

# Understanding the Business Value of Your eCommerce Platform.

5 ways a high-quality eCommerce platform can drive ROI.



# Designing and implementing a high-quality eCommerce experience isn't easy.

You'll need to carefully define your customer experience. Test it with prospective customers. Choose a new eCommerce platform or expand your existing one. It definitely takes time and money. But the rewards can be great.

When you're shopping for a new eCommerce platform, both short- and long-term ROI should be top

of mind. Looking at ROI can help you understand the value of your eCommerce platform as a business asset. And it can help you identify which platform is best aligned with your business goals.

This eBook covers  
5 ways an eCommerce  
platform can drive ROI  
for B2B organizations.





## ROI driver #1 New revenue from new customers

Your eCommerce platform can help you acquire new customers by:

### **Making it easy to create new, mobile-friendly content—**

A whopping 89 percent of B2B buyers start their research online. To reach today's B2B buyers, you need to publish a lot of content, including best practices content, product specifications, customer reviews, and more. And it must load quickly on mobile devices.

The bottom line? An eCommerce platform that lets you rapidly create and publish mobile-friendly content can make it easier for B2B buyers to conduct the research they need to make faster and better decisions.

**Simplifying the buying process—**A fast and convenient buying process can help your brand stand out from B2B competitors. What does that look like? It may include fast reordering based on past orders or preset

requisition lists, a completely online quoting process, and a simple online credit application. An eCommerce platform that offers all that (and more) will help you attract and win new customers.

**Reaching new market segments—**eCommerce lets you reach customers in places where you don't have a sales team—in a neighboring state or on the other side of the globe. It also makes it more cost-effective to sell to smaller customers that may not buy enough to justify a dedicated account manager. An eCommerce platform that supports cross-border commerce (including local languages, payment methods, and shipping options) as well as self-service tools for smaller customers can help you add new revenue streams.



of buyers start their research online.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"The Changing Face of B2B Marketing," Think with Google, March 2015.

## ROI driver #2 New and incremental sales to existing customers

Your eCommerce platform can help you sell more to existing customers by:

**Giving customers visibility into your full product line**—Customers can easily fall into a rut. They often buy a few favorite products and keep on reordering them as if on “autopilot.” In many cases, it’s because they don’t know what else you’re selling. Your eCommerce platform can help you make customers aware of products by supporting better online merchandising, advanced search capabilities, and automated “also-bought” promotions. Together, all of these features can encourage your existing customers to buy more.

**Making personalized recommendations based on browsing and shopping behavior**—80 percent of B2B companies say that customer expectations are higher because of what they experience as consumers. And a big part of the consumer experience is smart, personalized product recommendations. An eCommerce platform that uses artificial intelligence to power personalization can increase the value of each sale.

**Providing an integrated, omnichannel experience**—Eight out of 10 B2B companies say that an omnichannel strategy is critical to their future success. After all, customers who can buy when and where they want are likely to spend more. An eCommerce platform that lets you provide a consistent experience across channels can help you earn more.

### SELCO SELLS MORE WITH A NEW MOBILE CHANNEL.

UK-based Selco sells building equipment and supplies to busy contractors. One of these contractors’ biggest challenges is generating and keeping track of price quotes for multiple jobs. And a late price quote can often mean lost work.

To help their customers do more business, Selco built a project management app designed specifically for contractors. It lets them easily input job details and automatically get pricing for tools and materials from Selco. And, if a price quote is approved, customers can use the app to quickly place their orders.

The new mobile channel was a classic win-win. It dramatically improved the customer experience for Selco customers. And it helped Selco increase sales.

<sup>2</sup>“Remember This: B2B Customers Are Consumers, Too,” Adobe Blog, June 28, 2017. <sup>3</sup>Glen Hartman, “How to build an effective B2B omnichannel commerce platform,” Econsultancy, February 2015.

## ROI driver #3 Increased efficiency

Your eCommerce platform can help you become more efficient. It can do this by:

**Giving buyers self-service purchasing options**—Data input errors can happen when sales reps take orders in person and on the phone. After all, we're all human. But mistakes that lead to returns can be expensive. When customers input their own orders, fewer errors occur. An eCommerce platform with self-service purchase options can help you reduce costly mistakes.

