



Cities With the Smallest Female Wage Gap

Introduction

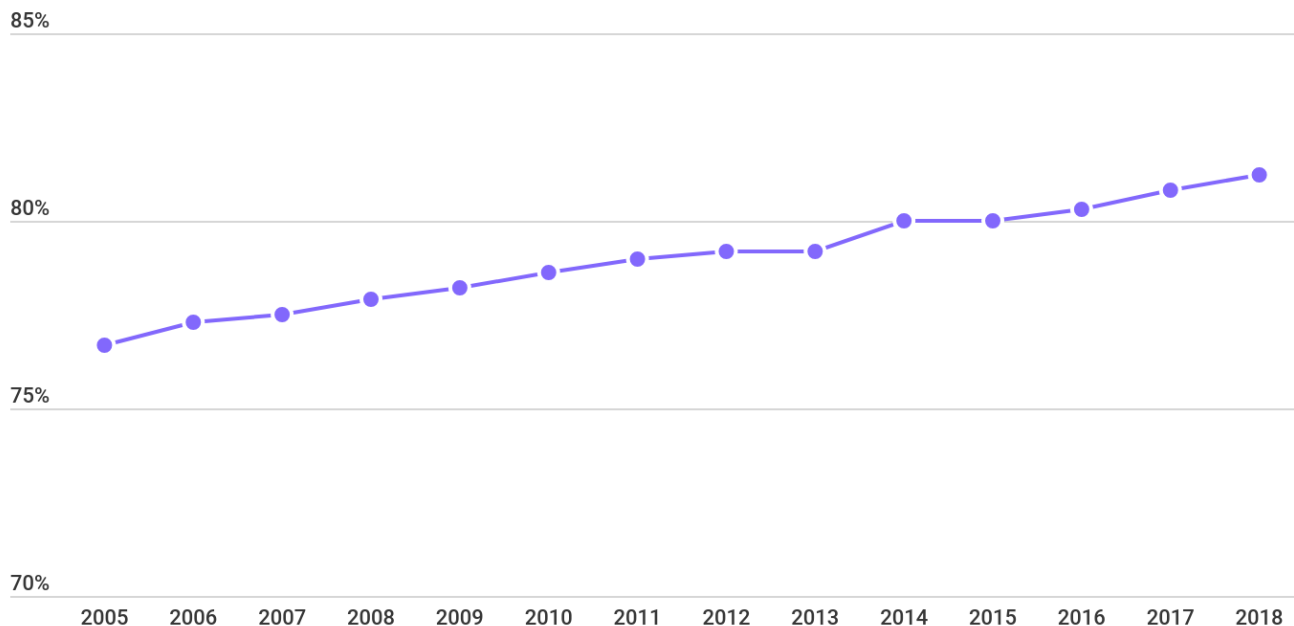
Over the past several decades, female participation in the workforce has risen sharply. According to [Pew Research Center](#), women comprise 47% of the U.S. labor force, an increase from 30% in 1950. The same report shows that women are now more likely than men to hold a bachelor's degree (38% vs. 33%) or postgraduate degree (14% vs. 12%). However, despite increased labor force participation and educational attainment, women continue to experience lower wages than their male counterparts.

According to the latest data from the *2018 American Community Survey*, women earn only [81 cents](#) for every dollar earned by men. The median annual earnings for full-time working women is \$42,238, compared to \$52,004 for full-time working men. The picture was much bleaker less than 15 years ago when women earned barely three-quarters as much as men. Although the gender wage gap in the U.S. has narrowed considerably in the last few decades, the possibility of gender parity remains in the distant future.



U.S. gender wage gap slowly narrowing

Women's earnings compared to men's



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey (full-time year-round workers 16 and over with earnings)



Research shows that a variety of social and economic factors likely contribute to the pay gap. A report by [Pew Research Center](#) found that 42% of working women say they have been subjected to gender-based discrimination on the job, citing examples such as receiving less support from senior leadership, being treated as incompetent, or earning less than a man for doing the same job. The same research shows that 22% of women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, compared to only 7% of men.

Compared to men, women tend to advance more slowly through organizational hierarchies—a trend referred to as the glass ceiling effect. Research from McKinsey’s [Women in the Workplace](#) report shows that women are only slightly less likely than men to be hired for entry-level positions, but are significantly less likely to be hired for or promoted to managerial positions. As a result, men hold 62% of manager positions, compared to only 38% for women.

