Build a better omnichannel experience.

How to deliver a better omnichannel experience for your customers—no matter how and where they buy.

Omnichannel commerce is a popular B2C buzzword, but it's important for B2B too.

According to McKinsey & Company, 83% of B2B leaders believe that omni-channel selling is a more successful way to prospect and secure new business than traditional "face-to-face only" sales approaches. What is omnichannel commerce? If you sell through stores, distributors, marketplaces like Amazon or Alibaba, or resellers in addition to your own website, you are an omnichannel business.

Omnichannel selling can be complicated. Your customer experience can easily become fragmented and inconsistent. And when that happens, customers hesitate to buy. They wonder if they can get a better deal online, in store, or through a different distributor. To succeed, you need a fully integrated customer experience that's clear, consistent, and greater than the sum of its parts.

This guide looks at how B2B businesses can deliver a more cohesive customer experience across all of their channels.
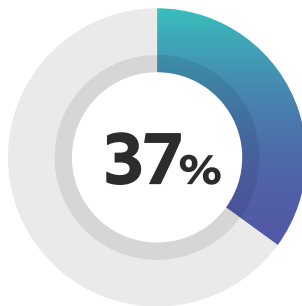
The many ways to be omnichannel.

The move to omnichannel isn't just a pandemic workaround. It's here to stay. When given the choice of in-person, remote, or ecommerce, B2B buyers want all of the above.
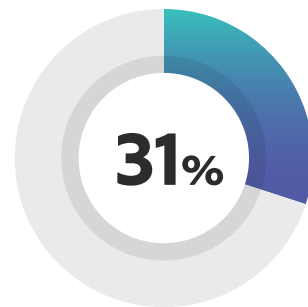
The most effective routes to market for B2B companies as of 2021:
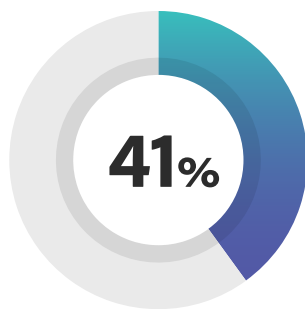
41% ecommerce

37% in person

31% video conference

Strategies

Own web store	52%
Distributor web store	33%
Social media	32%
Mobile apps	31%
Email marketing with buy buttons	29%
B2B marketplace	23%
Call center	15%
Physical store or depot	13%
Mail order	13%
Fax	11%

Source: McKinsey & Company

1. Keep content consistent.

B2B buyers may see your products on your website, a marketplace, and on your distributors' websites. Inconsistent product descriptions and imagery confuse customers who shop across all of these channels. Or customers who've shopped online will see something different when they visit one of your stores. Instead, you want customers to see the same high-quality content, images, and information every time they interact with your brand.

How can you do better? Making it easier for channel partners to access the latest product descriptions and imagery can help keep your brand's message clear. Auditing your products across all your channels can help you consistently make a good impression everywhere.

# 2. Actively manage your inventory.

When you're selling through multiple channels, it's harder to manage inventory. Order and inventory data stored in multiple systems can easily get out of sync. Worst case, you'll have conflicting information on your different sites.

How can you do better? The short answer: display accurate product availability everywhere your products are sold. To do that, you'll need to make sure all of your channels—including marketplaces—are connected to the same ecommerce platform and your inventory management system.

You may also want to consider an order management solution that lets you pool and allocate your inventory sources. By looking at all your inventory together and assigning it to specific channels, you can make sure products are available for your highest priority channels and customers.

72%
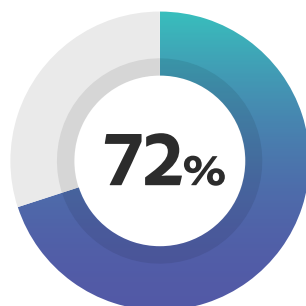
of B2B buyers say they've used Amazon Business to research a purchase for work.

50%
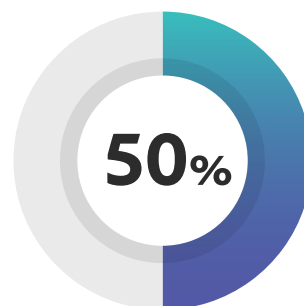
of buyers report they've completed more than 10% of their B2B buying on Amazon Business.

Source: Amazon Business

3. Standardize pricing, payment, and shipping options.

Everyone wants a great deal. But it's frustrating to see products from the same brand priced differently in different channels. These discrepancies are common, but they can make customers hesitant to buy. They may wonder if your products are cheaper somewhere else.

How can you do better? Make sure pricing, payment, and shipping options are consistent across channels. Whether a customer buys in a physical outlet, online, or through the call center, they should get the same deal. Of course, there is one caveat. Pricing on a web platform or with various distributors could vary. But you should minimize differences wherever possible.

4. Provide universal visibility.

Customers want to see all their orders in one place for all their buyers and across all channels. They want to know how much they're spending overall, look for trends, and predict their needs better. But this kind of visibility isn't always the norm.

How can you do better? Your account management dashboard should give customers a 360-degree look at their purchases through all channels. They should have visibility into all their interactions with your brand and an easy way to get help if it's needed.

5. Connect online and offline channels.

Online and offline channels can sometimes act like separate universes. If you buy online, you may have to wait for delivery rather than pick up your order at a local branch or store. Or maybe you want to buy in-store, but the product you're looking for is only available online. Either way, it's more work for your customers and your sales reps.

How can you do better? First, allow buyers to buy online and pick up at your store or warehouse. Second, provide in-store tablets or kiosks where shoppers or store sales reps can search for products that may not be available locally. (In retail, this is known as the "endless aisle.") Third, sales reps should be able to quickly view customers' recent online browsing and purchasing activity to make better recommendations both in-store and online.

Key takeaways:

- Omnichannel commerce is not just for B2C companies

- The key to omnichannel success is a unified experience that's consistent across all your channels

- Done correctly, omnichannel commerce can make it more convenient for customers to buy—and help them find exactly what they want

- To do omnichannel commerce well, you need intelligent order management and smart, automated fulfillment

Adobe Commerce inventory and order management capabilities make omnichannel achievable.

It does this through:

Intelligent order orchestration: Adobe Commerce manages all incoming orders and handles complex situations like split orders, back orders, and so on.

Automated inventory sourcing: Adobe Commerce identifies the fastest and most cost-effective location from which to fulfill each order. It also keeps track of inventory levels and helps you avoid product-order mismatches.

Connecting online and in-store experiences: Adobe Commerce lets you give customers the option of picking up online orders in store. It also supports endless aisle, which gives in-store customers the ability to see and purchase products available elsewhere.

Centralized customer service: Adobe Commerce gives service reps a 360-degree view of each customer's activities across all channels. This makes it easier to manage returns and exchanges.

Adobe Commerce

Adobe Commerce is the world's leading digital commerce solution for merchants and brands. With Adobe Commerce, you can build engaging shopping experiences for every type of customer—from B2B and B2C to B2B2C. It's built for enterprise on a scalable, open-source platform with unparalleled security, premium performance, and a low total cost of ownership. Businesses of all sizes can use it to reach customers wherever they are, across devices and marketplaces. It's more than a flexible shopping cart system. It's the building block for business growth.

To learn more about Adobe Commerce, visit business.adobe.com.

Sources

"B2B Buyers Embrace Digital-First Purchasing," Amazon Business, October 3, 2019.

Liz Harrison, Dennis Spillecke, Jennifer Stanley, and Jenny Tsai, "Omnichannel in B2B Sales: The New Normal in a Year That Has Been Anything But," McKinsey & Company, March 15, 2021.