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Cramsession™ for CIW E-Commerce Designer

Abstract:

This Cramsession will help you to prepare for CIW exam 1D0-425, E-Commerce Designer. Exam topics include Standards, Technologies and Practices for E-Commerce Models, Marketing, Promotion, Customer Service, User Interaction, Purchasing Methods, and Secure Transactions Using SSL and SET, Payment Gateways, Inventory Control, and Site Performance Testing and Evaluation.

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CIW E-Commerce Designer

Major types of E. Business Activities

- Business to Business B2B
- Business to Consumer B2C
- Consumer to Consumer C2C
- Business to Government B2G
- Business to Employee B2E

General Steps for Opening an E. Shop

Internet Merchant Bank Account

- In the US, many banks and Online Transaction providers offer Internet Merchant Accounts.
- Keep in mind that a US merchant account can take up to a month to be activated.
- If you already have a merchant bank account, you will need to upgrade it to an Internet account.
- Verify with your bank to make sure it accepts Internet merchant accounts and has credit card processors that can connect to FDC, Paymentech or CyberCash.
- Account must be able to handle Card Not Present transactions. As the vast majority of Online Transaction Providers are located in the US and are restricted in their ability to interact with banks outside their own country, it may be more difficult for international merchants to obtain this kind of service.
- Service provider's role: Customer visits your web site and chooses to buy your product/service, completes an order form and securely provides credit card or check info. Completed form is submitted to service provider's secure server for verification. You receive real-time online authorization, and order confirmation is immediately sent to you and to customer. Customer's credit card or checking account is debited, and your bank account is credited.
- Payment gateway is used to connect to the bank's system.

Web Hosting

- The main reason for having your site hosted is the up-time. Most host sites will support your site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Hosted sites normally have excellent backup and contingency plans.

- A disadvantage of having a site hosted is the lack of control.
- If you are to select a good hosting company, look for the following:
 - Good up-time
 - Good technical support
 - Fast connection to the Net
 - Staff that is knowledgeable about e-commerce
 - Compatibility with major e-commerce providers
 - Please do not confuse a web hosting company with an E Commerce service provider. Web hosting companies simply host your site and/or your server equipment, and may not offer transaction capabilities.

Obtaining a Digital Certificate

- Also known as a SSL (Secure Socket Layer encryption) Server Certificate.
- Enables SSL on the web server to protect communications securely.
- All E-commerce providers require you to have SSL before you can use their services.
- A certificate for merchant costs about \$125.00 and can be obtained from Thawte or Verisign.
- After obtaining a certificate you may want to shop for a Provider of Online Transactions.

Choosing Shopping Cart Software

- An operating system that allows people to purchase your items, keeps track of your accounts, and ties together all of the aspects of your e-commerce site into one cohesive whole.
- Many Online Transaction Providers will have shopping cart software that comes with their service.

Components of a Working E-Business System

- Your e-business will take place in four main venues:
 - The customer's view - visuals, navigation, content
 - The stockroom - catalogs, product information, inventory/resource management
 - The back office - payment, customer service, query tracking, order management and delivery
 - The boardroom - measuring, planning and managing your business
- Site promotion:

- Word of mouth
- Banner advertising
- Offline advertising.
- Store Front End Design:
 - Style - give correct impression of what kind of business you run:
 - Graphics
 - Layout
 - Site Design
 - Focus
 - Language.
 - Function – providing your visitors with the bare essentials to locate and order your products is never enough:
 - Persuasion can be achieved using combinations of both neutral and non-neutral information, pressure to buy and enticements such as free trials, bundled products, etc.
 - The 'information' area of your site will provide updateable Information which you can inexpensively manage and change
 - Links - provide multiple routes to navigate your site with ease:
 - Backup Links on menus, footers and sidebars to allow visitors to find their way to the product pages.
 - Shopping Baskets are critical in simplifying and facilitating complex search/select/order cycles.
 - Search Tools allow accelerated location of products, services and information.
 - Navigation - visitors should be able to very quickly and confidently travel around your site:
 - A two-level site index and subindex metaphor involves a simple, clear top-level index often placed across the top of the page., and a context-specific subindex, showing you links relevant to your current position.
 - Top-level index should not contain too many items (suggested maximum is 7), and your sub- or side-index should be as small as possible.
 - Side index titles should be short, informative, and either displayed in small font text or in graphics with heavy clue.
 - Subindex is an alternative to side index.
 - Frames should be avoided if at all possible, as they mess with people who want to reload single frames, bookmark single frames, and move backwards or forwards.
 - You should help robot search engines to find stuff in your site easily and quickly, through 'flattening' your structure or having non-graphical links.