Part of this effect stems from women being more likely than men to [take time out of the workforce](#) to care for young children. These career interruptions contribute to the “motherhood penalty,” a phenomenon that [negatively impacts women’s earnings](#) and career advancement. Interestingly, studies have shown that men with children are more likely to receive [wage increases](#) compared to men without children.

Whether or not by choice, women also tend to work in different industries and occupations than men, many of which don’t pay as well. According to data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, women only hold [24% of STEM jobs](#), which tend to pay higher than non-STEM jobs.

Census data shows that some occupations and industries are better than others when it comes to equal pay for men and women. Women in maintenance occupations are the worst paid relative to men, earning less than 55% of what men earn. Women in legal occupations don’t fare much better, earning 63.3% of what men earn. In part, this is because [men are better represented](#) among the highest-paying legal jobs, such as lawyers. But even among lawyers, women tend to earn significantly less.

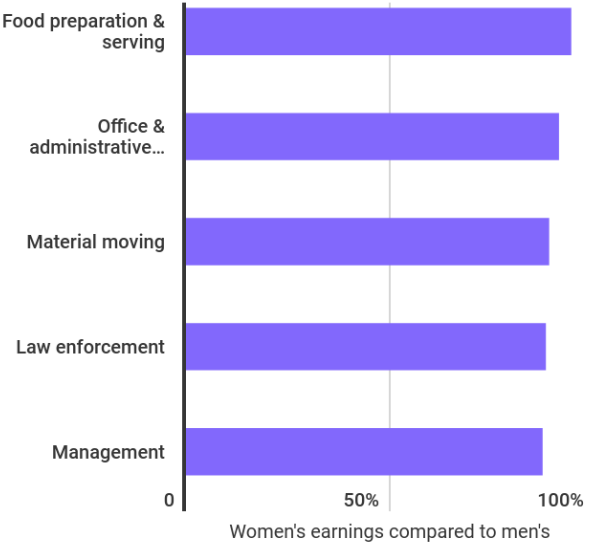


At the other end of the spectrum, in lower-paying food preparation and serving related occupations, the gap between men's and women's earnings shrinks to less than 6%.

