

Hiring an ecommerce SEO specialist is not just about finding someone who can improve rankings. The right person should help more shoppers find the right products, make your category and product pages more useful, and connect organic search work to commercial outcomes.

That distinction matters. A store can gain impressions and clicks while sales stay flat: a familiar “traffic up, sales flat” postmortem. Perhaps the new visitors have little buying intent. Perhaps key category pages are weak, product pages leave shoppers with unanswered questions, or technical issues stop search engines from understanding the catalogue.

When assessing candidates, look beyond promises of rapid growth or claims about the latest Google updates. Ask how they diagnose your store, which page templates they would prioritise, and how they will measure whether their work improves revenue—not just visibility.

1. Look for fundamentals, not trend-chasing

Ecommerce SEO changes, but the basics still do a lot of the heavy lifting: crawlable pages, clear site architecture, useful content, sensible internal links, and pages that match what shoppers are looking for. A strong specialist understands new developments without treating every Google update as an emergency.

Ask candidates to explain how they decide whether a change matters to your store. They should be able to distinguish a confirmed technical problem from normal ranking movement, and explain what evidence they would check before recommending major changes. “Google changed something, so we need to rewrite everything” is not a strategy.

Trend awareness can still be useful. For example, social commerce may affect how people discover products and what information they expect to see before buying. But an SEO specialist should explain how that observation translates into a specific action for your site—such as clearer product details, stronger category recommendations, or better alignment between social campaigns and landing pages. They should not pitch a trend as a substitute for fixing an unhelpful page.

For a broader view of market conditions, some teams use resources such as PESTLE analysis to organise political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors. That context can inform planning, but it does not replace search data, customer research, or an understanding of your catalogue.

2. Expect a clear approach to purchase intent mapping

Different searches signal different needs. Someone searching “how to choose hiking boots” may be researching, while someone searching “waterproof hiking boots size 8” is closer to selecting a product. An ecommerce SEO specialist should be able to map those needs to the right pages.



This process—purchase intent mapping—helps prevent a common mistake: sending every valuable keyword to a product page or publishing blog content for searches that a well-built category page could serve better. The specialist should show how they identify intent, group related searches, and choose the page type that can best satisfy each group.

Questions to ask about intent mapping

- How will you identify the searches that are most likely to lead to a purchase?
- How do you decide whether a query belongs on a category, product, guide, or support page?
- How will you handle overlapping keywords that could compete with one another?
- How will you account for brand, product type, size, material, use case, and other purchase modifiers?
- How will you connect search intent to revenue and conversion data?

A good answer should include practical examples. For instance, “best boots for winter hiking” could suit a buying guide that helps shoppers compare options, while “women’s insulated hiking boots” may be better served by a relevant category page. Specific model names, sizes, and colours may call for product pages—provided those pages are available and useful.

3. Make category page strategy a core part of the conversation

Category pages often sit between discovery and purchase. They can attract searches for product types and help shoppers narrow down a large selection, yet they are [pestleanalysis](#) frequently overlooked in favour of blog articles or one-off technical recommendations.

Ask the candidate which category page strategy they would use for your catalogue. They should consider how categories are organised, whether their names make sense to customers, and how filters affect both usability and crawlability. They should also be able to explain how category descriptions, headings, product selection, and internal links contribute to a useful page—not simply suggest adding a block of generic text to every category.

Faceted navigation and technical SEO at scale

Filters for size, colour, price, brand, and other attributes can make shopping easier. But when every filter combination creates a crawlable URL, a large store may end up with many near-duplicate or low-value pages. Managing this is a central part of technical SEO at scale.

A qualified specialist should be comfortable reviewing how your platform handles filtered URLs, pagination, canonical tags, internal links, and indexation. They should not recommend blocking or canonicalising URLs without first understanding which filtered pages have genuine search demand and serve a distinct purpose.

Ask them to explain how they would prioritise fixes across your catalogue. The best plan is not necessarily to change every URL at once. It may be safer to test a focused set of category templates, monitor crawling and organic performance, and then roll out changes with clear quality checks.

4. Check that product pages are genuinely useful

A product page needs to do more than repeat a manufacturer's description. It should help a shopper decide whether this is the right item and make the next step easy. For a pair of boots, that could mean clear sizing guidance, materials, fit notes, care instructions, stock availability, delivery costs, and returns information.

