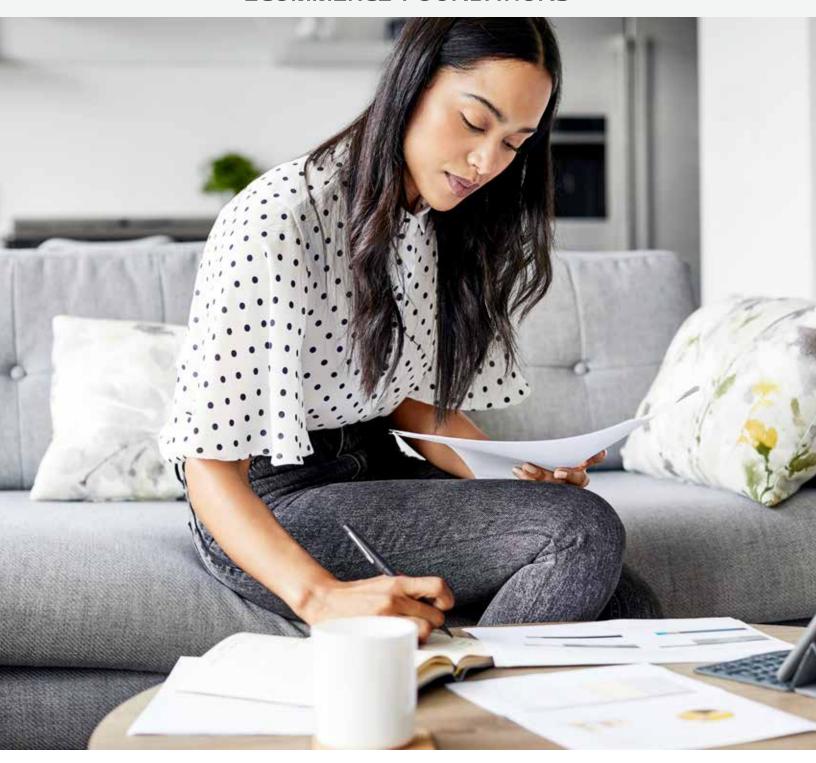# THE NEW SCHOOL
PARSONS

ECOMMERCE FOUNDATIONS

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Consumers spent $861.12 billion online with U.S. merchants, with online spending representing about 21% of total retail sales in 2020. Ecommerce has grown into an indispensable part of doing business across industries, creating new markets and upending traditional retail models. Learn the fundamentals of selling direct to consumer (DTC), planning a digital strategy, exploring key trends shaping the future of online customer experience, and gain an understanding of how ecommerce brands are built and launched.

This online course is organized to take the student through the process of designing a seamless, ecommerce enterprise. We will explore the process of building an e-tail experience with a focus on marketing and entrepreneurship, while providing insights and perspectives on the digital tools available from a wide variety of insiders. Parsons faculty and industry experts provide compelling video lessons, while specialists from Shopify and other insiders throughout the industry offer insight and share their career trajectories to help students gain key learnings for their own ecommerce brands.

A sequence of activities and assignments builds students' skills and understanding of the ecommerce market from every angle, including creating a market strategy, differentiating your offering, building a digital brand, designing an efficient customer journey, optimizing SEO tools and paid media, utilizing data and KPI reporting, understanding distribution and logistics, and more. Students will ultimately understand how to design an ecommerce experience geared towards attracting customers and collaborating with decision-makers throughout the field.

FIVE COURSE MODULES:

- STARTING UP AND STRATEGY
- E-TAIL DESIGN
- CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
- BRAND IDENTITY & MARKETING
- BACK END SERVICES & REPORTING

Each course module is composed of shorter video lessons that you complete at your own pace. Assignments and hands-on projects reinforce key knowledge and help build career skills. Students earn a non-credit Certificate of Completion from Parsons upon successfully finishing the program.

STUDENT BENEFITS:

1. Certificate of completion (non-credit) from Parsons
2. Learn directly from leading academic and industry experts
3. Real industry scenario assignments
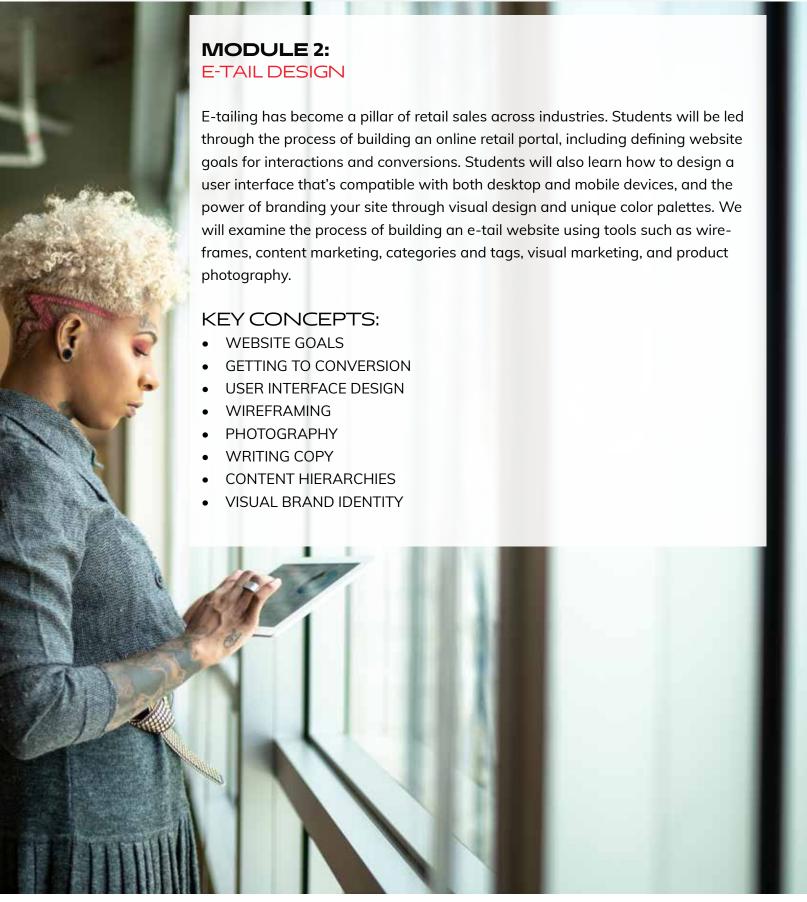4. 100% online and self-paced

MODULE 1:
STARTING UP & STRATEGY

Fundamental to everything is an understanding of the market you're entering as an up-and-coming ecommerce brand. Students will begin by creating a situational analysis of the market they're looking to enter, including exploring industry competition, customers, the wider marketplace, and more. They will find their "secret sauce" by defining what differentiates their product or service in the market. Students will learn about the range of business and revenue models, and strategize how they'll approach market spending. They will also learn how to manage overhead costs to achieve a good ROI, and how to create a buying plan and set sell-through goals. Finally, this module will give an overview of the technological tools available to ecommerce brands, including platforms like Shopify, legacy systems, custom designs, and open source solutions.

KEY CONCEPTS:
- SITUATIONAL AND COMPETITIVE ANALYSES
- POINT OF DIFFERENCE (POD) & POINT OF PARITY (POP) FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
- WHITE SPACES
- BRAND DNA
- ECOMMERCE STRATEGIES
- REVENUE & BUSINESS MODELS
- ECOMMERCE TECHNOLOGY AND PLATFORMS
- SHOPIFY TOOLS
- BUYING PLANS (MERCHANDISE MANAGEMENT)

MODULE 2:
E-TAIL DESIGN

E-tailing has become a pillar of retail sales across industries. Students will be led through the process of building an online retail portal, including defining website goals for interactions and conversions. Students will also learn how to design a user interface that's compatible with both desktop and mobile devices, and the power of branding your site through visual design and unique color palettes. We will examine the process of building an e-tail website using tools such as wire-frames, content marketing, categories and tags, visual marketing, and product photography.

KEY CONCEPTS:
- WEBSITE GOALS
- GETTING TO CONVERSION
- USER INTERFACE DESIGN
- WIREFRAMING
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- WRITING COPY
- CONTENT HIERARCHIES
- VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY

MODULE 3:
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

How does a customer's experience when purchasing a product on your platform impact your brand? Students will examine the user's experience by engineering a customer journey that reflects the mission and values of their brand. This includes both retail transactions and interactions like refunds, customer service, packaging, payment solutions, cart abandonment, and more. Students will also learn how to track users through tools such as net promoter scores, key driver analysis, employee satisfaction, data collection. The online experience must be designed to be as simple and effective as possible to encourage engagement and brand loyalty.

KEY CONCEPTS:
- BRAND STORYTELLING
- CHANNEL OPTIMIZATION
- CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION
- BUILDING A CUSTOMER JOURNEY
- ECOMMERCE METRICS
- CUSTOMER SERVICE
- UX DESIGN
- DATA COLLECTION AND USE

MODULE 4:
BRAND IDENTITY AND MARKETING

How do you leverage digital tools to measure marketing performance across multiple channels? How do you leverage search engine optimization (SEO), paid searches, influencers, and social media to find your ideal customer? This module will show students how they can retool their existing brand materials, such as packaging, to create engaging messaging. An understanding of fundamental marketing techniques and technologies is essential because the consumer must first discover a product before making their first purchase.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- ONLINE MARKETING STRATEGIES
- CROSS-CHANNEL PERFORMANCE TOOLS
- VIDEO AND MULTIMEDIA IMAGERY
- KEYWORDS AND HASHTAGS
- SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)
- PAID SEARCHES
- INBOUND LINKS
- INFLUENCER MARKETING
- PACKAGING DESIGN

MODULE 5:
BACK END SERVICES AND REPORTING

Students will learn the ins and outs of distribution and logistics, focusing on fulfillment tools, shipping, mass customization, and more -- elements that become more complex when doing business internationally. This module will provide students with a menu of digital solutions for measuring and tracking key metrics such as page views, and revenue reporting, as well as solutions for data privacy, such as API feeds, tender processing, third-party applications, and secure digital networks. You started with an idea -- close the loop when the customer opens their package.

