Selling in the Community Store

Successfully offering Shopware extensions

Version Sept 19th 2017

shopware

Earn money with Shopware extensions

Do you have a great idea how Shopware can be extended by an additional functionality? Do you design attractive templates for storefronts?

You can use our Community Store as a sales platform for the plugins you develop independently, thereby connecting you with the large market that is our Shopware Community. More than 60,000 customers already trust in Shopware.

You can either offer your plugins for free or earn extra revenue by charging them for a fee. As the manufacturer of your plugins, you have complete control over your offerings. The store is already comprised of over 2,000 individual extensions – a number that increases every day.
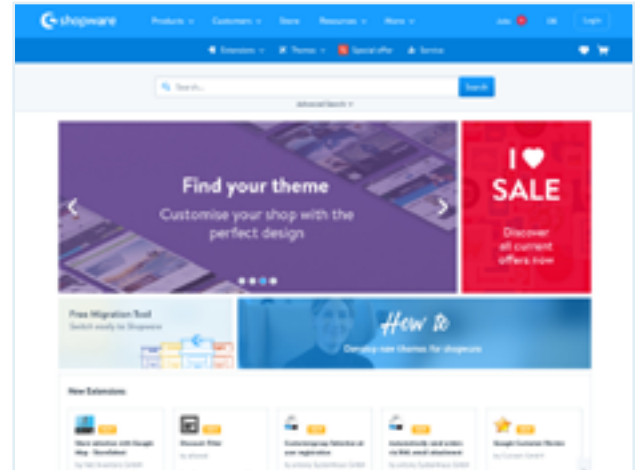
The reason why you should develop topics
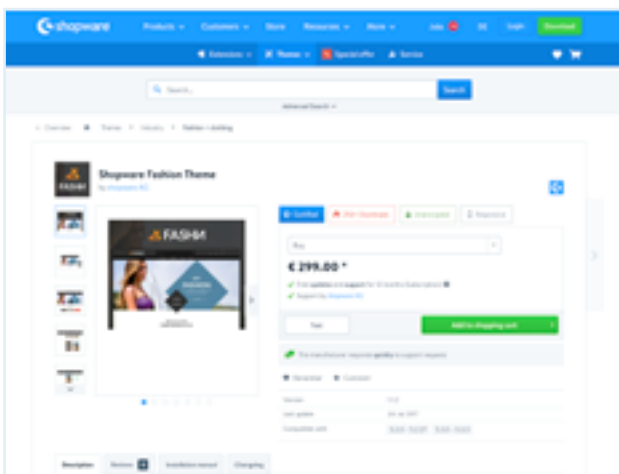
Shopware is based on an extremely powerful software architecture that relies on modern and advanced technologies. The code base is lean and efficient, which has a direct impact on the system's performance. Shopware is an open source project. By involving thousands of developers, the system meets the highest standards and offers shop owners a huge security advantage. The powerful plugin system makes it possible to extend the frontend and backend to meet individual requirements, all without losing the ability to perform updates. Shopware is developed for the people who use it – it's all about you.

More on theme development.

Why developers choose Shopware

Shopware is based on an extremely powerful software architecture that relies on modern and advanced technologies. The code base is lean and efficient, which has a direct impact on the system's performance. Shopware is an open source project. By involving thousands of developers, the system meets the highest standards and offers shop owners a huge security advantage. The powerful plugin system makes it possible to extend the frontend and backend to meet individual requirements, all without losing the ability to perform updates. Shopware is developed for the people who use it – it's all about you.

PHP 7 compatibility
At the end of 2015, Shopware became one of the first PHP-based systems to offer compatibility with PHP 7. This ultimately led to a performance increase in several areas of the system and in particular, the generation of themes.

Use of additional frameworks
Up until now, developers relied on ExtJS to develop their extensions. We wanted to change that. Now, through a special interface, it's possible to use additional frameworks such as jQuery, AngularJS or Ember.js. A special interface ensures operability with Shopware.

Open API
Easily extendable and customizable, the open API from Shopware is a powerful interface to various third-party solutions and can be easily extended and customized through your own resources.