**Automating the price quote process**—Developing price quotes can be painful and time-consuming for you and your customers. Automating some or all of the price quote process and putting it online is more efficient for everyone. Ideally, quote requests should be completely transparent to both merchant and the buyer. Both should be able to see changes to the quote over time and exchange messages. When the quote is approved, the buyer should be able to check out instantly.

The bottom line? An eCommerce platform that automates price quote workflows will save you time and money.

**Improving fulfillment**—Intelligent fulfillment technology can help you identify the quickest and most cost-effective way to source each order. You should be able to configure business rules for the "best" fulfillment choice based on whether your goals are faster delivery speed, lower costs, increased margins, or something else. And your eCommerce platform should make this happen automatically, without any human intervention.

An eCommerce platform that does all this can make order fulfillment faster, cheaper, and more efficient.

**Providing "one stop" business intelligence**—Consolidating data from multiple business systems can be a major challenge when you need a clear picture of your business. An eCommerce platform with business intelligence tools that can pull together data from multiple sources and quickly generate a range of reports saves time and manpower and provides insights that drive business growth.

An eCommerce platform with self-service purchase options can help you reduce costly mistakes.

## ROI driver #4

### Higher margins

Your eCommerce platform can help you increase margins. It can do this by:

**Encouraging customers to take advantage of self-service sales**—When customers buy online, it typically costs you less. The cost of an in-person B2B sales call can vary greatly, but it is often hundreds of dollars, including salary, travel, and meals. Phone calls are less expensive, but they still consume a lot of your sales reps' time. When customers buy

online, costs can be significantly less. An eCommerce platform that lets customers buy independently can easily boost margins.

**Letting you test direct-to-consumer sales models**—Sometimes selling direct to consumers can be more profitable than working through distributors. An eCommerce platform that supports multiple business models can let you quickly set up an online store and try selling to consumers.

What happened when Bauhaus automated the customer onboarding process.

reduced manual work by 80%

50% more customer registrations

#### FOR BAUHAUS SWEDEN, FEWER MANUAL WORKFLOWS EQUALS MORE NEW CUSTOMERS

BAUHAUS Sweden is a leading home improvement retailer that sells to builders and contractors as well as DIY consumers. They sell more than 50,000 products, from gas grills and toolsheds to solar patio lighting.

Before they migrated to Magento 2, one of their biggest challenges was signing up new business customers. This process, which included a credit check, often took days to complete and required a lot of emails and even faxes.

In 2017, they switched to Magento 2 and automated the customer onboarding process. **80%** of manual work was eliminated—and customer registrations increased by **50%**.

## ROI driver #5

### Lower overhead

Your eCommerce platform can help you minimize operating costs by:

**Offering DIY options for everything**—Many B2B customers like to do as much as possible online. They want DIY options for placing orders, checking the status of shipments, obtaining credit, and running reports. They also want to conduct detailed product research without calling a sales rep.

The good news for you? Self-service options are often easier for your customers and more cost-effective for you. An eCommerce platform with strong DIY capabilities can help you manage more customers with fewer people.

**Automating manual workflows**—Routine processes like credit applications and new customer registration often involve a lot of manual work, such as sending faxes and emails. They can be a time-consuming hassle for you and your customers. An eCommerce platform that automates these processes can save significant time and reduce human error.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The ROI of B2B eCommerce depends on many factors. Make sure you consider them all.
- Self-service solutions that let your customers do more for themselves, smarter fulfillment, and intelligent product recommendations are all eCommerce features that support ROI.
- An investment in a more flexible and complete B2B eCommerce platform can deliver significant business benefits over the long term.



## ABOUT MAGENTO

Magento, an Adobe company, is a leading provider of cloud commerce innovation to merchants and brands across B2C and B2B industries and was recently named a leader in the 2018 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce. In addition to its flagship digital commerce platform, Magento boasts a strong portfolio of cloud-based omnichannel solutions that empower merchants to successfully integrate digital and physical shopping

experiences. Magento is the #1 provider to the Internet Retailer Top 1000, the B2B 300, and the Top 500 Guides for Europe and Latin America. Magento is supported by a vast global network of solution and technology partners, a highly active global developer community, and the largest eCommerce marketplace for extensions, all available for download on the Magento Marketplace.

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