

CASE STUDY - INTEGRATING MERCHANT TOOLS WITH A SHOPPING CART

INTRODUCTION

In March 2018 we wanted to integrate our new merchant tools with a popular shopping cart system to build out a little merchandise demo shop where users could spend their JSE tokens.

METHODS

We chose WooCommerce as this is currently the largest open-source shopping cart system. It is a wordpress plugin and therefore would integrate well with our existing wordpress blog. All code would be written in PHP as closely as possible to the Wordpress/Woocommerce standards.

RESULTS

The development of a payment gateway was difficult due to a lack of familiarity with woocommerce/wordpress source code and it's been a few years since doing anything with PHP. The project was completed in a couple of days with a few tweaks still being made since submitting the plugin to Wordpress. The merchandise shop is setup and live at <https://jsecoin.com/shop>

DISCUSSION

Integrating the merchant tools with a custom shopping cart system should be made as simple as possible. This is still quite an undertaking that we can't really expect end-users to carry out for the project at this stage. WooCommerce is just one of hundreds of shopping cart systems available and in use today. One of the major SaaS systems currently running high volume is Shopify and it would be good to integrate with their platform if/when they open up development of new gateways*

For anyone creating a new integration we would recommend getting as familiar as possible with how other payment gateways on the platform operate. A lot of the code is open-source and freely available however for WooCommerce the majority is also outdated and dysfunctional with the latest release.

One consideration for anyone looking to accept payments in cryptocurrency is how you set the exchange rates or pricing compared to USD or any other currency. At the present time most goods and services being sold will be purchased by the merchant in fiat currencies which potentially could cause issues with the volatility of the crypto markets.

Overall we are happy with how the integration went. As a proof of concept it shows that we can integrate the merchant tools with shopping cart software with reasonable ease using standard gateway technologies.

The merchandise shop will open later this week and we will be maintaining and improving the gateway plugin as we find new requirements.