Direct path to new revenue streams

Your path to new revenue is relatively straightforward:

(1) **Develop your extension**

(2) **Create an account and accept the manufacturer contract**

(3) **Upload your extension to the store**

Shopware takes care of both the distribution and entire payment process of your extensions – you only have to take care of the service and support. When you make a sale, payment will be credited directly to your Shopware Account the following day.*

** For this service, we only charge a 25% commission of the net purchasing price.
You benefit across the board!*

Create an account and register as a manufacturer

If you haven't already, you can create your Shopware Account by heading to **https://account.shopware.com**, where you can register as a manufacturer. As a manufacturer, you have access to the enormous customer base of our Community.

The manufacturer contract

You can find the manufacturer contract under the menu point Plugin Management in your account. In order to offer plugins in the Community Store, you must accept this contract. But no paperwork to fear – the process is completely digital. After accepting the contract, your data will be double-checked by Shopware. Activation as a manufacturer usually takes anywhere between 1-2 business days.
After this point, you can start selling your extensions and plugins!

Credit your earnings

Your banking information is required so that we can transfer your earnings from your customer account to your banking account. You can easily enter your banking information in your account under Plugin Management > Provisions in your account. The minimum amount you can transfer is 50€. After verifying the transfer, you will receive a receipt of credit for your records.

Small business or tax ID

For the correct tax settlement, please infom us if you have a small business or tax ID. You should notify us immediately of any relevant changes.

VAT reductions

For providers of plugins and templates from Germany: it should be noted that you are eligible for a VAT reduction when selling plugins through our Community Store. This is in accordance with § 12 para. 2 no. 7c UstG. This means you receive your share of the net selling price plus the current 7% tax, provided you qualify for this deduction. To receive this reduction, please provide us with the appropriate accounting information.*

*Background: Since computer programs and therefore software are considered literary works protected by copyright, there is often the question of whether or not they apply for this reduced tax rate. However, since this area is still rather grey, there is no direct answer. The reduced rate depends largely on the contractual relationship between the author and the distributor regarding the use of the software. Only if during the acquisition of the software, both the rights to reproduce and distribute the software are transferred, the author is eligible for a reduced tax rate, which is currently set at 7%.

Please see your tax advisor for further information on this topic.

Your manufacturer profile

Build an impressive profile with your business credentials and awards

Every manufacturer has a designated space in the Community Store: the manufacturer profile. You can use this space to present yourself and company as best as possible. Upload your company logo to your account and be sure to include a compelling description of your company. In your manufacturer profile, customers will see a convenient overview of the plugins you currently offer in the Community Store. This is where potential customers can use your average plugin ratings as a benchmark of how satisfied others are with your products and services.

Visit the Shopware Academy and become a certified expert

You will receive a certification after you or a member of your staff successfully complete a course in the Shopware Academy. All certifications are published directly in your manufacturer profile for your customers to see. These badges are an additional verification of your competence and expertise with the Shopware system. If you have not taken advantage of our training opportunities, you can skip to the "Available training opportunities" section of this guide or check the current trainings on our website: **https://en.shopware.com/support/academy/**

Partner status: an indication of your expertise

You guessed it: your partner status is also proudly displayed in your manufacturer profile. The respective logo appears directly at the top of your description and designates you as an official Shopware partner. This helps your customers quickly recognize your expertise, which of course positively impacts your sales.

Not yet a Shopware partner?

Reach us per email: **info@shopware.com** / phone: **00 800 746 76260**

Uploading your extension
to the Community Store

It only takes a few steps to upload your extension to the Community Store. Just log into your account and follow **Plugin Management > Plugin Overview** within the menu structure then click on "Add new plugin". You'll then see a popup window, where you can enter all relevant plugin information for your new extension, including the descriptive text and any images. Here you can also request that your plugin become Shopware certified. This adds a "Shopware Certified" label to your extension for marketing purposes. You can find further information in our chapter "The new Shopware certification program".

Important:

Please make sure your images are embedded using https. Base64 images are not supported in the descriptive text.

Plugin compatibility

As a plugin manufacturer, it's always important to keep your plugins up-to-date in the Community Store. When your plugins are incompatible, you take the risk of your customers switching to competitors whose plugins offer compatibility with their upgraded Shopware shop.

