

# E-COMMERCE TERMS IN EVERYDAY USAGE

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**Abstract:**

*In current usage, terminology is the study of terms and their use. Terms are words that have different meanings according to different contexts. Terminological practice is the result to information explosion in different fields which lead to a large concern with appropriate denomination for several new terms and concepts. In the following paper, our aim is to take a look at the recent terminology in e-commerce field, a constantly growing and changing area, as the virtual world keeps developing, and at the importance these new terms have in our daily life.*

**Keywords:** *terminology, terms, e-commerce, online.*

Globalization nowadays requires specialists and professionals who can enable communication between different countries exceeding the linguistic and cultural barriers. Their success resides mainly in the ability to understand and transmit information in pure form taking into consideration language skills and competences with respect to their professional areas.

In order to understand various professional areas, some decades ago the languages for specific purposes were developed. Basically, special languages are thought of as systems deriving from the common language we all know. It is on the basis of this general knowledge that special knowledge is developed.

In order to speak about LSP, it is necessary to understand their meaning. In 1988, Strevens says about these languages that they “are related in content (in its theme and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities.”(Strevens 1988: 2) Special languages are usually thought of as the means of expression of highly qualified subject specialists.

“One of the reasons for this growing interest in LSP is due to the developments in the academic and scientific world which are exerting a strong influence on society and on education and life of the individual. On the other hand, this interest originated in the widening gap between specialists and laymen, preventing the free transfer of information and communication, as it is essential for the individual to have access to the complex fields of knowledge and science if he is to take a rational part in the development of society.” (Ciobanu 1999: 2)

The study of languages for special purposes has received a significant impact since the mid sixties. Before, in the 1920s the Prague linguistic circle defined the functional language, which made clear the fact there are specific elements typical of different areas. “In the 1930s the German linguistics introduced the concept of *Fachsprachen*, and in the beginning of 1950s Savory published *The Language of Science. Its Growth, Character and Usage* (1953), which laid the foundations for the theory of languages for special purposes, later referred to as languages for specific purposes.” (Galova 2007: 2)

The end of the Second World War represented a milestone in the development of the scientific, technical and economic activities on an international scale. This tremendous development was also perceived in a considerable influence upon language in general and special languages in particular. After the seventies though, the linguists

have agreed that LSP serve for the needs of individual fields such as science, law, medicine, technology, economics, etc. In conclusion, there has been an ever increasing number of special languages that keep developing in accordance with society's needs. Recently, due to the impact of information technology in our lives, there are more and more terms related to the IT field, being part of e-commerce terminology.

If we take a look at the *e-commerce* term, we sense very soon the fact that the prefix *e-* establishes the connection of trade with the electronic world, a contemporary trademark. Moreover, almost all of the e-commerce terms are in English and many of them are not translated into Romanian, which emphasizes the importance of English language in everyday usage. The number of people using English for communication is increasing, thus showing the dominant position this language actually has.

What is in fact *e-commerce*? According to Wikipedia, "it is a type of industry where buying and selling of product or service is conducted over electronic systems such as the Internet and other computer networks. [...] Modern electronic commerce typically uses the World Wide Web at least at one point in the transaction's life-cycle, although it may encompass a wider range of technologies such as e-mail, mobile devices, social media, and telephones as well." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-commerce>)

All special languages have their characteristics. LSP often measure the type of sentence, the verb forms and main tenses used, the nominal groups, as well as less used structures such as idioms or personal pronouns. The e-commerce language is a language that uses many acronyms besides the traditional declarative sentences. Here's a list of the most common e-commerce terms. I inserted their semantic category, the definition and their translation into Romanian (if they have one). I also mentioned the Romanian semantic category to notice any changes. The definitions are taken over from specialized sites: [www.ecommerce-quickguide.com](http://www.ecommerce-quickguide.com) and [www.techterms.com](http://www.techterms.com).