- Searching should lead to similar navigation metaphors as normal navigation, so that visitors can conduct their own navigation without learning new metaphors.
- Interactivity - how your site appears to respond to visitors' actions and questions:
 - Time-based Change - Placing newly updated content in prominent positions to give visitor the impression that things have changed since last visit.
 - Visitor Memory - remembering a visitor's previous interactions and placing him/her at the point where she was last time.
 - Inline Personalization - embedding of visitor-specific information in the pages you present.
 - Per-Visitor Display Preferences.
 - Reliability - visitors should never hit a dead end or an error report page.
 - Undo-ability - allows visitor to undo actions, go backwards and forwards through an interaction, and even escape.
 - Clarity – make it clear what to do next at each step.
- Store Back End Design:
 - Process involved:
 - Inventory and resource management - physical stock, staff and service resources, and outsourced resources.
 - Customer and order management.
 - Delivery and payment tracking.
 - Monitoring of site performance, trends in order/transaction activity, fulfillment, staffing costs, and time-and-motion costs. etc.
 - Order processing:
 - Order Forms - should be long enough to get all the information but as short as possible to avoid abandonment at the last moment.
 - Transaction Confirmation – should appear both on the returned page and in an immediate acknowledgement e-mail.
 - Order Tracking – similar to what DHL offers: putting their parcel-tracking system online.
 - Auto-sending an e-mail response is a courtesy, which most people will appreciate.
 - Customer Personal Details such as name, contact numbers, mailing address, company name, Ordering History, Details of individual orders and their status, as well as Financial details, account status, etc. should be maintained carefully.
 - Delivery and fulfillment:
 - Delivery can be physical (through UPS, DHL, etc) or electronic (such as download). Always notify the customers when the goods have been shipped.

- Monitoring:
 - Statistics - access logs will give you information on how site traffic is progressing.
 - Advertising tracking - track where visitors come from to your site.
 - Penetration Rates - outlining how many people ended up transacting business out of total visitors, people who made enquiries, people who looked at product information pages, etc.

Theory of Usability

- Customer satisfaction is everything.
- Launching a site that is difficult to use will deprive the business of its best customers.
- Re-sampling (asking dissatisfied customer to re-visit) is one of the hardest sells.
- You should test with a few users in order to gain insight into the usability of a design and to get usability feedback at a very early design stage where nothing has been implemented yet.
- Users hate redesigns because of the need to "learning something new."
- Getting things right before launch is the key.

Customer Database

- Customer database can help you guarantee repeat business by tailoring your site to an individual customer's needs.
- By keeping track of a customer's orders, inquiries and preferences you can develop a basis for future marketing campaigns, while continually fine-tuning your site to satisfy your target market:
 - Send specifically directed emails to targeted customers based on their profiles.
 - Inspire lapsed customers with special incentives and promotions.
 - Create a loyalty program.
 - Make suggestions about items related to past purchases.
- Typical entries in the database include order history, results of online surveys, complaints/feedback, product inquiries, referrals, responses to sales, guestbook entries, etc.