To help you avoid this risk and make your plugins more attractive, we've summarized the most important information for making your plugins compatible with the latest Shopware release.

Golden rule: compatibility with Shopware 5.2

If you want to make your plugins compatible with Shopware 5.2, they have to be able to run under PHP 5.6 and PH 7.x. It's important that the plugins be updated from the file basis. As of PHP 5.6, encrypted plugins are encrypted using a more recent version of IonCube. This is because a new version of IonCube is required for PHP 7, so encoded plugins must exist in a compatible version using the new encoder. As soon as shop owners download your plugin via the Plugin Manager in Shopware 5.2, the newly encoded versions are automatically downloaded. More information can be found here.

Automatic compatibility with bugfix versions

We regularly make bugfix releases available to the Community. Under **Plugin Management > Plugin version association** in your account, you can automatically assign your plugins as being compatible with the latest Shopware version. The only prerequisite is that your extension has already been authorized for release in the same release cycle. This will automatically authorize your plugin for all bugfix versions with just one click – say goodbye to manual maintenance paths.

The importance of going open source

Openness is our most important company value. In fact, after going open source in 2010, our software received an enormous boost in terms of distribution and use. That's why the next logical step was to offer the open source version of our plugins, which is what we've pursued since the release of Shopware 5.2. In addition, when looking into the requirements of projects, several explicitly require only open source extensions be used.

We recommend that you take this step with us and no longer encrypt your plugins using IonCube.

Your advantages:

- Your plugins become more modular and versatile
- You benefit from a higher acceptance and more widespread use
- It's much easier and quicker for other developers to create extensions or modules for your plugins
- Your plugins become all the more attractive

Protection against unlawful spread

In the case of possible license violations, the shop owner will receive a popup notification in their backend as well as in their Plugin Manager. It is also impossible for stolen copies of your work to access updates or support. These two measures were designed to ensure the security of your plugins. We are convinced that anyone who professionally operates an eCommerce site would be more inclined to purchase your work then run the risk of operating stolen content.

As of Shopware 5.2, you can easily offer your plugins as open source – plugins prior to Shopware 5.2 should remain encrypted

- Open your account and head to "Plugin Management > Plugin Overview" and edit the respective plugin.
- Important: in the editing module, the settings under "Additional options" should remain unchanged. So the options "I want to encrypt my plugin with IonCube" and "Shopware license check" should remain checked. It is important that nothing is changed here, otherwise all versions for prior Shopware releases (5.1, 5.0, etc.) will also be unencrypted.
- Now upload the new plugin version and uncheck the boxes for "I want to encrypt my plugin with IonCube" and "Shopware license check".

Plugin updates for older Shopware versions

When you'd like to offer plugins that are compatible with older Shopware versions, the options next to "I want to encrypt my plugin with IonCube" and "Shopware license check" must remain checked for plugin versions compatible with anything earlier than Shopware 5.2. In other words: the additional options must remain unchanged.

Encryption

If you would still like to encrypt your source code, you can do so through us. First select the plugin you would like to encrypt under **Plugin management > Additional options**.

There you can select "I want to encrypt my plugin with IonCube" and we will take care of the rest.

And it goes further:

If you are interested in developing a plugin and promoting it through the Shopware Community Store, you can log into your account and upload your plugin under the **Plugin Management** tab in your account. You are more than welcome to contact the Shopware team directly with any questions.

Choosing the right category for your extension

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To ensure your plugin can be easily found in the Community Store, it's important that you assign it to the appropriate category. When choosing the category, try to keep the target group and their search habits in mind – if you had a problem, where would you first look in the store for a solution? Keep in mind that you have the possibility of assigning up to two categories for each plugin.

Optimize for the in-store search

Searching is a key element of the customer journey in the Community Store. Many visitors automatically gravitate toward the search bar during their shopping experience and, in some cases, even make it a priority. Therefore, it's critical that you understand how to optimize your plugins for the in-store search.

Put yourself in your customers' shoes. Many customers use the search with the intention of finding a solution for a particular problem. You should use relevant keywords or phrases such as "Swap logo", "Ajax menu", "PayPal", "Configurator", "Variants" and so on. When creating your plugin name, keep in mind that your company plays a subordinate role – the main point is to make use of the right keywords so that your customers can more aptly connect with your solution. Always bear in mind how you look for products in the "real world".

