

The Best of Both Markets

Five reasons to choose a hybrid platform that supports B2B and direct-to-consumer selling



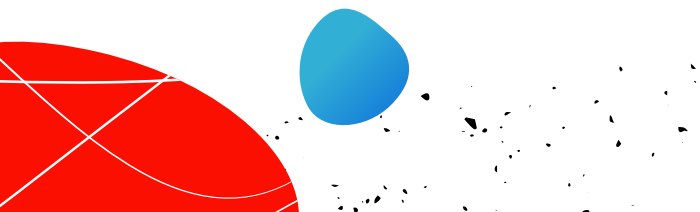
The lines between B2B and D2C commerce are blurring.

Today's consumers are shopping online more than ever. Digital commerce increased 76 percent YoY in June 2020¹, and many of those purchases are direct from manufacturers. It's no surprise, then, that B2B companies are entering the direct-to-consumer (D2C) market in growing numbers. It's both a new source of revenue and a great way to understand how people use their products and how they can be improved.

And the opposite is also true: a growing number of consumer-focused companies are getting into B2B commerce. In the US, online B2B sales are more than double online retail sales, and business-to-consumer (B2C) companies want a piece of it.² So they're adding wholesale storefronts to diversify and grow their sales. They're even creating custom product lines for corporate use.

Whether you're adding B2B or D2C digital storefronts, you'll need a new set of commerce features, which you'll have to build or buy.

This eBook identifies five reasons to choose a hybrid commerce platform that combines strong B2B and D2C functionality.

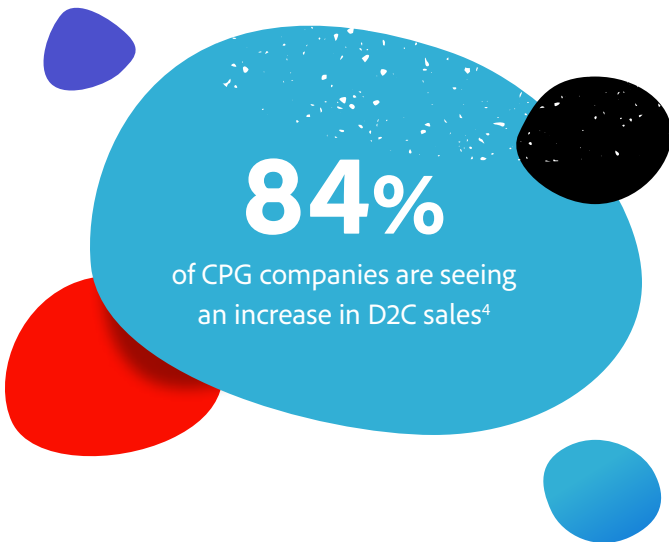


B2B commerce is a big opportunity...

If you define B2B sales as employee purchases on supplier websites, the US market is expected to surpass \$1 trillion.² If you add online B2B sales conducted through business networks and electronic procurement systems, it's a staggering \$9 trillion.³

...and so is D2C

Worldwide, D2C sales are increasing for 84 percent of consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies.⁴



1. You won't end up with two platforms

Running two separate eCommerce platforms—one for B2B and one for D2C—can lead to duplication of effort and systems. You'll have to manage two vendors as well as two platform lifecycles and update schedules. You'll need to integrate both your platforms with CRM, ERP, and other systems. And you'll need to juggle two sets of infrastructure requirements.

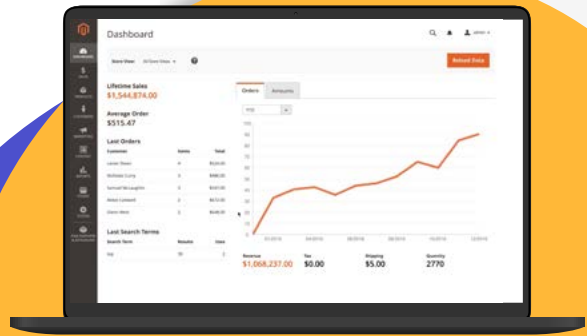
Overall, your commerce ecosystem will be more complex and require a lot more work to maintain. You may need different teams to support each system, and you may not have enough time to scale or fully customize either one. It will also be more difficult to get a holistic view of business performance, because your web, customer, and product data will be siloed in different systems.

