



# The Starter Guide for B2B Digital Commerce

Empowering B2B digital newcomers to succeed with composable commerce

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# Why digitize your B2B commerce with a composable approach

It's no secret that the B2B commerce landscape has undergone a significant transformation in recent years. The global pandemic and changing market dynamics have accelerated a shift to digital purchasing across all industries and ushered in a new generation of B2B buyers who expect exceptional digital experiences. Simultaneously, economic challenges have highlighted the importance of automation and cost efficiency in B2B operations. And finally, the drive to stay competitive into the uncertain future continues to fuel digital transformations globally.

While the B2B sector has embraced eCommerce capabilities to varying degrees as a response to all of these factors, many companies still lag behind in digitization. If your company meets this profile, you're certainly not alone.

It's a fact that scores of organizations operating with little to zero eCommerce capabilities remain hesitant to invest in digitizing buying experiences. Regardless of the reasons for such reluctance — failed eCommerce initiatives, fear of losing jobs, change management challenges or senior management's lack of understanding of business benefits — the undeniable truth is that your company loses competitiveness with each passing day by failing to address the expectations of business customers.

And therein lies the heart of the real opportunity: **Modernizing commerce is all about meeting the expectations of B2B buyers.** As consumers, they experience outstanding shopping journeys, convenient and user-friendly brand interactions, and even omnichannel engagement. It's only natural that they'd value the same consumer buying principles when they buy on behalf of their employers. Simply put, when businesses can meet those expectations, the higher the chances of converting more sales and increasing the bottom line.

**“ People working in the mining industry are still normal people. In their personal life, they use eCommerce. They are used to easy processes. And when they were making B2B purchases from us, they were experiencing a cumbersome and complex buying journey. So, many of our customers were asking if we could provide more modern, simpler ways to make those purchases.**

— Pekka Jaarinen, Director of Digital Services, Normet

The B2B sector is unequivocally moving towards digital commerce: [Gartner](#) predicts that 80% of B2B sales interactions between suppliers and buyers will occur in digital channels by 2025. The message is clear: **Businesses have to digitize commerce now or risk falling behind.**

## B2B buyers are already shopping online — and want to buy on your eCommerce site



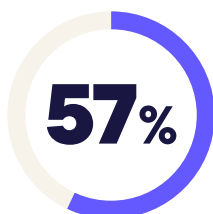
of B2B buyers find **gathering information online on their own** to be superior to interacting with a sales representative during the discovery process<sup>1</sup>



of B2B buyers **research their purchases online** before they're ready to make a purchase offline<sup>2</sup>

50%

of B2B buyers make **digital purchases of goods or services** for their organization daily<sup>3</sup>



of B2B buyers list a **manufacturer's eCommerce site** as their first choice to buy products, outranking Amazon Business (43%)<sup>4</sup>



70%

of B2B decision-makers are **prepared to spend up to 500,000 USD** on a single eCommerce transaction<sup>5</sup>

Sources: <sup>1</sup>Master B2B, <sup>2</sup>Master B2B, <sup>3</sup>Digital Commerce 360, <sup>4</sup>Digital Commerce 360, <sup>5</sup>McKinsey

So, how can digital newcomers overcome the fear and overwhelming options that exist around such large-scale digital transformation initiatives? And what are the tried-and-tested routes that B2B companies can take to kickstart their digital journeys while accelerating time to value?

If your business is in the early stages of embarking on a digital commerce journey, this guide is for you. We'll walk you through the basics of composable commerce, discuss how it can meet the needs of today's B2B businesses and buyers, and provide actionable steps for launching your digital journey with ease, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Using a composable approach, you can quickly start unlocking the benefits of digital commerce, gaining the confidence and agility required for sustainable business growth, both today and in the future.

**Let's get started!**

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# Evaluating technology choices for digital commerce

B2B companies with zero-to-limited eCommerce capabilities have historically relied on marketplaces like Amazon Business to make their products available online. While this approach continues to bring value as a channel, B2B buyers are eager to shop online directly on a manufacturer's site or at a distributor's site.

**“ In general, brand manufacturer and industry distributor websites rank highest in terms of purchase frequency for B2B purchases for many reasons, not the least of which are brand trust and depth of content including product detail such as specifications, descriptions, detailed pricing and related products and recommendations above others.**

— Mark Brohan, Senior Vice-President, B2B and Market Research, [Digital Commerce 360](#)

If your B2B organization is ready to implement digital commerce for the first time or enhance existing basic capabilities, there are three technology choices available in the market today:

## Option 1: All-in-one platforms

Also known as “legacy” or “monolithic” systems, all-in-one platforms offer businesses a comprehensive set of commerce components, such as search, payments and checkout, in one system. At first glance, this may seem advantageous. However, these platforms lack flexibility and are challenging to customize, leaving B2B companies restricted with a fixed feature set and a “boxed-in” data model that cannot be easily tailored to their specific requirements.