By the way, you are not only optimizing the search for the store. Google will also pay attention to the optimized text of your plugins. That's because the Community Store has excellent Google traffic rates. With well optimized text, your products will receive higher rankings in Google's search engine and will be displayed in the search results with direct links to the store.

Entering keywords for your plugin

So that visitors to the Community Store can better find your extensions, we've made it possible to create tags for your plugins. Under the plugin description in your account, you now have the option of adding up to five keywords for your plugins.

When shop owners use these keywords in their search for new extensions, they'll have a much easier time arriving at your plugins. Keywords are also indexed by external search engines.

As soon as you start entering terms, the system will suggest relevant keywords already used by similar manufacturers, thereby allowing you to enter terms relatively quickly.

Small tip: When deciding which keywords to use, think from the perspective of the shop owners. If you didn't know the name of the plugin, which keywords would you use to find what you're looking for?

Promoting your extensions

Benefit from powerful marketing features in the Community Store

Create discount campaigns for your extensions

You can create discount campaigns under the menu item **Plugin management > Plugin Discount Campaigns**. You will find a list of all discount campaigns already created (if you haven't created any, this space will be empty). You can offer discounts for individual products or create bundle discounts. You can either choose between percentage or absolute discounts.
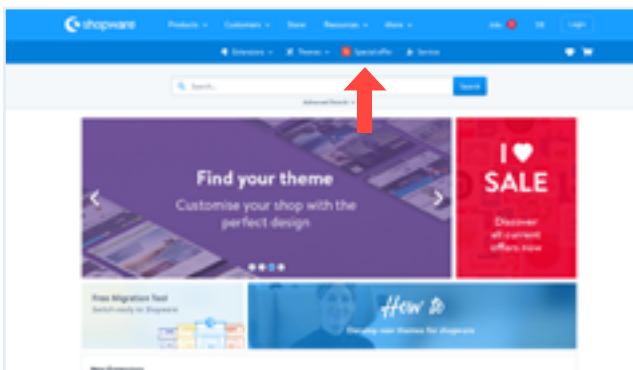
Every campaign has a beginning and end date. Since they're prominently displayed in the **%SALE** category in the Community Store, discounted offers are great way to drive more traffic to your products.
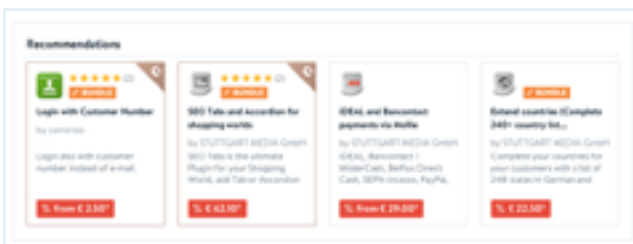
In addition, discounted products are displayed with an eye-catching "Sale" banner and red price tag in the plugin listing, thereby making your plugins all the more appealing to new and repeat customers.
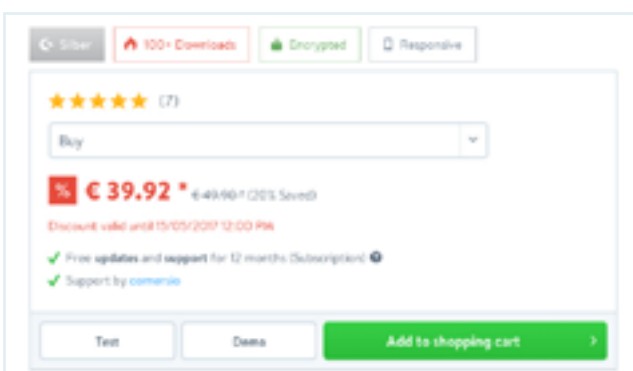
Discounts are displayed on the product page with a slash through the original price. Attractive discounts lead to better conversion rates. The end date of your campaign underlines the exclusivity of your offer.

Added benefits with attractive bundles

Next to traditional discount campaigns, you have yet another marketing feature to help you increase your sales for the long term: bundles.

Bundles are a great way to encourage customers to purchase several plugins at once. Head over to **Plugin Management > Plugin Bundles** in your account, where you can bundle complimentary plugins and offer them to your customers for a discounted price.

