



System Overview

AmeriCommerce System Concepts

November 28, 2007

Purpose

The Storefront

The Administrative Console

Marketing Tools

File Management



PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to give you an introduction to the concepts, features and tools available to you in the AmeriCommerce Shopping Cart System. After reviewing this material, you should have a fairly good grasp of the capabilities of our product and how some of the major tasks of running an online store are performed. We will not be able to cover all features, but you can find additional information in our knowledge base at www.myamericommerce.com

The AmeriCommerce Shopping Cart System is divided in to two main pieces. The first piece is the **storefront** that your customer uses to browse your site, view your products, maintain their account information and make purchases. The second piece is the **administrative console** that you use to create your site's design, maintain store settings, process orders, maintain your catalog, track inventory, analyze statistics and perform electronic marketing. In addition to the general system features, you will want to also become familiar with file management techniques.

All checkout, customer account management and administrative console access occurs over a secure connection.



THE STOREFRONT

The storefront is where your customer lives when they are on your site. It consists of your home page, product pages, checkout pages, customer account pages and other general content pages.

The AmeriCommerce Store Front system uses a template theme system that allows you to easily specify duplicate content across all pages. Duplicate content usually includes things like logos, navigation and advertisements. For more information, see Theme Editor under Administrative Console section.

PAGE TYPE: HOME PAGE

Your **home page** is usually the first page a new or even existing customer will see when coming to your site. For new customers, it will be the first impression they get of your business and probably will have a major impact on whether they continue to click through your site or leave. You probably should consider having a skilled web designer aid you in your home page design and other design needs. For a reasonable rate, AmeriCommerce can also help you in this area if you so choose.

When designing your home page (and website) you need to consider where you would like to place your logo(s), various navigation links, featured products, general content and any other items. You may want to have navigation to customer account pages on the top right while having navigation to your product categories on the left. You can include a search box or small shopping cart in your header. The main content area is usually good for displaying featured products and possible some introductory information about your store.

You also need to take in to consideration visual elements such as colors, graphics and fonts. With our shopping cart program, you can setup default fonts, colors and other design settings at a global level and then over ride them at the element level too. See the Theme Designer topic for more information.

The screenshot shows a website layout for 'Mosaic Tables' with the following elements and annotations:

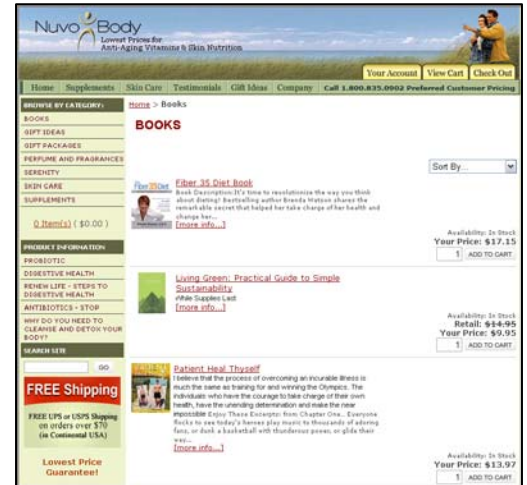
- Navigation:** ABOUT, SPECIALS, IDEAS, GUARANTEE, QUESTIONS, CONTACT
- Header:** A large banner for a 'FALL SALE' with a woman's photo and text: 'fall is the time for fun, friends, and family. Celebrate around your mosaic table. Now through Oct. 31st save up to \$250 off select mosaic tables for your kitchen, dining room, or patio.'
- Categories:** A sidebar menu on the left lists: Mosaic Tables, Accent Tables, Bistro Tables, Kitchen Tables & Patio Tables, On The Table (Tagines, Plates & Bowls), By The Table (Lighting, Pots & Planters), and Table Talk (Tips & Ideas, Articles). A 'Sign up for email news, ideas, and special offers' box is also present.
- Product Grid:**
 - Accent Tables:** 'Charming accent tables made from beautiful hand-cut Moroccan tiles' with an image of a round table.
 - Kitchen Tables:** 'Our handmade mosaic tables are perfect as kitchen tables or patio tables.' with an image of a square table.
 - Bistro Tables:** 'Table for two? Check out our creative colorful bistro tables.' with an image of a small round table.
 - On The Table:** 'Decorative tagines add an...' with an image of a tagine.
 - By The Table:** 'Light the night with these unique Moroccan lamps and lanterns' with an image of a lantern.
- Special Offers:**
 - link to content:** A callout pointing to a 'snap-in' product listing: 'On The Table Plates and bowls from \$39 - \$159'.
 - First visit to My Mosaic Table?** 'My Mosaic Table is a unique online boutique that's...'
 - Find your own mosaic style.** 'How do you choose the right look for your patio or kitchen tables?'
 - Got an idea or photo to share?** 'We love to hear from our guests. So if you have a...'
 - Free shipping on all items.** 'Even our large dining and kitchen tables are shipped at no...'