KEY CONCEPTS:
- DISTRIBUTION
- FULFILLMENT
- THIRD-PARTY LOGISTICS
- PRINT-ON-DEMAND & ZERO-RISK MODELS
- SHIPPING SOLUTIONS
- BACK-END REPORTING
- DATA PRIVACY
- ANALYTICS

ENROLLMENT DETAILS

How do I apply for Ecommerce Foundations?
The application for Ecommerce Foundations is entirely online and only takes a few minutes to complete. You can apply here: http://www.yellowbrick.co/apply/?program=ecommerce

How much does the program cost?
The cost of the entire program, which includes all five course modules, related activities, and a Parsons (The New School) Certificate of Completion upon finishing, is $999. There are also installment payment plans available, starting as low as $99/month. Complete pricing will be sent to you upon acceptance into the program.

To receive your Parsons Certificate of Completion, you'll need to have all installments paid in full and have successfully completed all program requirements.

What payment methods and currencies do you accept?
We accept almost any type of credit or debit card. So if you have a Visa, MasterCard, American Express, JCB, or Discover card, we'll accept it. If you're enrolling outside the United States, tuition will be charged in your local currency at the prevailing currency exchange rate.

Is there financial aid available?
No, financial aid is not offered for Ecommerce Foundations. However, there are payment plans available, starting as low as $99/month. And Yellowbrick also offers a scholarship program. You can apply for a Yellowbrick scholarship here: https://www.yellowbrick.co/scholarship-application/

What is your cancellation policy?
You can withdraw from a course hassle-free and at no cost within 24 hours of enrollment. After 24 hours, you have up to 7 calendar days to withdraw and get a full refund, minus a $100 cancellation fee. No refunds will be issued for enrollments past 7 days.

How do I begin the program?
Once we have received your tuition payment, your spot in our program is secured. You will receive a welcome email that has your login instructions, and you can begin immediately. The program is 100% online and self-paced, so you can complete it on your schedule.

THE PROGRAM

Are there any prerequisites, age requirements, or restrictions?
Students must be at least 13 to enroll. There are no other prerequisites. All you need is a passion for ecommerce and learning.

What do I get when I complete the program?
Students who successfully complete the program will earn a Certificate of Completion in Ecommerce Foundations from Parsons. Ecommerce Foundations is a non-credit program.

How long do I have to complete the program?
With your enrollment, you will have unlimited access to the full program for one year from the date you enroll. For almost all of our students, one year is more than enough time to work through the programs and fully absorb the content.

What if I need more time?
For those that need more time to complete the program, you will have an option to pay a low monthly fee to continue your access to the program materials.

Can I download course videos or materials?
Class videos or materials are not downloadable. However, once enrolled, you will have unlimited access to all videos and materials for 12 months.

What can I expect to accomplish by the end of this course?
Ecommerce Foundations is designed for students at any stage of their academic or professional experience and with the potential for many different outcomes. In other words, what you can expect to accomplish after completing this program depends on...you!

In more general terms, our students usually identify two main takeaways after completing the program. First, they have a significantly greater understanding of how the product design industry and related careers work. Second, with the Certificate of Completion from Parsons on their resume, they differentiate themselves from the rest of the pack.

What type of people enroll in Ecommerce Foundations?

People with all levels of experience, and in all stages of their career, benefit from enrolling in Ecommerce Foundations. But you will have something in common with all of our students — a passion for creating an online retail experience and a desire to build a successful career doing what you love! Our students might already be working in the industry and looking to get ahead, or working in a different industry looking to switch careers. They might aspire to start their own e-tail business and be looking to build skills and gain valuable experience that will set them apart in a hyper-competitive market. They might be your future professional and personal network in the fashion world. They might be like you — a future leader in the industry!

Where do I find the program materials?

All program materials can be found online. You can access and review the materials whenever you like through the course login page, which you'll receive once you enroll — all you need is an internet-connected device.

Which devices can I use to watch the class videos and access other program materials?

You can access the program on your computer, tablet, or smartphone. Desktop or laptop computers tend to provide the best experience.

When and where do the classes meet?

Whenever you like — the program is entirely online, self-paced, and on-demand. That means you can study and access the program lessons whenever and wherever you can connect to the Internet.

How much time do I need to dedicate to the program?

It varies from person to person, but be prepared to work hard and to dedicate about 30-40 hours in total. Remember, you have a full year to complete the program so you can pace yourself over 12 months!

After I complete the certificate in Ecommerce Foundations, what comes next?

This certificate lays the groundwork for you to pursue your goals in whatever aspect of the design industry you feel passionate about. If you find that you want to learn even more about a specific area, Parsons offers a number of in-person and online program options.

Who is Yellowbrick and why are they involved?

Our mission at Yellowbrick is to empower the next generation of talent to find their passion and build a career doing what they love. We strive to deliver on this vision by partnering with top-tier universities and world-class global brands to provide students with unparalleled online educational experiences and inspiring career opportunities.