- Affiliate (n) - Any web site or business that provides links or sales to your site through their own marketing efforts (Ro: afiliat, n)
- B2B - Generally refers to selling products or services to other businesses, acronym standing for business to business (Ro: B2B)
- B2C - Generally refers to selling products or services to end consumers, acronym standing for business to consumer (Ro: B2C)
- Banner (n) - An advertisement or image displayed on one or more web sites to attract visitors to your site (Ro: banner, panou publicitar online, n)
- Browser (n) - A Web browser, often just called a "browser," is the program people use to access the World Wide Web (Ro: browser, n)
- Cache (n) - stores recently-used information in a place where it can be accessed extremely fast (Ro: cache, n)
- Captcha (n) - is a program used to verify that a human, rather than a computer, is entering data. Captchas are commonly seen at the end of online forms and ask the user to enter text from a distorted image. The name "captcha" comes from the word "capture," since it captures human responses. It may also be written "CAPTCHA," which is an acronym for "Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart." (Ro: captcha, n)
- Conversion rate (n) also Transaction Conversion Rate (n) - The percentage of visitors who take a desired action on your web site (Ro: rată de conversie, n)
- Cloud (n) – the term comes from early network diagrams, in which the image of a cloud was used to indicate a large network. The cloud eventually became associated with the entire Internet, and the two terms are now used synonymously. (Ro: cloud, n.)

- Cookie (n) - is a small amount of data generated by a website and saved by your web browser. Its purpose is to remember information about you. (Ro: cookie, n)
- Directory (n) - A search service that arranges the web pages in its database (often through a registration process) into categories and subcategories. (Ro: director, n)
- Domain name (n) - A user friendly name that represents a location on the Internet (Ro: domeniu)
- E-commerce (n) – refers to business over the internet. The two major forms of e-commerce are Business-to-Consumer (B2C) and Business-to-Business (B2B). The terms "e-business" and "e-tailing" are often used synonymously with e-commerce. (Ro: comerț electronic, comerț online, n.)
- E-mail marketing (n) - The use of email to promote or market your products or services (Ro: marketing prin e-mail, more often e-mail marketing, n.)
- File (n) - A file is a collection of data stored in one unit, identified by a filename (Ro: fișier, n)
- Forum (n) – An online discussion where visitors may read and post information or comments (Ro: forum, n.)
- .gif (n) - The letters "GIF" actually stand for "Graphics Interchange Format." It is an image file format used widely on the web (Ro: .gif, n.)
- Home page (n) – the opening page of your website (Ro: pagină de pornire/home page, n.)
- JavaScript (n) - A scripting language used in the development of web pages. Generally refers to client side web programming (Ro: JavaScript, n.)
- .jpg/.jpeg (n) - Image file format used widely on the web (Ro: .jpg/.jpeg)
- Keyword (n) - A word used to perform a search (Ro: cuvânt cheie, n.)
- Key phrase (n) - A phrase used to perform a search (Ro: frază cheie, n.)
- Keyword research (n) - The search for keywords related to your web site (Ro: căutare după cuvânt cheie, n.)
- Link popularity (n) - A measure of the quality and quantity of sites that link to your site (Ro: popularitatea linkului/număr de vizitatori per link)
- Log file (n+n) - A file that maintains a record of the requests for resources on your web site. It is a file that contains a list of events, which have been "logged" by a computer (Ro: fișier log, n+n )
- Merchant Account (n) - A bank service account that allows you to accept credit card transactions. Just one part of the process of accepting online credit card orders (Ro: cont comerciant, n)
- Navigation (n) - Generally referred to as the structure and process of moving from one page or section of a web site to another (Ro: navigare,n)
- Page view (n) - A request to load a single HTML page (Ro: vizualizare pagină, n)
- Payment Gateway (n) - An internet service that connects your e-commerce site with your Merchant Account. A gateway accepts your order information and connects to your Merchant Account to authorize and transfer funds (Ro: gateway de plată)
- Pay-per-click (n) - Used to describe those search engine services that charge for creating visitors to your site. The cost of each visitor is determined either by a BID or FLAT FEE that you are charged each time a search engine user clicks on a link to your site from these sponsored links (Ro: plata pe click/comandă)