Example storefront home page with common use cases set up

PRODUCT PAGES

You will use **product pages** to display various information about your products including product name, descriptions, item number, price and other relevant information. Depending on your catalog needs, you can hide and show various pieces of information. For example, some store owners like to show a retail price and then their price with the product. If you decide not to show the retail price, you can easily hide it.

Product pages include those pages that display product list and product detailed information. They include the Category, Product Search, Manufacturer Products and Product Details pages.



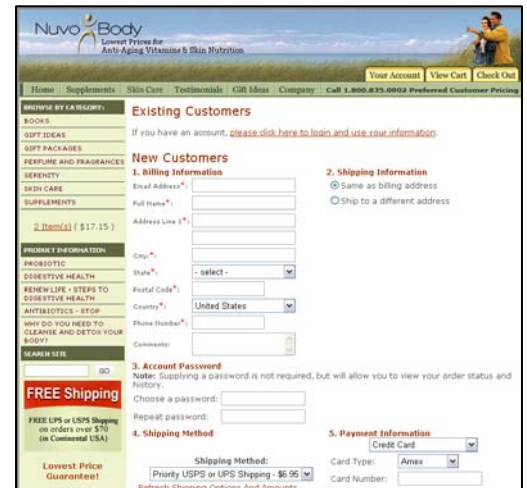
The Category page lists all products for a category you have defined

PAGE TYPE: CHECKOUT PAGES

Your customers will use the **checkout pages** to manage their cart, view orders and make purchases. They will be able to perform such tasks as add/removing items from their cart, entering new account information, entering shipping information and process purchases. The checkout pages include the Shopping Cart, One Page Checkout, Checkout Wizard, Order Details, and Receipt pages.

PAGE TYPE: ACCOUNT PAGES

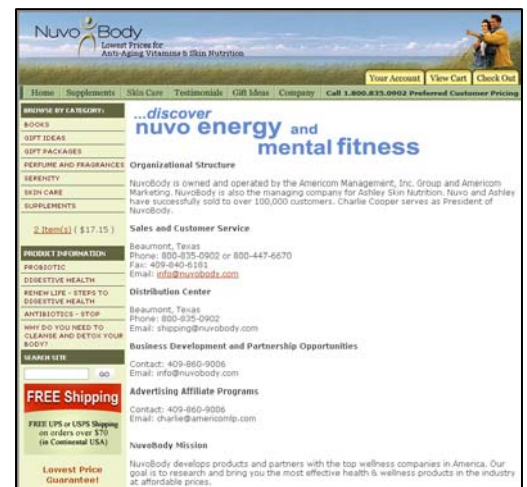
Customers will use the account pages to manage their personal information including names, email addresses, physical addresses and password. Account pages include **My Account**, **Lost Password** and **Change Password** pages.