With a hybrid platform, you can support B2B and D2C models with one system, efficiently manage both with the same team, and get a unified view of your business results.

2. You'll get a jump on the competition

Adding a new B2B or D2C model can take time, especially when you need to configure a new commerce platform or add extensive customizations to your existing one. If you have a hybrid platform, you can get to market much faster. Instead of buying a new platform or building new features, you can “flip a switch” and start configuring products and processes.

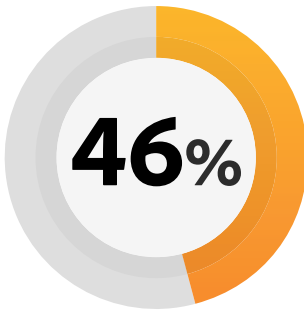
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3. You'll stand out

Some B2B-only platforms are built with a B2B aesthetic. This means they lack some of the “consumer-like” features that both business buyers and consumer shoppers expect, like rich content, visual merchandising, personalization, etc. But that doesn't work anymore. B2B buyers require a high-quality digital experience when visiting B2B sites online. 46 percent of B2B buyers and researchers are now millennials, who overwhelmingly prefer a more modern digital experience.⁵

A platform vendor with roots in both B2B and D2C commerce will offer a common architecture with shared content and design elements. This means you can easily craft your B2B experience to include the consumer-like features B2B buyers want while providing a consistent brand experience across all your sites. If you're selling direct to consumers, you'll be able to create the kind of engaging and personalized experience that today's shoppers will really notice.



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4. You'll be ready for anything

D2C commerce provides an important diversification benefit for B2B companies. Many B2B organizations rely on a handful of large clients to sustain their revenues, which keeps marketing costs to a minimum but also exposes them to customer risk. A thriving D2C operation can offset this risk and help your organization maintain revenues if any of your big customers run into trouble.

Plus, if your hybrid eCommerce software package offers multi-site support, you will be able to rapidly add new storefronts as demand evolves.

5. You'll keep your product catalog under control

When you have multiple commerce platforms, you end up with multiple product catalogs. This means you need to maintain two sources of product data and keep them synchronized. Hybrid B2B and D2C systems offer unified catalog management so you can keep track of all your products in one place. You can keep all your products in the same database. Certain products can be turned on and off for business and consumer buyers. And managing inventory becomes much easier.

Key takeaways

You won't end up with two platforms. A hybrid platform is easier to manage and offers a 360-degree view of your business.

You'll get a jump on the competition. A hybrid platform can dramatically reduce time to market.

You'll stand out more. A hybrid platform can support a unique and engaging user experience that helps your brand stand out.

You'll be ready for anything. A hybrid platform gives you the flexibility to quickly adopt new business strategies and models, now or in the future.

You'll keep your product catalog under control. A hybrid platform keeps product management simple.

Sources

¹ Adobe Digital Economy Index, June 2020.

² "Forrester Analytics: B2B eCommerce Forecast, 2018 to 2023 (US)," Forrester Research, December 2018.

³ "Mapping the \$9 Trillion US B2B Online Commerce Market," Forrester Research, April 2018.

⁴ PA Consulting survey: http://www2.paconsulting.com/rs/526-HZE-833/images/PA%20Consulting_D2C_Research_Summary_Digital2.pdf

⁵ "The Changing Face of B2B Marketing," Think with Google, March 2015.

ADOBE EXPERIENCE CLOUD

Leveraging deep customer intelligence, **Adobe Experience Cloud** gives you everything you need to deliver a well-designed, personal, and consistent experience that delights your customers every time you interact with them.

Built on the Adobe Experience Platform, leveraging Adobe Sensei machine learning and artificial intelligence, Adobe Experience Cloud gives you access to the world's most comprehensive suite of solutions across three clouds—Adobe Analytics Cloud, Adobe Marketing Cloud, and Adobe Advertising Cloud. And because it's from Adobe, it's integrated with Adobe Creative Cloud and Document Cloud so that the design of a great experience is inextricably linked to its delivery.

ADOBE COMMERCE CLOUD

Adobe Commerce Cloud combines Magento Commerce with Adobe Experience Cloud, providing an end-to-end platform to manage, personalize, and optimize the commerce experience across every touch point.

MAGENTO COMMERCE

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