Site Security

- Tools to use include:
 - Routers

- Firewalls
- Intrusion Detection Systems (IDSs)
- Vulnerability Assessment Tools (Scanners, etc.).
- Routers:
 - Network traffic-managing device that sits in between sub-networks and routes traffic intended for, or emanating from, the segments to which it is attached.
 - Sensible place to implement packet-filtering rules based on your security policies.
 - Packet filter is a simple and effective form of protection that matches all packets against a series of rules.
 - Packet-filtering routers examine each IP datagram and yield a permit or deny decision for each packet received. They determine whether it matches one of its packet-filtering rules, based on packet-header information made available through the IP forwarding process.
- Firewall:
 - Insulates a private network from a public network using carefully established controls on the types of request they will route through to the private network for processing and fulfillment.
 - Appears primarily in two flavors: application level gateways and proxy servers.
- Application-Level Gateways:
 - Allows the network administrator to implement stricter security policies than packet-filtering routers can manage.
 - Special-purpose code is installed on the gateway for each desired application.
 - Often referred to as a Bastion host because it is a designated system that is specifically armored and protected against attacks.
 - Only services that network administrators consider essential are installed on the Bastion host - if a service is not installed, it can't be attacked.
 - A more secure firewall system can be constructed using a dual-homed Bastion-host system that has two network interfaces: the physical topology forces all traffic destined for the private network through the Bastion host.
- Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) employs two packet-filtering routers and a Bastion host while defining a "demilitarized zone" (DMZ) network, which functions as a small, isolated network positioned between the Internet and the private network.

Secure Electronic Transaction (SET)

- Uses a system of locks and keys along with certified account IDs for both consumers and merchants.
- Encrypts information exchanged between the shopper and the online store.
- Establishes industry standards to keep order and payment information confidential.
- Increases integrity for all transmitted data through encryption.
- Provides authentication that a cardholder is a legitimate user of a branded payment card account.
- Provides authentication that a merchant can accept branded payment card transactions through its relationship with an acquiring financial institution.
- A certificate is a public key that has been digitally signed by your financial institution to identify the user. SET uses certificates to encrypt payment information.
- Certificate Authority is a service your bank (or its designate) provides that digitally signs public keys sent by a web browser or the merchant's server software.
- Cryptography is the practice of digitally "scrambling" a message using a secret key or keys.
- Secure Socket Layer (SSL) is developed by Netscape Communications Company and is a standard that encrypts data between a Web browser and a Web server. SET uses SSL to make sure all data sent is encrypted.
- Digital Wallet is installed as a plug-in to your web browser to store your MasterCard number and your shipping information. Keep in mind that you need to know the secret "password" to use what's inside.
- Shopping Cart is part of an online catalog that keeps track of the items that you have decided to buy.
- Virtual Sales Slip has detailed information on a financial transaction which is generated by the merchant's online store and downloaded to your digital wallet. Items included are confirmation of your order, shipping details, tax (if applicable), and total amount of sale, etc.

Technology – the Microsoft Platform

- Site Server Commerce 3.0:
 - Runs on top of Microsoft Windows NT Server with Microsoft Internet Information Server IIS 4.
 - Includes a comprehensive set of server components, management tools, and sample sites.

- Uses the concept of pipelines to construct process flow.
- Generates resulting Active Server Pages (ASP) to formulate a complete store front.
- Can work with third party software to handle payments.
- <http://www.microsoft.com/siteserver/commerce/default.htm>
- SQL Server 7:
 - The ideal choice for a backend database to work with Site Server Commerce.
 - <http://msdn.microsoft.com/sqlserver/>
- Visual Interdev 6:
 - Tools for developing and customizing ASP.
 - <http://msdn.microsoft.com/vinterdev/default.asp>

NOTE: You are expected to have brief experience working with the above software tools.

Technology – the NON Microsoft Platform

- Oracle 8i:
 - Flagship database server offered by Oracle
 - <http://www.oracle.com>
- Java 2
 - The write once use anywhere development language from Sun
 - Need corresponding JVM for different OS
 - JDBC provides Java Database Connectivity
 - JSP Java Server Page is similar to ASP Active Server Page on the Microsoft Platform
- Linux
 - Open source OS
 - Many different distributions; e.g., Redhat, Corel
 - Typical combination: use MySQL as the database and PHP (Hypertext Preprocessor) as the language
 - PHP is a server side scripting language designed for building dynamic web pages and web database connectivity