One Page Checkout allows the customer to enter all their purchasing info in one place

PAGE TYPE: CONTENT PAGES

AmeriCommerce includes a **content management** feature that allows you to maintain static content for your site. This usually includes such pages as Contact Us, About Us, and Privacy Policy. Good use of content pages will provide a more professional appearance to your site and can increase your SEO (Search Engine Optimization) rankings.



An About Us page is a great way to give more information about your company



THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLE

The administrative console is the place where you will spend most of your time when managing your site. It is a very powerful tool for performing everything from website design to site usage analysis to catalog management. There are many features available to help you make the most of your online store. We will give you an overview of the more significant functions and feature available to you. These include Store Settings, website design through the Theme Management area, Catalog Management, Inventory Tracking, Order Processing, Shipping Configuration, Reporting/Analysis and Marketing.

LOGGING INTO THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLE

To login in to your store, type the name of one of your websites in to the address of your browser and add /store/admin.

Examples:

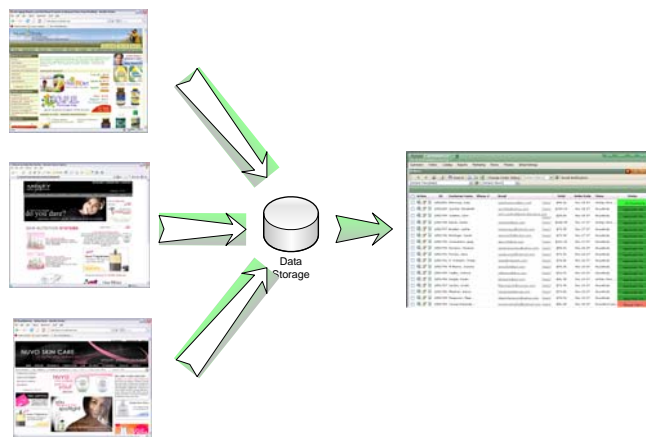
www.yoursite.com/store/admin
yoursite.americommerce.com/store/admin

The login page will be displayed and you will be taken to the main reporting page after you login. Note for those that are using the multi-storefront option, you can use any of your site domain names. For the most part, the administrative console shows the same exact information for all sites.

STORE SETTINGS

AmeriCommerce is built from the ground up with the concept of multiple storefronts. Multiple storefronts allows you to re-brand your products or even offer a separate set of products on different websites, but manage it all from the same administrative console.

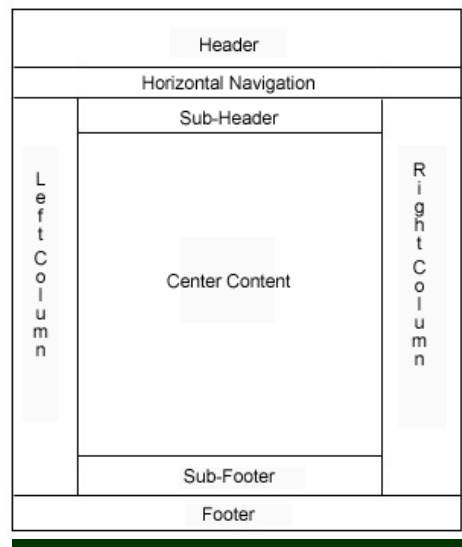
Store-Level settings can be found under the Stores menu in the administrative console. You can setup Payment Options, Shipping, Handling Options, Tax Rates, Active Catalog and other store-level options.



WEBSITE DESIGN (THEME MANAGEMENT)

AmeriCommerce uses the concept of **Themes** to allow you to easily manage and change the look and feel of your site. You can create many themes including variations on a theme by copying the theme and making changes to it. You can then assign each site to a theme or even use the same theme on multiple sites. Most of your website design will be handled through the Theme Editor and the Site Explorer. For each theme you maintain settings that will affect the look and feel of your site. This includes site settings, pages settings, Style Settings, Snap-ins and Merges.

