

The 10 Pillars of E-commerce Scale-Up

A diagnostic matrix. Each pillar names the structural risk if ignored and the first three actions that usually unlock it.

CORE

Set the Foundation

The substrate. Every pillar above these leans on a sound technical base and a consistent brand story.

01

FOUNDATION

Scalability of the Setup

Risk: Current architecture can't absorb 2–3× volume without breaking the shop, ops, or back-office.

- Audit shop, ERP, fulfillment, automations
- Sequence: fix → test → improve → scale
- No growth spend until base holds

02

BRAND

Narrative, Styleguide & Personas

Risk: A diffuse brand weakens PR, paid and owned channels at the same time.

- Claim, origin story & quality promise
- Styleguide enforced on every touchpoint
- 2–3 personas mapped to a journey

ENGINE

Build the Engine

The machine that turns visits into fulfilled, profitable orders. Storefront, logistics, back-office and cash work as one.

03

STOREFRONT

UX & Conversion Integrity

Risk: Friction taxes every euro of paid and organic traffic silently.

- Mobile-first audit & button logic
- Clean nav, filters, search
- Reviews & testimonials on-site

04

FULFILLMENT

Shipping, Returns & Urgency

Risk: Logistics policy is a silent conversion lever — or a silent killer.

- Free-shipping threshold + free returns
- Express & cut-off-time promises
- Peak-volume & 3PL fallback plan

05

OPERATIONS

ERP, B2B & Data Hygiene

Risk: Running operations on the shop platform caps scale and corrupts reporting.

- Dedicated ERP with inventory logic
- B2B separated from D2C cleanly
- Clean migration & one source of truth

06

CAPITAL

Cash & Working Capital

Risk: Revenue scales linearly; working-capital need scales first — and faster.

- Rolling liquidity plan (base/best/worst)
- ABC + NOS forecasting
- Trade credit / supplier terms

GROWTH

Activate Growth

Demand generation and retention layers. Each compounds revenue once the engine reliably handles volume.

07

CRM

Lifecycle & Automation

Risk: Without a CRM, you rent your customers back from ad platforms every month.

- Purpose-built tool (not the shop)
- Welcome, review, win-back flows
- Cohort & segment messaging

08

ASSORTMENT

AOV & Cross-Sell

Risk: Basket value is usually the fastest margin lever left on the table.

- True cross-sell by category/variant
- Cart add-ons & small-ticket SKUs
- NOS + tiered price points

09

PAID MEDIA

Prospecting & Retargeting

Risk: Paid spend amplifies whatever the funnel is — good or bad.

- Pixel + Conversion API + feed
- Prospecting + retargeting + LAL
- ROAS / CPA as steering KPIs

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MEASUREMENT

KPIs, Marketplaces & PR

Risk: Without a KPI backbone, decisions default to the loudest voice in the room.

- Weekly KPI dashboard & cohorts
- Marketplaces as NOS reach
- PR, influencers & compliance