Similar to the standard campaigns, bundled offers can have absolute or percentage based discount. Additionally, all bundled offers will be listed in a designated category in the Community Store.

All plugins that are assigned to a bundle are specially marked with a "Bundle badge".

Coupon codes

Do you have your own website or send a regular newsletter? Then coupons can be used as a strong marketing instrument for your plugins. Under **Plugin Management** in your account, you can create percentage or absolute vouchers, which are an additional incentive for your customers to make a purchase.

The value of a voucher can be up to 50% the price of the plugin. You have full control over the validity of the voucher and can determine how many times each voucher can be used per person. Alternatively, you can assign individual codes per person, which can only be used once. You have the option of specifying whether coupons can be redeemed for only specific plugins or whether it they apply for all of your plugins. You can get an overview of all generated coupon codes with a simple CSV export, where you can see if and/or how often a coupon was redeemed.

Tip:

Do you have an extension that is struggling to get attention? Then bundle your new plugin with a different extension that is already doing well in the Community Store.

Support for your customers

If a customer is having any trouble with your plugin, they can use the account to send you a support request. You will receive an email notification whenever a new support request is created. Support tickets can be reviewed in your account. In the best case, this request should be answered as soon as possible – you have up to four days to provide a response, which will be sent directly to the customer's account. You can close the support ticket as soon as the problem is solved.

Good support pays off – customers can evaluate your support with positive reviews, which leads to a higher conversion rate in the Community Store.

Distinction of your reaction time

This manufacturer responds **very quickly** to support requests

Do offer a particularly fast reaction time for support requests? You will be rewarded on both your plugin page and manufacturer profile with a badge that indicates your exceptional support. Here's how it works:

- We calculate your average reaction time based on the 10 previous tickets you've responded to

- If your average reaction time lies within one day, you get the badge "This manufacturer responds **very quickly** to support requests"

- If your average reaction time lies within three days, you get the badge "This manufacturer responds **quickly** to support requests"

Tip:
Customer satisfaction is a valuable asset for generating more sales. The more satisfied your customers are, the better reviews your products will have in the store.

Reviews boost customer confidence

Reviews greatly impact the relevance of a product: they create trust, provide orientation and influence the purchasing decision. Customers are much more likely to purchase your plugins when they see positive feedback from other customers. Product reviews are broken down by several categories:

- Functionality

- Usability

- Documentation

- Support

Every individual review will be displayed on the product page. Potential customers can get a better impression of your products and services from these reviews.
In addition, the average rating will be calculated and displayed on the product page.
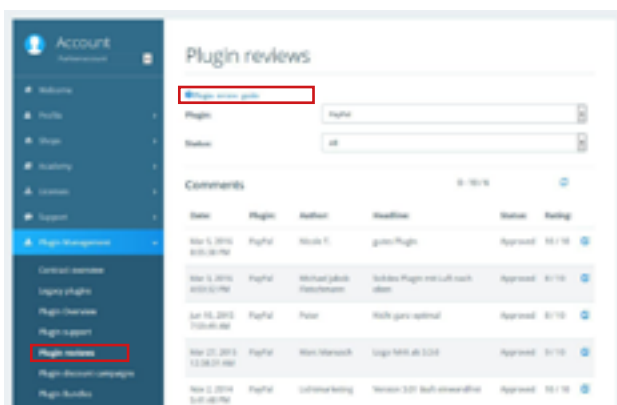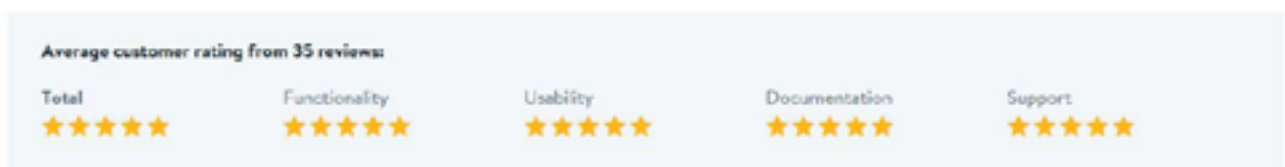
In your account, you have the possibility of verifying every evaluation and reacting to customers who submit a negative rating.
You can manage your plugin evaluations under the menu point Plugin Management > Plugin Reviews in your account.
When resolving negative feedback, you can communicate with a dissatisfied customer directly from your account. Our rating system was designed to improve the Community Store and support both you and your customers. Success is only possible when both the manufacturer and customer are satisfied.
In your account, again under Plugin Management > Plugin Reviews, you will find a small guide that provides you with more information on how this system works.