The AmeriCommerce Shopping Cart system uses a template system that allows you to easily specify duplicate content across all pages. Duplicate content usually includes things like logos, navigation and advertisements. The page is divided in to separate areas and you are allowed to define the content for each. The defined areas are Page Header, Page Footer, Left Column, Right Column, and Center Content as shown in the graphic to the right.



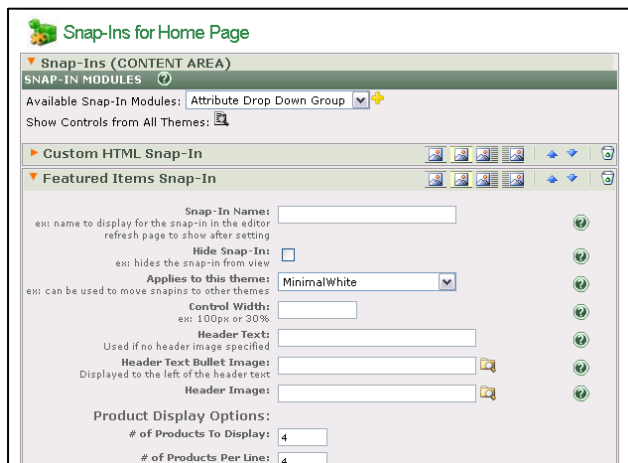
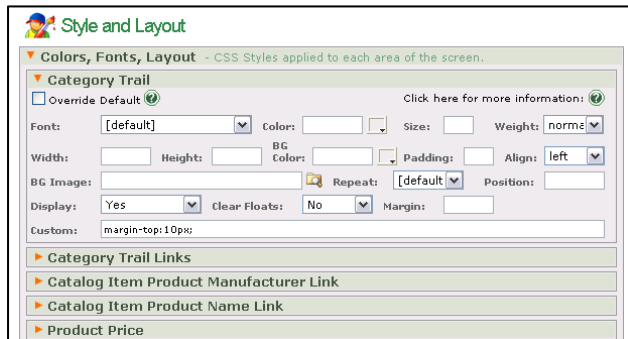
For most pages, you can turn on and off all sections except the Center Content area. You can, of course, include your own complete HTML pages with whatever content you like, but those will not include the common

areas defined above. To include content within the common page areas, you can use the content management feature to define your own static content.

Many page elements can be maintained using the **Style Editor**. The style editor is based on CSS (cascading style sheets), a very powerful web standard for providing consistent yet flexible look and feel. With the Style Editor, you can change fonts, colors, padding and other related settings.

Snap-ins are components you can add to various areas of the page such as the header, left column, just above the main content and just below the main content. You can add Snap-ins that may apply to a single page or Snap-ins that pretty much apply to all pages. Examples of some of the Snap-ins include the Featured Items, Search Box, Browse By Category and Custom HTML Snap-ins.

Site Merges are tags that can be placed in emails or in certain content areas that allow dynamic information to be added to a page. Some merges are based on data elements while others are related to various website functions. For example, in the site's header, you can include the ##LOGINLOGOUTLINK## merge to create link that will take you to the login page when a user has not logged-in and will change in to a log-out link after logging-in.