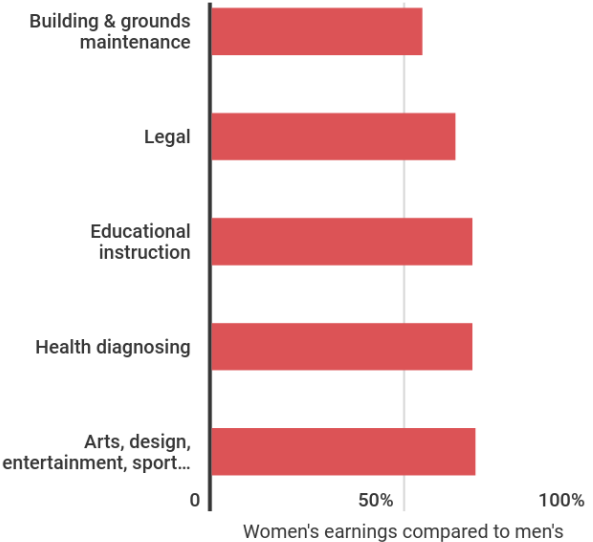


Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings by occupation

Best-paying occupations for women



Worst-paying occupations for women



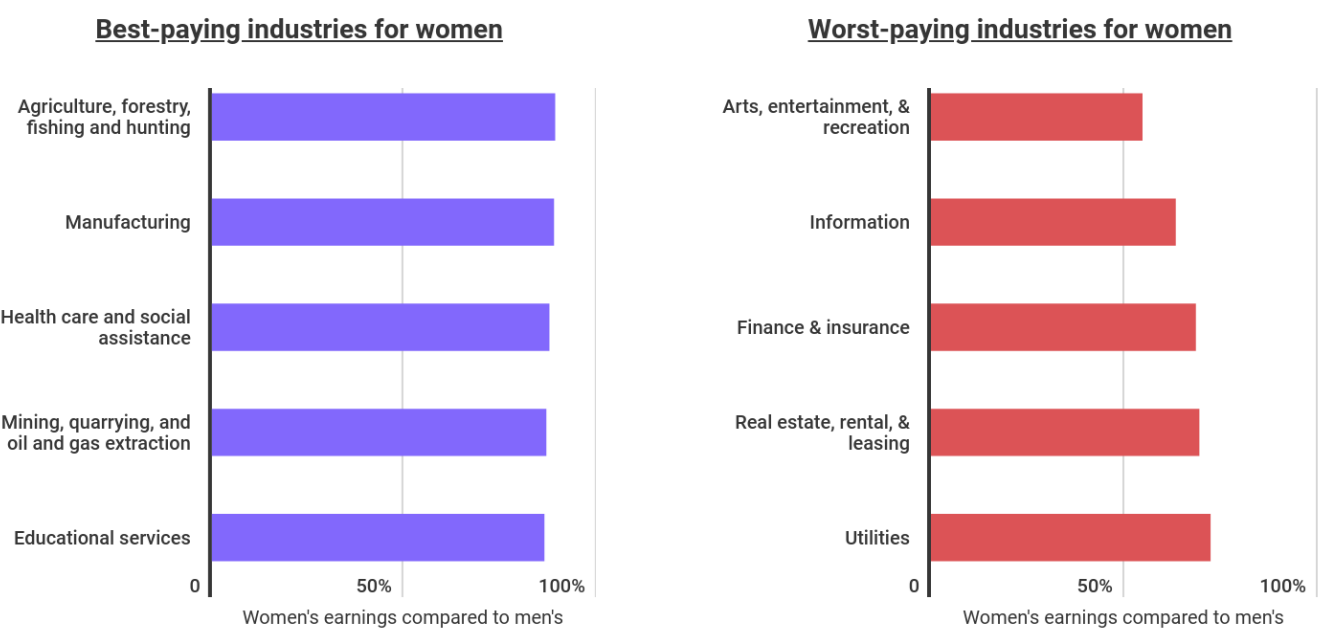
Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey



Industries also vary widely in the disparity in pay between men and women. Women in the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry earn just slightly more than half of what men earn, while the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry has the most equal pay, with women earning almost 90 cents on the dollar compared to what men earn. The manufacturing industry is a close second in most equal pay, with women earning 89.1% of what men earn. Women working in health care also have smaller wage gaps relative to men.



Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings by industry



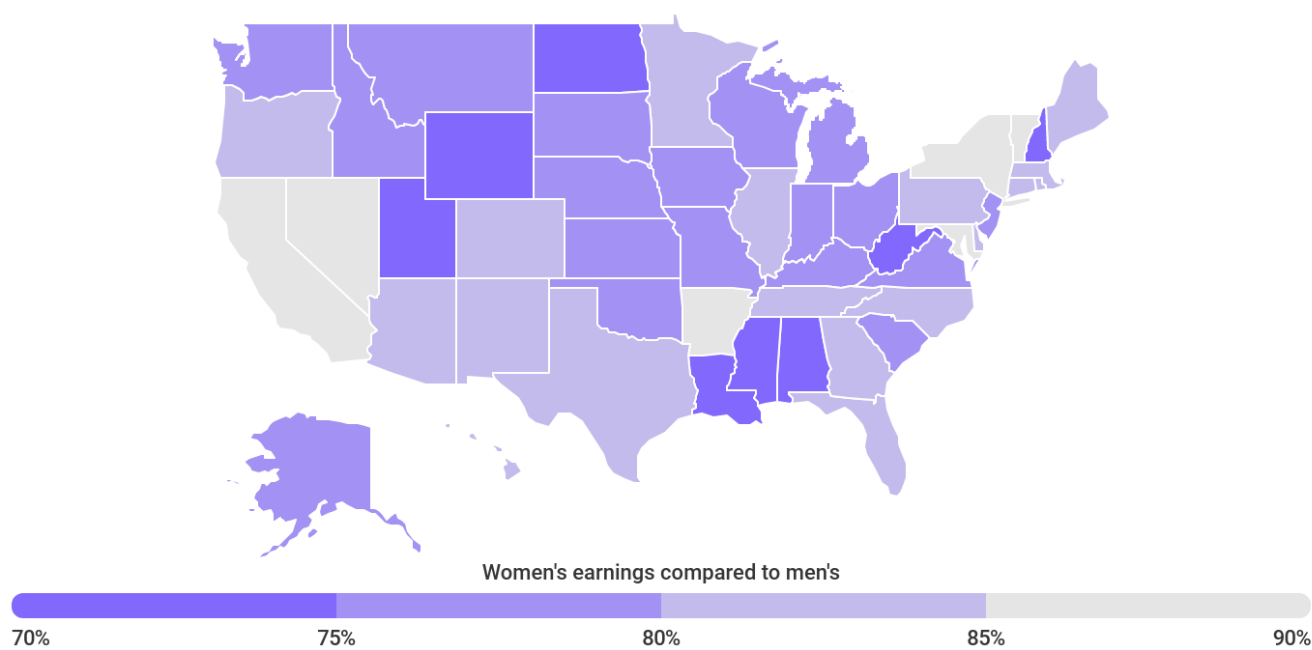
Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey



While the downward trend in the gender wage gap is clear at the national level, the difference in pay between men and women varies widely by location. States on the West Coast and Northeast tend to have more equal pay between men and women, with California, New York, Maryland, and Nevada boasting the smallest gender wage gaps. Conversely, states like Wyoming, Louisiana, and West Virginia have the largest gender wage gaps.



Male & female earnings are closer in coastal states



Source: U.S.Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey



At an even more granular level, wage gaps vary significantly across cities. To find the cities with the smallest and largest gender wage gaps in the U.S., researchers at Volusion analyzed data from the Census Bureau’s 2018 American Community Survey. For the purpose of this analysis, the gender wage gap is defined as the ratio of full-time working women’s annual earnings to full-time working men’s annual earnings.

At the city level, areas with the smallest gender wage gaps are also geographically diverse. But similar to the state-level analysis, cities with the smallest gender wage gaps are more likely to be on the West Coast or in the Northeast. Here are the cities with the smallest gender wage gap:

Small & midsize cities where women earn the most compared to men

Small Cities	Percent*	Midsize Cities	Percent*
1. Boulder, CO	116.4%	1. Yonkers, NY	101.4%
2. Waterbury, CT	106.9%	2. Spring Valley, NV	101.0%
3. Syracuse, NY	101.7%	3. Tempe, AZ	100.5%
4. Vista, CA	101.4%	4. Springfield, MO	100.3%
5. Pueblo, CA	100.7%	5. Salinas, CA	99.8%
6. Hartford, CT	100.0%	6. Richmond, VA	99.5%
7. New Haven, CT	99.6%	7. Providence, RI	98.8%
8. Pasadena, CA	99.5%	8. Hollywood, FL	98.4%
9. Miami Gardens, FL	99.0%	9. Oxnard, CA	96.7%
10. Bridgeport, CT	98.3%	10. Salem, OR	96.5%
11. Inglewood, CA	97.7%	11. Alexandria, VA	96.0%
12. El Monte, CA	97.6%	12. Escondido, CA	96.0%
13. Pearland, TX	97.3%	13. Paradise, NV	96.0%
14. Miramar, FL	96.5%	14. Jersey City, NJ	93.6%
15. Costa Mesa, CA	96.3%	15. Winston-Salem, NC	92.7%

**Women's median earnings as a percentage of men's median earnings for full-time workers 16 years and over*



15 Large U.S. Cities with the Smallest Gender Wage Gaps

15. Dallas, TX

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 90.7%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$40,402
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$44,540
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Arts, entertainment, and recreation
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Health technologists and technicians



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

14. Tucson, AZ

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 91.0%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$33,729
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$37,060
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Real estate and rental and leasing
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Healthcare support occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

13. Denver, CO

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 91.2%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$51,565
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$56,541
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Utilities
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo



12. Houston, TX

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 91.9%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$38,267
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$41,647
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

11. Phoenix, AZ

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 92.1%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$39,420
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$42,797
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Life, physical, and social science occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

10. Detroit, MI

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 92.4%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$32,965
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$35,689
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Real estate and rental and leasing
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo



9. New York, NY

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 92.4%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$52,162
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$56,453
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Construction and extraction occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

8. Boston, MA

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 92.5%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$57,466
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$62,101
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Protective service workers



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

7. Chicago, IL

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 92.6%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$50,756
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$54,800
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Construction and extraction occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo



6. Oakland, CA

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 94.0%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$61,856
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$65,783
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Wholesale trade
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Protective service workers



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5. Fresno, CA

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 94.9%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$40,179
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$42,330
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Utilities
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations



Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

4. Minneapolis, MN

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 95.1%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$53,047
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$55,758
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Architecture and engineering occupations

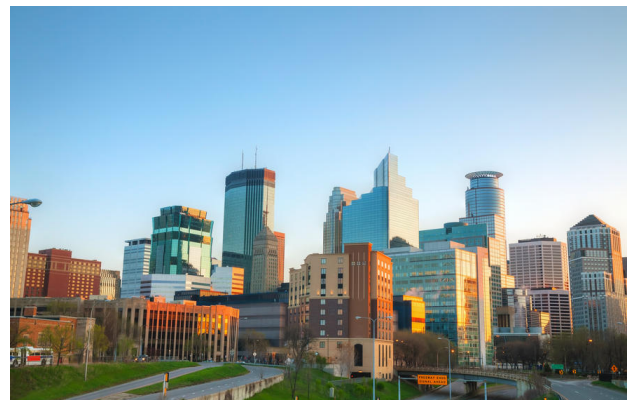


Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo



3. Sacramento, CA

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 96.4%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$49,894
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$51,768
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Community and social service occupations



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2. Los Angeles, CA

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 97.0%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$43,929
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$45,265
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Construction
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Construction and extraction occupations

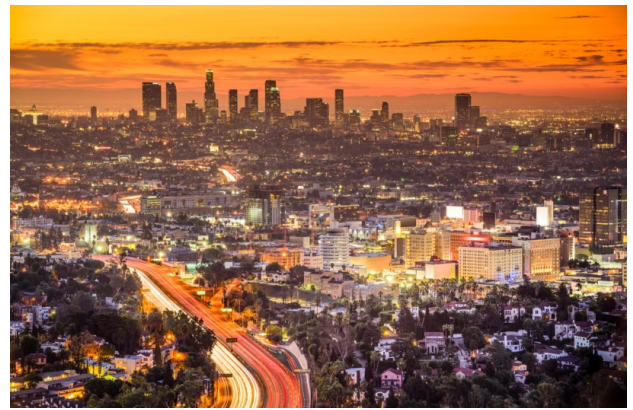


Photo Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

1. Aurora, CO

- **Women's earnings as a percentage of men's:** 100.4%
- **Median annual earnings for full-time women:** \$42,859
- **Median annual earnings for full-time men:** \$42,699
- **Industry with the smallest wage gap:** Utilities
- **Occupation with the smallest wage gap:** Protective service workers

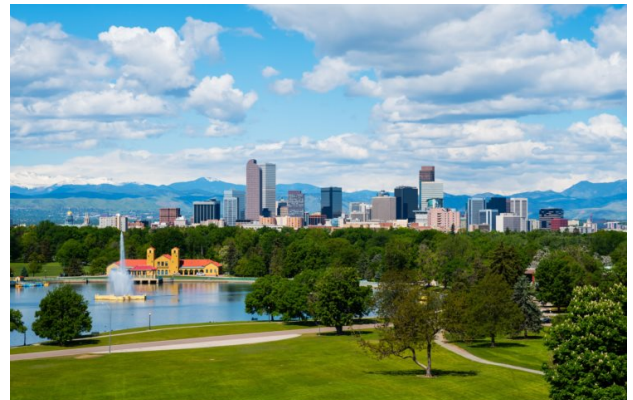


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Methodology & Full Results

Data on the gender wage gap, women's median earnings, men's median earnings, and the industries and occupations with the smallest and largest gender wage gaps come from the Census Bureau's *2018 American Community Survey (ACS)*. The gender wage gap is defined as the ratio of full-time working women's annual earnings to full-time working men's annual earnings. Industries and occupations with the smallest and largest gender wage gaps are also identified using the ratio of full-time working women's annual earnings to full-time working men's annual earnings.

Cities were grouped into the following cohorts based on population size and ranked by the gender wage gap:

- Large: cities with more than 350,000 people
- Midsize: cities with 150,000-350,000
- Small: cities with less than 150,000 people

You can view the full results of this study [here](#).





About Volusion

Volusion is an all-in-one ecommerce solution that helps entrepreneurs build and manage successful online businesses. Since 1999, our dedicated team of developers, marketers, designers, and technical support experts have been passionate about helping merchants operate and grow their stores, whether startup or established. Two decades later, Volusion has earned dozens of accolades and powered over 150,000 successful online businesses.

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