
STOCK STORIES: SHOPIFY

TOM SLATER

Shopify helps companies looking to sell their goods online. It is regarded by Amazon as a partner and, as Tom Slater explains, with a growing number of companies looking to have an online presence, it has a massive potential opportunity.

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Tom Slater: Shopify was founded in Canada by a German entrepreneur, Tobias Lütke. He was seeking to set up a snowboarding and surf shop and realised that the tools he needed to do this effectively online didn't really exist. His background was as a very successful computer programmer and he rapidly discovered, in building these tools, that they were in much higher demand than his surfboards.

This has grown into a system for helping anybody to sell their products online. It's an increasingly complex online landscape. You have a very powerful player in Amazon and merchants need all the help they can get in managing their inventory, merchandising it, taking payments, doing shipping and Shopify provides those tools.

It's not a competitor to Amazon. Indeed it is increasingly instrumental in allowing third parties to sell on, on Amazon's platform and is regarded by Amazon as a partner. Which is absolutely crucial in the world of e-commerce, because anything that competes with Amazon generally has a fairly short life expectancy.

What's really attractive about Shopify is that the market opportunity is so large. There is a huge pool of commerce that is moving online, where the tools don't exist to do that job effectively. So we think Shopify has the opportunity to be a much bigger business in five years' time, than it is today.

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