CATALOG MANAGEMENT

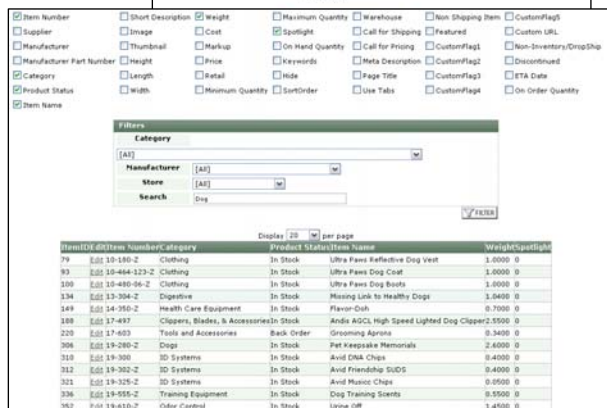
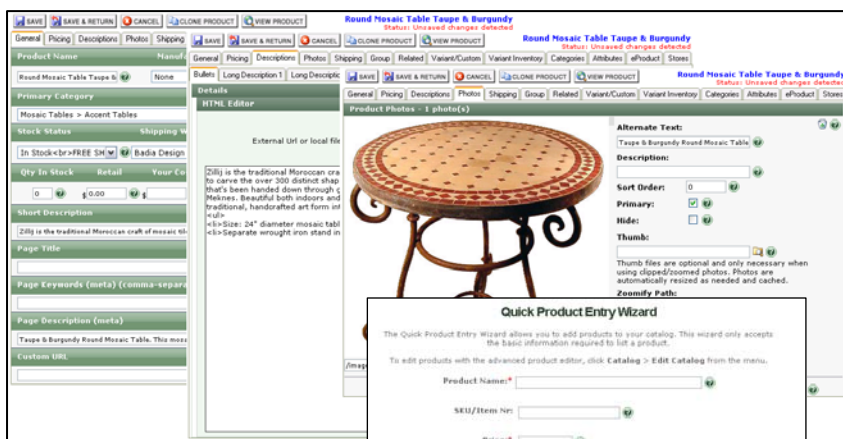
Catalog management will be one of the most important tasks you will perform when running your store. Your catalog will include all the information about your products including descriptions, categorizations, pricing and much more.

The AmeriCommerce shopping cart system includes several tools for maintaining catalog information including **Product Editor**, Category Editor, Quick Product Entry, Product Mass Editor and Imports. With a variety of options, you can optimize your catalog maintenance by using the tools that best fit your needs.

Use the **Product Editor** to allow you to see and edit all information about a given product.

Use the **Quick Product Entry** to add a new product with just the basic information needed.

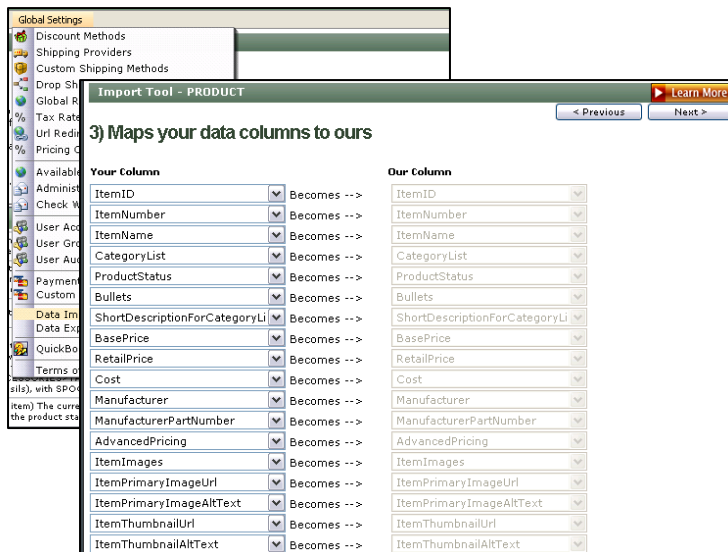
Use the **Product Mass Editor** to update similar information about several products at the same time.



IMPORTING AND EXPORTING DATA

Use the various **Import Tools** to allow you to easily manipulate a large number of products in a spreadsheet or other external application, and update the catalog in a few easy steps. For existing items you already have in AmeriCommerce, you can use the **Export Tools** to first export your data. Once you have it exported, you can make your changes, add new items if you like and then import the data. The format for the exports is pretty much the same as the imports. This allows you to more easily maintain your information.