Ask how the specialist would work with your merchandising, ecommerce, and customer service teams to improve product-page usefulness. SEO recommendations should reflect what customers actually need to know, not just what can be added to a template. Useful reviews, clear specifications, and accurate delivery information can support both search visibility and conversion.

Conversion is part of the SEO conversation

Organic traffic has limited value if the landing page cannot answer shoppers' questions or guide them toward a purchase. A strong specialist pays attention to how search visitors behave: which pages they land on, whether they find relevant products, and where they drop out of the journey.

That does not mean an SEO consultant should claim ownership of every conversion change. It means they should recognise when a page's usability may be limiting the value of organic traffic and collaborate with the teams responsible for design, merchandising, and conversion rate optimisation.

5. Look for a measurement plan tied to commercial outcomes

Before work begins, agree on how success will be measured. Rankings and organic sessions can help diagnose performance, but they are not the whole business case. A useful reporting plan links SEO activity to commercial outcomes such as qualified visits, revenue, orders, conversion rate, and performance by product category or landing-page type.

Ask the candidate to describe their baseline and reporting approach. They should want to understand your analytics setup, attribution limitations, seasonality, margin differences, and the way your business defines a valuable order. They should also explain which metrics are leading indicators—such as improved indexation—and which reflect business impact.

Area to assess Useful evidence Potential warning sign Organic visibility Relevant landing-page and query trends
Rankings presented without context Commercial impact Revenue, orders, and conversion by page type Traffic
growth treated as proof of success Technical SEO at scale Prioritised fixes and a way to validate them Large
sitewide changes with no testing plan Page quality Recommendations tailored to category and product templates
One generic checklist for every URL

If a candidate shows ranking screenshots, ask what happened to sales, leads, or other outcomes over the same period. A rise in visibility can be encouraging, but it needs revenue context before you can judge its value.

6. Test how they work with your platform and team

SEO recommendations need to make it through your ecommerce platform, development process, and approval workflow. A technically strong plan that nobody can implement is not much of a plan. Ask candidates how they document tickets, prioritise developer time, validate releases, and handle platform limitations.



Find out who will do the work day to day, how often you will meet, and what you can expect in the first 90 days. A specialist from an agency such as Clickslice may bring a wider team or established processes; an independent consultant may offer closer access to the person doing the analysis. Neither model is automatically better. Focus on fit, accountability, and the quality of the proposed work.

Ask for a sample audit, project plan, or reporting document with sensitive information removed. Look for clear reasoning and prioritisation—not just a long list of issues. The strongest recommendations explain the problem, the affected page template, the expected benefit, the effort involved, and how results will be checked.

7. Watch for warning signs

- **Guaranteed rankings:** No credible specialist can promise a specific position for a competitive query.
- **One-size-fits-all content plans:** Publishing more blog posts is not the answer if category pages better match your customers' intent.
- **Fear-based updates:** Google updates deserve attention, but not every fluctuation requires an emergency response.
- **Unclear technical recommendations:** Ask what each change affects, why it matters, and how it will be tested.
- **No commercial discussion:** If a candidate never asks about products, margins, stock, or sales goals, they may not be thinking about your business.
- **Overconfident attribution:** SEO results are affected by seasonality, promotions, stock levels, and other channels. Look for honest analysis rather than simplistic credit claims.

8. Use a practical hiring scorecard

To compare candidates fairly, ask each one the same questions and score their answers against your priorities. A short exercise can reveal more than a polished pitch: give them a few category and product URLs, a business objective, and a snapshot of search or sales data. Ask what they would investigate first and why.

1. Can they explain how they would map purchase intent to page types?
2. Do they understand category templates, product pages, and faceted navigation?
3. Can they connect technical SEO at scale to a realistic implementation plan?
4. Do they identify product-page improvements that could help shoppers convert?
5. Can they define success using commercial outcomes as well as SEO metrics?
6. Are their recommendations specific to your catalogue and your team's capabilities?

Choose the specialist who can connect search to shopping

The best ecommerce SEO specialist is not the person with the loudest prediction about Google updates or the biggest list of keywords. It is the person who can explain how shoppers search, which page template should answer each need, and what practical changes could improve discovery and purchase.

Look for solid fundamentals, thoughtful purchase intent mapping, a credible category page strategy, useful product-page recommendations, and technical SEO at scale that your team can implement. Most importantly, insist on a measurement approach that puts traffic in context and keeps commercial outcomes in view. That is how you avoid celebrating "traffic up, sales flat" as a win—and choose a partner who helps organic search contribute to the business.