Tip:
Bad reviews sometimes happen. React as quickly as possible in order to find a solution. This is one way for you to improve your ratings.

New ideas for best sellers

Are you looking for new ideas for plugins to offer in the store? Or do you want to gather a better idea of the Community's requirements and what kind of extensions they're requesting?

For inspiration right at your fingertips, simply head over to our open Issue Tracker, where the Community is always suggesting new ideas and requirements for Shopware. Use this feedback as inspiration for new extensions:

https://issues.shopware.com

You can gather some ideas for plugins in our Shopware Forum, where members of the Community make suggestions for feature wishes (DE & EN).

Help with plugin development

So this is your first time developing an extension for Shopware – what is best way to start?

Fortunately, there are various resources at hand to help you bring your idea for a plugin to the market. As a part of our regularly scheduled Developer Training, you receive direct and personal support from those who know Shopware best.

In our Community section, you will find a rich compilation of material regarding plugin development, which is always expanding. Check out the following links to get started:

Developer's Guide: **https://developers.shopware.com/developers-guide/**
Developer's Blog: **https://developers.shopware.com/blog**
Designer's Guide: **https://developers.shopware.com/designers-guide/**

Plugins developed with the new plugin system

At the 2016 Shopware Community Day, we presented a new plugin system that offeres even more possibilities for developing extensions for Shopware 5.2. This new system offers a number of advantages, especially from a technical point of view. You can find more information and examples in our tutorial.

Available training opportunities

Fully informed and ready to go

The Shopware Academy is Shopware's in-house training center. Located in an ultra-modern facility, these courses encourage learning in a productive environment and leave participants closely informed about the topics that interest them most.

Courses encompass both Shopware as well as general topics from eCommerce.

From the application of the technology to marketing your online shop, partners and developers alike find something that enriches their Shopware experience.

Developer Training

In this course, you will dive into the technology of Shopware 5 and get to know the structure of the system, which includes performing individual programming and modifications yourself. Learn the basics of plugin development and everything that lies "under the hood" in Shopware's system. In addition, this course gives you the opportunity of becoming a "Shopware Certified Developer". This course is ideal for all programmers and is a prerequisite for the Advanced Developer Training.

Advanced Developer Training

This two-day course provides participants with an in-depth understanding of the key technologies behind Shopware 5. This training is designed for seasoned developers who already have experience working with Shopware and previously received the "Shopware Certified Developer" certificate. The training covers various aspects from working with Doctrine, modifying the product listing, developing plugins and upgrading existing backend modules.

For more information and to apply:

https://en.shopware.com/Academy/list/

Template Training

The template is one of the most important factors of an online shop – it's the first thing people see when they visit the store and likely the most memorable aspect. Templates are pivotal to the success of your online shop and should therefore be regarded with special importance.

Life is too short for boring webshops. That's why Shopware allows for an unlimited variety of custom templates. Whether adapting an existing design or creating one from scratch, this course provides you with the know-how to create your own professional templates using the best technology available. In simple steps, we guide you through the process of developing your own themes for Shopware 5. After successfully completing a short exam at the end of the training, you will become a certified "Shopware Template Designer".

Advanced Template Training

As the number of devices used to access online shops rises, as do the requirements for an online shop. This course was designed to help designers and developers face the challenges posed by modern eCommerce. Shopware's responsive template offers modern solutions that significantly simplify the legwork of creating a modern, interactive storefront. Together with experienced developers, you will learn how to apply Shopware's technologies to create your own individual templates. After successfully completing a short exam at the end of the training, you will become a certified "Advanced Shopware Template Designer."