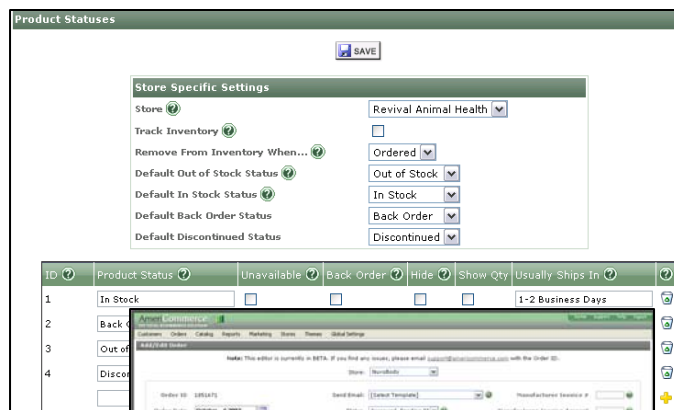
If this is the first time you are importing your items, you can download a blank template that includes all the headers. There is a link on the first page of each import. If you already have a file from possibly another system, you will need to first convert it to a CSV (comma separated values) file. You can do this either with a program such as Microsoft Excel or manually by hand. Once in the CSV format, you can use the Import Tool to map your column header names to our column header names. When a column header name in the file matches one in our list, it will automatically try to map it. If you plan to map from a given format several times, you can save a mapping file that can be referenced later.



INVENTORY TRACKING

Related to catalog management is **inventory tracking**. You can track and maintain the quantity of each product or product variation you have in stock. Stock quantities can automatically be decremented based on one of several order triggers. Triggers include Ordered, Paid and Shipped.

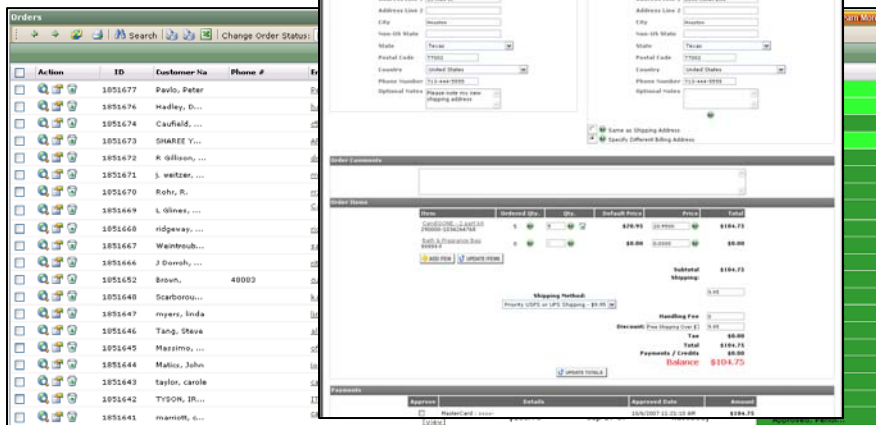
You will also want to maintain the **product status** for your items. Common product statuses include In Stock, Out of Stock, Back Ordered and Discontinued. You can custom this list to meet your needs. You can also configure each product status to have your store manipulate the handling of the product such as hiding it or making it unavailable to be added to the cart. The product statuses can be maintained on the Product Statuses page.



There are several ways to maintain the stock quantity and product status for your items. You can use the product details to maintain them individually, or you can use the Inventory Editor or Imports to do it in mass.

ORDER PROCESSING

Another very import part of running your store, is order processing. This is where you will be able to review your orders, print invoices and packing slips, process payments, enter manual orders and handle drop shipping. Order processing includes the Order Manager, Order Edit, Order Statuses Configuration and Drop Ship Manager pages.



The **Order Manager** page will display a list of your orders. You can filter the list by store, customer, status and several other criteria. You can perform operations on multiple orders at once such as printing invoices and packing slips, send email notifications and status changes.

You use the **Order Edit** screen to modify existing orders and to add new orders. You can also process payments and credits from this page.

The **Order Statuses** configuration page is for setting up the status you would like to use for processing your orders. Statuses are highly configurable and allow you great flexibility by allowing you to process orders in a way that make sense for you business. On this page, you can set the way statuses are reflected during credit card transactions, set automatic email notifications and more.

