

# **StoresOnTheWeb Ecommerce Developer Guide**

*How to create custom  
Internet storefronts using  
standard HTML*



*Building Blocks for Ecommerce Communities<sup>SM</sup>*

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# Introduction

StoresOnTheWeb ("SOTW") provides this Ecommerce Developer Guide as an aid in building full-featured custom designed catalogs for Consumer and Business-to-Business transactions. Our Open Developer License gives you access to a system for creating online catalogs that match an overall website style without the need for specialized programming skills. If you design HTML pages today, you can transform them into interactive catalog templates quickly and easily.

In addition to storebuilding tools, SOTW includes Epaygate™, an integrated payment gateway controlled from a browser that replaces Cybercash™, Authorize.Net™ or other similar settlement systems. This avoids a multi-vendor solution and multiple user interfaces from which to administer your store.

Consolidating catalog components with back-end payment and reporting gives your client total control under a single-user interface.

You handle the design work, we'll handle the programming and hosting. Together we'll build better catalogs that transform your client's information website into a profit center.

**HINT!** Items in this Guide that you need to know to build online catalogs are marked with a “ ] ”.

## **StoresOnTheWeb Basics**

The SOTW Ecommerce Developer Guide describes the process by which HTML designers may create unique storefront designs that sit atop the SOTW Shopping Cart and Epaygate payment gateway system.

The storefront is made up of Department and Product page templates that act as a shopper interface into the Merchant-managed inventory database. Inventory may be entered and administered using an Internet browser, allowing password access from anywhere, at anytime.

### The Anatomy of an Ecommerce System

Here are the basic components universal to webstores:

- **Storefront Components** – Department and Product templates with product navigation, Shopping Cart and Order Form are all parts of a standard Internet catalog. Confirmation pages and email alerts are also routinely part of the active storefront.
- **Merchant Account** – Before credit cards may be authorized and settled online, a Merchant Account must be applied for and approved by a Merchant Service Company (MSC). The MSC issues a Merchant ID (MID) to the Applicant, which is used by SOTW in setting-up online card processing. The MSC manages the financial administration and merchant billing for Issuing (cardholder's) and Acquiring (merchant's) Banks on behalf of the central Network Processor that electronically transfers funds between the banks.
- **Payment Gateway** – A shopping cart that accepts credit cards must negotiate the transfer of funds from the cardholder's account to the merchant's checking account. This software interface is called the "payment gateway" and uses the Merchant ID account number and encrypted keys to verify proper identity.

- **Batch Deposit Reconciliation** – As orders are settled, on a daily basis these transactions are recorded in the Merchant’s corporate accounting system as deposits. The group of orders is called a Batch. Daily batch transactions are summarized in the month-end accounts statements of both the Merchant Service Company and the merchant’s commercial bank. Epaygate produces a Batch Deposit Report that lists all financial transactions for each order from initial confirmation of purchase to capture and settlement. The summary report streamlines month-end account reconciliation and provides a complete audit trail of the transaction history of each order.

## ***Variables transform HTML into Templates***

At the heart of the store customization is Variable Replacement. Section Two of this Guide contains the list of Variables, their definition and usage. By placing these variables in your HTML pages, you create catalog templates that can be applied across the entire storefront. Each variable calls up a different piece of stored information unique to a client like a company name, logo, product data, product navigation menus and so on.

Example: Placing the `#{Logo}` variable in an HTML page catalog template will trigger the SOTW Interpreter to place the client’s logo image in an exact position within the page. This image can be uploaded and updated from the Store Manager without having to alter the catalog template each time a change is made to the logo.

By using variable replacement you create versatile catalog templates that can be applied across every product in inventory. As a designer, you can build a library of templates that can be quickly re-deployed with minor style changes. Whether each catalog is built from the ground-up or is a derivative of earlier created templates, your focus will be on style, rather than programming.