Privacy Issues

- A general guideline: Looking at the outside of an "envelope" is only a 'mail cover,' and is not a 'search and seizure' under the Fourth Amendment, and so does not require a warrant. Looking inside of the "envelope" is a 'search and seizure' because it is an interception of an 'electronic communication', and is considered a wiretap. If a third party looks into the envelope without consent, such as viewing e-mail contents, credit card entries or purchase orders, then this will constitute wiretapping. However, if either of the original parties to a communication were to unilaterally disclose its contents, such as if an e-tailer were to reveal its customers' identities and purchase records without their permission, there would be no wiretap, but an invasion of privacy under state law.
- Under the opt-in model, consumers will see a pop-up screen upon each visit to a site, which would prompt them to give or withhold permission with respect to each item of personal information that the site wants to collect.
- Under the opt-out method, consumers can withhold permission to collect their personal information by clicking on an easy-to-find screen, thus requiring consumers to take the initiative in protecting their privacy.

Policies and Regulations

- A summary of New Legislation on Digital Signatures and Electronic Commerce Pending in State Legislatures can be found at:
<http://nii.nist.gov/pubs/pestsigh.html>
- Information on digital signature legislation can be found at;
<http://www.unc.edu/courses/law357c/cyberprojects/spring98/digitalsignatures/interst.htm>
- Information on copyright and web music can be found at:
<http://www.unc.edu/courses/law357c/cyberprojects/spring98/cyberlaw/main.html>
- Latest development can be found at:
<http://www.commerce.net/resources/work/appc.html>

Barriers

- Possible major barriers to E-Commerce include:
 - Treaties, international laws, conventions or agreements, or the laws of countries other than the United States.
 - Tax laws or regulations.
 - Consumer protection regulations.
- US government has a page devoted to Request for Public Comment on Legal Barriers to Electronic Commerce at:
<http://osecnt13.osec.doc.gov/ecommerce/barriers.nsf>

- Electronic Commerce Barriers Survey Results can be found at: <http://www.ita.org/software/research/indpulse/barriers.htm>

Affiliate Program and Other Web Marketing Strategies

- You pay any number of other web sites to act as a sales force or promotional arm in order to generate visitors or customers for your site.
- Incentive Payment Structure:
 - Per click - you will pay the affiliate for each time a visitor from the affiliate site clicks on a link to your site.
 - Per lead - you will pay an affiliate when a visitor from the affiliate site visits your site and then performs some action - registering for free info to be sent to him or her, giving you their e-mail address, or signing up for some kind of membership, etc.
 - Per sale - you will only pay the affiliate when a visitor from the affiliate site actually makes a purchase on your site.
 - Per impression - you will pay the affiliate for every time your link is displayed on their web site regardless of whether or not a visitor clicks on that link to visit your site.
- Banner Exchange allows you to:
 - Show your banner in other sites
 - Show other sites' banners in your site
 - Set up a mutually beneficial partnership
 - Visit www.bannerexchange.com to take a look
- There are many services out there that help you register in various search engines and guarantee you a "top ranking" in the result list. An example can be found at 1stplac ranking.com
- Traffic Analysis is important because:
 - Knowing the performance of your advertising and the sources of your traffic can assist you in getting high traffic volume. Once customers get to your site, understanding their habits and preferences is the key to keeping them satisfied.
 - Web servers produce log files with millions of lines of visitor tracking information. Every time a person comes to any web site and does anything, a line of data is added to the log file that records each and every action he makes.
 - There are many packages out there to help you analyze the log files and produce meaningful reports

Outsourcing Fulfillment

- External parties provide services including:
 - Warehousing

- Manage merchant account, all chargebacks, and weekly reports
- Product shipping and handling
- Pros – you can focus on your web operations and lower initial investment for warehouse and other facilities.
- Cons – higher operating cost.

Alternate Payment Solutions

- Problems with credit card
 - Current consumer protection laws give all the power to consumers.
 - Merchant banks rarely give merchants a chance to contest chargebacks.
- Credit card surrogates:
 - Example: PayPal - the payment method of choice on eBay.
 - Act as an intermediary between the buyer and the seller.
 - Payments can be made via credit card, personal check, or from an electronic funds transfer from the buyer's bank.
 - A good model for consumer-to-consumer payments, but not suitable for business-to-consumer transactions.
- Cash Card-based Solutions;
 - Similar to pre-paid calling card with a unique identifier on it:
 - No chargeback for the merchant as there are no credit card companies involved.
 - Customer has to interrupt his shopping experience to purchase the cards, which is quite inconvenient.
- Hidden Details Payment System:
 - The buyer actually leaves the merchant site during the checkout process and enters his purchasing details into pages that actually reside on the site of the payment system.
 - WorldPay offers this kind of service.
 - Chargebacks are not necessarily eliminated as the site has a relationship with the customer.
- E-Charge Phone:
 - Allows customers to bill purchases to their local phone bills.
 - Can handle payments ranging from \$1 to \$300, as well as recurring subscription charges like ISP charges.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)