ID	Order Status	Email Notification	Open	Declined	Canceled	Shipped	Status Color	Action
1	In Processing	[NONE]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	35833	
2	Approved, Pending Shp	[NONE]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	339933	
3	Shipped	Order Shipped	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	45444	
4	Credit Declined	Payment Declined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	#3333	
6	Please Call 1-800-44	[NONE]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	#7766	
7	Cancel Order	Order Canceled	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	#7733	
8	Back Order, Please Co	[NONE]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	#8800	

DROP SHIPPING MANAGER

The **Drop Ship Manager** lists all of the orders for a particular drop shipper (or warehouse). The orders listed here will only include those orders which have an item that is associated to the current drop shipper, which can be chosen from the drop down box. In many respects, this page is similar to the order manager.

At this time, drop shipping allows e-mails to automatically be sent to the associated drop shippers when an order is placed and/or paid for, and includes relevant items. The e-mail notifications and drop shippers themselves can be configured in the Drop Shippers/Warehouse section of the administration console.

SHIPPING CONFIGURATION

There are two options for providing a list of **shipping options** to your customers. The first is to use a list of shipping methods and **live rates** provide by major shipping providers. You can pick one or more shipping providers and even pick the methods you want to provide to your customers. Included are advanced options for mark ups and disabling method per store. All you do is provide the weight for each item and maximum weight for each package. When the customer enters their address and request a shipping quote for an order, the shipping engine will estimate the number of packages including weight for each, send this information to each shipping provider and display a list of live rates to the customer for each method available in their area. You can also select various advanced features at the store and product level such as "ships separately" or "non-shipping item". AmeriCommerce supports live rates for several of the major shipping companies.

The second option for providing methods and rates to your customer is to use **custom shipping methods**. Custom shipping methods are for those who want more control over the rates provided and charged to customers or who are not necessary using one of the supported shipping companies. Each custom shipping method is entered with a set of rules for determining the rate. Rules can be based on weight, purchase price, number of items, shipping region and warehouse. Rates can be based on one of several criteria including flat, percentage and number of packages. Many of the advanced store and product level features also apply to custom shipping methods.

Note that you can use a combination of both shipping provider live rates and custom shipping methods.

REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

AmeriCommerce has a wealth of reports that are available to you with most including easy-to-read graphs. From management to marketing and ecommerce to visitor analysis, there are reports to help you analyze all aspects of your online business.

There are several summary reports to give you a big picture view. As an example, the Dashboard Summary provides the following information.



Marketing Reports can help you analyze your various campaigns to determine which ones are providing you the best returns. Some of the reports offered are Pay Per Click Analysis, Organic Analysis and Ad Code Analysis.

The **ecommerce reports** provide you with information on sales, taxes, shipping and other information related to purchases. The sales report here gives you a break down of sales by category and product.

Category	Sales	Items Sold	Num Orders
ReNew Life Cleansing & Detoxification	\$384.14	21	12
Skin Care Systems	\$239.70	2	2
H.O.P.E Formula	\$221.70	3	2
Skin Care	\$171.85	4	3
Item	Sales	Items Sold	Num Orders
Nutraceutical Toner	\$79.90	2	1
Anti-Wrinkle Firming Cream	\$69.95	1	1
Hyaluronic Serum			
ReNew Life Digestive Support			
Fiber 35 Diet			
Garden of Life Wholefood & Organic Nutrition			
Probiotic			
Gift Ideas			

Visitor reports provide you with different views of how your customers or potential customers use your site. Some of the reports available include Most Popular Pages, Top Entry pages, Top Exit Pages and Top Referrers.