- Permission marketing (n) - Marketing based on getting a user's consent to receive information from your company or web site (Ro: permission marketing, n)
- Pop-up (n) - The term "pop-up" has two computer-related meanings. One refers to a window and the other is a type of menu. A pop-up window is a type of window that opens without the user selecting "New Window" from a program's File menu. A pop-up menu is a type of menu that pops up on the screen when the user right-clicks a certain object or area (Ro: pop-up, n)
- Search engine (n) - A program that indexes web documents and attempts to match those documents with search words or phrases enter by a user (Ro: motor de căutare, n)
- Search engine optimization (n) - The process of building web pages target toward getting higher ranking in search engines (Ro: optimizarea motorului de cautare, n)
- Shopping Cart: Generally refers to the portion of an e-commerce site that maintains a list of the products chosen by a visitor to purchase. Can stand alone (using an HTML or other product presentation format) or can be part of an e-commerce solution (Ro: coș de cumpărături, n)
- Spam (n) - Originating from the name of Hormel's canned meat, "spam" now also refers to junk e-mail or irrelevant postings to a newsgroup or bulletin board. It is an unsolicited commercial email (Ro: spam, n)
- URL/Universal Resource Location (n) - Location of a resource (web page, file, image, etc.) on the Internet (Ro: URL, n)
- Web browser (n) - A software application that allows you to view resources (primarily HTML web pages) on the Internet (Ro: browser web, n)
- Web design (n) - The creation and coordination of information in a web site (Ro: design web/ web design, n)
- Web hosting (n) - A computer that is always connected to the internet and provides access to web resources for a web site (Ro: găzduire web/web hosting, n)
- Web Resource (n) - Any HTML file, image or other computer file that can be reached through a URL (Ro: resurse web, n)
- Web site traffic (n) - The number of visitors and visits to your web site. Can be measured in Hits, Page Hits or Unique Visitors (Ro: traficul web site-ului, n).

After this short guide of e-commerce terms, we can draw the following conclusions concerning the nouns/phrases above mentioned:

1. Taking into consideration the semantic category of the words/phrases studied, all of them are nouns in English, and this category remains unchanged in Romanian as well.
2. Out of the 43 words/phrases analysed, 20 keep the English form in Romanian usage, which means that 46.51% of the words are used exclusively in English (ex: browser, cache, cloud, pop-up, etc.)
3. There are as well many English terms that can be partially translated into Romanian; either one term out of two is used in Romanian, while the other term remains in English, or there is both a Romanian form and an English one. More exactly we have 10 such terms, which equals 23.25% of the words examined. (ex: e-commerce, link popularity, etc.)
4. Polysemy (widening of meaning) has an interesting approach in the area of e-commerce. There are some terms that have a Romanian equivalent, but due to the fact that their meaning previously existed in a different area, people

- prefer using the specific English term: (cookie = prăjitură/cookie, cloud= nor/cloud)
5. It contains numerous acronyms (ex: CAPTCHA, URL, HTML, B2B, B2C, GIF, etc.)
  6. It contains compound words. Compound words that contain prepositions, articles or adverbs are more often hyphenated than compounds (ex: pop-up: vb+prep, pay-per-click: vb+prep+n).
  7. There are situations where the words remain in English, while the word order is changed to the Romanian word order (ex: En: web browser = Ro: browser web)

All these conclusions stand for a rapid and large spread of electronic commerce in our lives. Many words and their Romanian equivalents show appropriateness of enlarging the Romanian dictionaries with neologisms coming from this area. Other words, where at least in practice, people prefer the English term, prove the fact that Romanian language does not have the basis for such a rapid development of new terms and the fact that English is world-wide.

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