- An "early" form of e-commerce
- Proprietary

- High cost

Open Buying on the Internet (OBI)

- A set of specifications to provide a standard framework for secure and interoperable business-to-business Internet commerce.
- Initial focus on automating high-volume and low-dollar transactions between trading partners.
- Latest version is 2.1.
- A requisitioner at a Buying Organization uses a Web browser to interact with a specialized catalog at a Selling Organization.
- When an order is placed, the Selling Organization will transmit an order request to the Buying Organization's purchasing server for approval and/or additional information.
- The Buying Organization will approve or reject the order and return an approved, completed order to the Selling Organization.
- Technical specification focus:
 - Standard process by which a requisitioner accesses a specialized catalog at a selling organization.
 - Standard data format for order-related information that is exchanged between trading partners.
 - Standard methods for transmitting order-related data between organizations.
 - Standard security mechanisms for authentication, secure communications, and non-repudiation.
- Built on existing standards in order to maximize interoperability and decrease implementation costs:

Purpose	Existing Standard
Content Display	Evolving standards as specified by the W3C
Order Requests and OBI Orders	X12 850 EDI standard
Order Transmission	HTTP 1.0 using SSL
Secure Internet Communication	SSL V3
Cryptography	SSL V3 API Public Key Cryptography Standards (PKCS)
Public Key Certificates & Certificate	X.509 V3 certificates

Authorities	
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For more information on OBI please visit: <http://www.openbuy.org/>

Open Trading Protocol (OTP)

- Protocol for the development of software products that will permit product interoperability for the electronic purchase --- most importantly, being independent of the chosen payment mechanism.
- The development of this protocol is "not for profit."
- Can encapsulate the payment with the offers/invoice/receipts for payment and delivery.
- Interoperable products for electronic commerce:
 - Any OTP enabled consumer can "trade" With any OTP enabled e-commerce merchant.
 - Replicate consumer's real world experiences in the virtual world.
 - Encapsulate any Internet payment method, which complements but does not replace payment methods.
- Benefits for consumer:
 - Larger selection of merchants.
 - More consistent interface.
 - Record of transaction can be easily obtained.
- Support pay at / after delivery, single invoice multi-payment or multi-purchase single payment.

More information on OTP can be found at: <http://www.otp.org/>

Virtual Enterprise

- Group of autonomous, dispersed organizations that temporally collaborate to achieve a common business objective.
- Provide its participants a competitive advantage in markets demanding agility and rapid response - bring process and knowledge together in a single user-friendly environment to provide universal, effective access to data, information, and knowledge.
- Requirements:
 - Supports dynamic group membership, dynamic organizational and geographical distribution of the group-membership, dynamic modes and different communication methods.



- Support for various group working practices and dynamic group member-roles, various types of information exchange, groups with different life duration.
- Integration of currently used tools and support for current work customs.
- Authentication and security issues.
- For more information please visit: <http://event.ucl.ac.uk/>

Why to:

This "Why to" section outlines the reasoning behind many of your important ECommerce decisions.

Business-to-Business (B2B)

B2B model is a model of low volume and high price margin. Business-to-Consumer (B2C), on the other hand, is high volume and low price margin. Forrester expects that total Internet trade will explode - exceeding \$20 billion in the United States this year and growing to \$350 billion by 2002. Eighty percent of this activity will be business-to-business commerce.

ECommerce

ECommerce has the following impacts towards traditional business:

- Extend and accelerate familiar business models - changing business dynamics in the process.
- Change channel partner relationships.
- Shift focus towards services.
- Establish new frontiers of sales and service efficiency.
- Expand global trade.