Rank	Referrer
1	www.mercola.com
2	www.healthy.com
3	www.healthline.com
4	www.health.com
5	www.healthline.com
6	www.health.com
7	www.healthline.com
8	www.health.com
9	www.healthline.com
10	www.health.com
11	www.healthline.com
12	www.health.com
13	www.healthline.com
14	www.health.com
15	www.healthline.com
16	www.health.com
17	www.healthline.com
18	www.health.com
19	www.healthline.com
20	www.health.com



MARKETING

AmeriCommerce provides you with several built-in marketing tools to help you increase your site traffic and sales. There is integration with Google AdWords and Yahoo Pay Per Click to help direct targeted traffic from those popular search engines and report on your investment. We integrate directly with Google, Yahoo and ShopZilla **shopping portals** to allow you to upload your products to their sites. We also have the ability for you to provide electronic affiliate links to your partners and track the related sales activity through the **affiliate console**.

Additionally there are built in facilities for automatic site maps, dynamic custom URL's, page titles and meta tags. Also, mass emailing management, chatting software integration, email templates for marketing, adcode visitor tracking and much more.



FILE MANAGEMENT

File management can be an important part of maintaining your website. Depending on your needs, it is something you may do weekly or even daily. However for some customer who have small catalogs and use a designer for their website, they may not need to deal with files at all. Coming up with an affective means for handling your files can mean increased productivity. While evaluating your needs, you will need to consider the type of files you will be working with, where those files are located and the tool(s) you will use to manage them.

TYPES OF FILES

Most customers will be working with at least two types of files: graphics and import/export files. You may also be working with other files such as HTML, Flash and PDF files. A lot of this will depend on your site content, how often it changes and how you process your data.

You will use graphics files as part of your site design and for your product photos. These usually include JPG, GIF and possibly PNG files. JPG files are used for photos and other images that have a lot of colors. GIF files are usually used for images with fewer colors such as buttons. PNG files can also be used but are less common. While some graphics are available in AmeriCommerce, you will usually use a designer, purchase images packages, or create your own. Note that having high quality images that are optimized for quicker downloads, especially product photos, are important for conveying a professional storefront.

AmeriCommerce supports importing and exporting CSV (comma separate values) files for much of its data related to the product catalog, customers and orders. For exports, it is usually just a simple download that happens from your browser. You can usually just choose to save to a location on your computer or open it with a program associated with that file type. For those using Microsoft Windows and Office, this is usually Excel. For imports, you will need to upload a file from your computer to your website.

The other types of files you may work with usually have to deal with content delivery. That just means that you might want to put some of your content in other static file types because they are more convenient for you and/or your customers. For example, you may want to maintain About Us information in a static HTML file using your favorite editor and upload it to the site when that information changes. AmeriCommerce natively supports hosting and linking to many different types of content.

FILE LOCATIONS

Files will usually either be located on your computer or your website. In either case, you will want to arrange files by purpose and/or type for ease of management. You will also want to consider the number of files you have. The more files you have, the more folders you may want to create to help you locate them quicker. Finally for those with multiple storefronts, you will want to put files that are shared between the different sites in the Share folder. The Share folder is off the root of each site.

FILE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

There are two ways to access the files on your website. The first is to use the **Site Explorer** that is built into the AmeriCommerce administrative console. The second way is to use a third party FTP (file transfer protocol) program that can handle file management needs over the Internet efficiently. For those with a large number of files or who need to transfer files often, we recommend using a third party FTP program. See our knowledge base at MyAmericommerce.com for more information. Examples include: SmartFTP, BulletProof FTP and others.

Note: to obtain an FTP account and password, contact AmeriCommerce support. Accounts are not available for Free Trials.



SUPPORT SYSTEMS

There are a few resources to help you learn and grow with AmeriCommerce.

- myAmeriCommerce – www.myamericommerce.com
- KnowledgeBase - www.myamericommerce.com/iframe.aspx?tab=KB
- Support Ticketing - www.myamericommerce.com/iframe.aspx?tab=Support
- Video Training - www.myamericommerce.com
- User Forums - www.myamericommerce.com/forums