeted Local Marketing:

Are you leveraging local SEO, Google My Business, and targeted ads to attract foot traffic to the store?

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25. Influencer & Media Partnerships:

Have you planned collaborations with local influencers or media to maximise exposure?

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26. Post-Launch Marketing:

What is your long-term marketing strategy to keep customers engaged after the initial hype?

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OPENING EVENT & LAUNCH STRATEGY

YES

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27. Grand Opening Event Plan:

Do you have a clear plan for a grand opening event? Will there be special offers, product exclusives, or in-store demonstrations?

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28. VIP or Influencer Guests:

Will you invite key influencers, community leaders, or brand ambassadors to drive word-of-mouth about the opening?

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29. Local Community Involvement:

Can you incorporate a charitable or community aspect into the launch and partner with a value aligned community/charity partner?

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30. Customer Follow-Up After Opening:

How will you engage customers after the grand opening – email campaigns, loyalty programs, or social media interactions?

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RESOURCING & STAFFING

YES

NO

31. Employee Training Focused on Values:

Is your training program designed to not only teach operational skills but also deeply embed your brand's core values, such as curiosity and integrity, from day one?

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32. Involving Staff in the Values Journey:

Are your employees actively involved in the journey of creating a values-driven storefront? Do they understand how their roles contribute to the overall vision of the business?

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33. Values-Led Customer Service:

Are your employees trained to be curiosity-led in customer service, proactively seeking to understand and meet customer needs while maintaining the integrity of your brand's standards?

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34. Creating a Shared Vision:

Do your staff feel like they are part of a bigger vision, and are they encouraged to take ownership of the store's success through shared values and open communication?

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35. Hiring Aligned with Values:

Are you hiring staff who naturally align with your values of curiosity, integrity, and customer-first mentality?

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36. Staff Resourcing:

Do you have enough staff to handle different aspects of the business (cashier, inventory, customer support) during peak hours?

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37. Store Management:

Will you appoint a store manager, and how will they manage the day-to-day operations of the store?

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FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

YES

NO

35. Budget for Store Design and Fit-Out:

Have you created a detailed budget for the store's design, including the cost of fixtures, lighting, displays, and technology?

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36. Ongoing Operational Costs:

Have you factored in the monthly operating costs of rent, utilities, insurance, and staffing before COGS?

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37. Ongoing Marketing Investment:

Are you planning for continuous marketing efforts post-launch to sustain customer interest, including seasonal campaigns, loyalty programs, and local advertising?

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38. Post-Opening Adjustments:

Do you have a budget allocated for ongoing store adjustments and rejigging? This could include reconfiguring the layout to address efficiency gaps or enhance customer flow based on real-world experience.

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39. Financial Buffer for Unexpected Costs:

Do you have a contingency plan or financial buffer to cover unexpected expenses that may arise during or after the store launch?

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40. ROI Forecasting:

Have you created a clear forecast for how long it will take to recoup your investment, including sales targets and projected foot traffic?

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After the launch of your store, it is important to have a plan in place to sustain customer interest and continue driving sales. This will require ongoing marketing efforts, such as seasonal campaigns, loyalty programs, and local advertising.

It is also crucial to allocate a budget for post-opening adjustments. As you begin operating your store, you may realise there are efficiency gaps or areas that could be improved for better customer flow. It is essential to address these issues quickly and make necessary changes to ensure a successful operation.

In addition, it is vital to have a financial buffer in case of unexpected costs. Despite thorough planning and preparation, there may be unforeseen expenses that arise during or after the store launch. Having a contingency plan in place can help mitigate financial uncertainty and global external pressures. This is often the time we see businesses plateau or indeed move backwards after the initial opening hype.

LONG-TERM STRATEGY

YES

NO

39. Potential for Growth:

Is the store's size and location flexible enough to allow for growth, such as adding more product lines, in-store experiences, or pop-up events?

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40. Flexibility for Market Changes:

Does your lease agreement and store layout provide enough flexibility to adapt to changes in the market, such as shifting customer behaviors or new competition?

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How Did You Do?

You've completed the Checklist! Here's a quick look at how you scored:

YES

NO

Out of a total of 40 checklist items, this gives you a great starting point to assess if your ecommerce brand is ready for a physical store.

For any areas where you answered "No," take the time to refine those aspects of your business to ensure a smooth transition from online to offline.

Remember, every improvement brings you closer to confidently launching your physical store.

Opening a brick-and-mortar location takes careful planning. Stay consistent, and keep building on your success.