Online Instant Storefronts

Accessible from any Internet connection with Web Browser, and is the quickest way to implement a solution.

Offline Storefront

You retain control over the performance and reliability of your site.

EDI

Use if your company needs to handle a large volume of repetitive standard transactions, operates on tight margin, or operates in a time-sensitive environment.

Independent CA

It is a neutral and trusted third party that oversees all transactions.

Credit Model Transaction

You can offer products or services without the expense involved in operating a storefront, and processing hardware for the site and credit transactions are readily implemented.

Internet Security

Internet encryption is designed to make decryption very difficult (not entirely impossible) without the key. For example, RSA encryption uses prime numbers and factoring to encrypt data, making it unreadable to anyone who does not have the decryption algorithm. Secure transaction protocols used for transmitting credit card information are so secure that copying data during transmission is hardly possible.

Audience Data

It is a combination of demographics, psychographics and other survey tools that determine exactly what is the message, whereas demographics only determines who should see the message.

Search Engine Placement

When a search engine visits a new site, it attempts to categorize the site based on its content. All of this are done automatically. A directory, on the other hand, is basically a manual-entry database system. The most effective search engine registration is usually from a service or software package that automates the process. Keep in mind though, search engine will ignore any repeated keywords in the META tag. And if you use more than 100 keywords, all keywords will be ignored.

Offering Soft Goods

Hard Goods vs. Soft Goods: Examples of Soft goods are: Software, Music, News ...etc. Hard goods are "tangible" items like Hardware and Books. Soft goods in general have advantage in terms of delivery, as they can be delivered digitally over the net, while hard goods required physical delivery.

Buyer-Centric Procurement System

- Corporate procurement is the next wave in the world of B2B ECommerce.
- Buyer-centric procurement system addresses key issues such as Catalog aggregation/customization/management, End User Access and Store, User Administration, Approvals & Routings, and Transaction Processing Interface.
- Catalog aggregation is the ongoing process of obtaining and loading the vendor- based catalogues into a given company environment.

- Buyer takes an active role in identifying suppliers who can deliver what they need.
- Empower the employees to buy office supplies and other low volume maintenance items via the Web without going through the cumbersome approval process.

S/MIME

- Short for Secure/Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions.
- Set of specifications that defines a standard protocol used by electronic messaging user agents to apply cryptographic security services to mail that is sent, and to process protected mail that is received.
- Requires a minimum set of "mandatory-to-implement" cryptographic algorithms to be implemented in all S/MIME-compliant applications, although customers are not forced to use the S/MIME-specified algorithms.
- S/MIME version 2 specifications are currently implemented in many popular electronic messaging products.
- Version 3 is currently under development by Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) to include the Cryptographic Message Syntax (CMS) that defines a standard syntax for communicating cryptographic information that is independent of the format of the encapsulated content or of the transport mechanism.

Portals

- Create and retain new customers - rather than forcing users to find relevant products and services on their own, portals aggregate them in one convenient digital marketplace.
- Immediate revenue - gives companies access to millions of Internet users and dramatically lowers the cost of customer acquisition while offering an instant ROI.
- Outsourcing - allow companies to access hosted services, transact business, and trade intellectual capital easily and conveniently.

Avoid Spamming

- Meaning: Spam is a canned meat product. If you get spam thrown at you, it does not hurt, but is a mess to clean up - spamming is the act of posting a message to many people at once. Getting spammed via email means that the message does not particularly 'hurt', but it is annoying.
- Precisely, Spamming is defined as flooding the Internet with copies of the same message, in an attempt to force the message on people who would not otherwise choose to receive it.
- Negative impacts of Spamming: It costs people money to read or receive their mail if their ISP is charging them based on usage. Also, it costs ISP's

and online services to transmit 'Spammed' information, and these costs are transmitted directly to subscribers.

- Spamming is now considered to be illegal in many regions. You may go to check out <http://www.zdnet.com/eweek/news/0824/28mspam.html> for information on the California Anti Spam bill.

Special Thanks to [Michael Yu](#) for contributing material for this Cramsession. Make sure to visit his site at:
<http://michaelyu.freesevers.com>

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