For more information and to apply:

https://en.shopware.com/Academy/list/

The Shopware certification program

Even better marketing possibilities for your plugins

As a manufacturer of Shopware extensions, you've likely noticed a few changes in the Community Store these past few months. Namely, the new design and opportunities for marketing your extensions. After the store relaunch, we dedicated ourselves to the topic of plugin representation and certification. That's why we redesigned the process of how your plugins are certified in the Community Store and made better use of the "Shopware Certified" label.

What are my advantages?

The new certification label is a mark of quality and are true "eye-catcher", which visitors can use to identify which plugins and manufacturers represent particularly high quality and support. The graduation for certifications are "Gold", "Silver", and "Bronze". As a manufacturer, your plugins receive an extra marketing push – not only are they distinguished with a corresponding label, but they received a more prominent placement in the plugin listing and are easier to find. This distinction is therefore a true added value, as it draws attention to your plugin and increases sales.

How do I get a "**Shopware Certified**" **label?**

If you want to distinguish your extension with a Shopware certified label, you can do so by activating this option in your account under **Plugin administration > Additional options**. After doing so, the following takes place:

1. Expanded code review, done automatically by Shopware (the standard code review is constantly being revised).
2. The plugin is marked with "Code review successful" and is then placed in "candidate mode" for the bronze label.
3. After reaching the minimum metrics for the bronze status, the plugin is displayed with the "Bronze" label in the store.
4. You receive an alert that congratulates you on being Shopware certified.
5. The plugin will be regularly advertised in the Shopware Weekly newsletter
6. The plugin is then placed in "candidate mode" for the silver status (same workflow as from point 3).
7. It is then placed in "candidate mode" for the gold status (same workflow as from point 3).

Your plugin meets the requirements for being displayed with a certified label – apply now for the certification program and benefit from the exclusive distinction.

What are the basic metrics for qualifying for the certified program?

Depending on the current standing of your plugin, it might automatically qualify for one of the three certification levels. This level depends on several criteria that also include your status as a manufacturer:

- How long you've been a plugin manufacturer
- How many plugins you already have in the Community Store

- Average rating of all plugins
- Compatibility with the current version
- Average time required to update to the current version release
- Support response time (within a given time: 4 days)
- Status as a certified developer
- Code metrics – whether or not your plugin has passed the automatic code review

The bronze certified label fulfills the following metrics:

- You have been registered as a manufacturer in the Community Store for more than 6 months
- The plugin is compatible with the current Shopware version
- The plugin has min. 1 update (bugfix)
- The code review was successful

- The plugin has been purchased or downloaded a min. 25 times
- The plugin has a min. review of 4 stars
- Support for the plugin has a min. 4 stars
- There is a test version available
- The plugin comes with documentation

The silver certified label fulfills the following metrics:

- The plugin fulfils the metrics for the bronze certified label
- The plugin has more than 75 downloads
- You have been registered in the store for more than 12 months
- The plugin has min. 2 updates
- The plugin has more than 5 reviews, with no ratings lower than 4 stars

- The average rating of all plugins is min. 3.5 stars
- The support rating is a min. 4 stars
- You have more than 3 plugins already available in the Community Store
- You're a Shopware Certified Developer or have more than 10 plugins in the store

The gold certified label fulfills the following metrics:

- The plugin fulfils the metrics for the silver certified label
- You have been registered in the store for more than 18 months
- You have more than 5 plugins already available in the Community Store
- The plugin has min. 4 updates
- The plugin has more than 115 downloads
- The plugin has more than 15 reviews, with min. average 4 stars
- The average rating of all plugins is min. 4 stars
- You have completed the Shopware Advanced Developer Training or have already developed more than 20 plugins for the store (incl. inactive plugins)
- You have more than 24 months experience developing plugins

How can you go down a level?

- If the plugin receives negative reviews
- If the support performance decreases
- If it takes more than 4 weeks to update the plugin to offer compatibility with the current Shopware version
- If Shopware recognizes any disciplinary reason not mentioned here

Do not worry – if the metrics are no longer met, you will not automatically lose your status. You are granted a buffer period of two weeks to adjust your plugin/support in order to meet the metrics again.

How much does certification cost?

For participation in the certification program, we will charge a 10% surcharge of the sales commission. If you have any questions concerning the new certification program, you can contact us per email at sales@shopware.com or phone at 00 800 746 76260.