Notoriously difficult to update and customize, these systems also prevent B2B players from adapting to new market dynamics and the evolving demands of their customers. According to [Forrester Research](#), 81% of B2B companies use an eCommerce platform that lacks tools, can't handle the complexity of products, collect customer data or scale effectively, which translates into monolithic systems.

In short, all-in-one platforms are suitable solutions for companies with simple product catalogs and customer flows, with customization featuring low in their priority list.



## Option 2: Homegrown platforms

B2B business models can be complex, making it difficult to find an all-in-one platform that meets all needs. That's why some organizations choose to create their homegrown commerce engines.

While this may seem like a good solution to address unique complexity, building a DIY (do-it-yourself) platform from scratch requires significant investment. Over time, B2B companies often encounter similar issues found in all-in-one platforms: Technical debt, lack of innovation and inefficient use of resources.

## Option 3: Composable commerce platforms

A composable approach liberates B2B companies from the limitations of all-in-one and homegrown platforms: No longer must you deal with over-standardized feature sets or build everything from scratch. Essentially, composable commerce gives companies the flexibility and freedom to leverage best-of-breed commerce components like checkout, cart and search, and combine them according to their needs.

Composability supports a “**build-and-buy**” approach, which gives B2B firms the ability to integrate commoditized components from best-of-breed solutions that fit their business needs at any given time AND build/customize the bits that reflect the uniqueness of their business.

In B2B, a composable system provides out-of-the-box features via APIs and templates for standard use cases like quoting and business unit-specific pricing, while still allowing for extension-based customization. Such capabilities are crucial to tackle B2B's inherent complexity. In other words, B2B companies are increasingly adopting a composable approach to become digitally mature faster and more cost-effectively.

A true composable system is more than best-of-breed components and includes three core traits:

- ☑ **Component-based:** Plug and play independent and interchangeable components to meet the unique needs of your business.
- ☑ **Cloud-native:** Leverage the full power of cloud-native infrastructure to achieve exceptional scalability, reduce costs and improve online performance.
- ☑ **Tech-agnostic:** By allowing developers to select and manage applications without proprietary technology that requires specific programming languages and certifications, your business can boost developer productivity and innovation big time.

“By embracing API-first composable commerce, which offers modular architecture for rapid innovation, MMG [midmarket growth] B2B firms can swiftly adapt to market changes to optimize revenue generation and capitalize on emerging CX opportunities.

— IDC MarketScape: Worldwide B2B Digital Commerce Applications for Midmarket Growth 2023-2024

By taking a composable approach, businesses become more adaptable and are best positioned to meet changing customer expectations on the fly. Overall, they can reap **seven top benefits**:



### Unlimited flexibility and agility

B2B firms tend to have complex and unique requirements, such as handling large order quantities, managing multiple pricing tiers and integrating with ERP systems. Addressing these complexities requires a fully flexible, scalable and agile approach — the cornerstones of composability.



### Infinite scale

Run multiple brands, expand to new markets, bring in new channels and even try out new business models with ease. Respond faster to influxes of traffic and customers with autoscaling and high SKU processing times.



### Automate labor-intensive processes

Automate and optimize processes that currently require extensive manual overhead, like handling complex payment terms, quote generation and reordering.



### Reduce total costs of ownership (TCO)

As a versionless system, composable commerce eliminates the need for upgrades, maintenance or backward compatibility of customizations. Also, technical debt and hosting fees become a thing of the past. Cloud-native infrastructure eliminates the need to pre-provision and manage servers to handle traffic peaks and reduces hosting costs.



### Boost ROI

Create customized journeys to differentiate, accelerate experimentation and innovation to increase market share, and expand to new geographies and even to new business models like D2C, easily.



### Reduce downtime risks

The distributed nature of composable architecture reduces the risks of system crashes, as any issues that may arise are easier to contain and fix since the components are decoupled from each other architecturally.



### Adaptability and incremental innovation

Designed for constant change, a composable approach enables companies to swap functionalities in and out without friction, as well as reduce time-to-market for new releases.

## Minimizing B2B complexity with composable

B2B businesses have one trait in common when it comes to commerce: **Complexity**. Managing multi-tiered distribution channels, cross-border transactions, supply chain issues and catering to customer-specific demands remains a challenge. Many organizations have implemented all-in-one software or built homegrown solutions in the hopes of abstracting complexity in commerce, only to learn that those massive and often feature-rich solutions aren't flexible, agile or adaptable enough in a rapidly changing environment.

**Composable commerce arose as a response to constant change**, leveraging agility and real-time responsiveness to new market dynamics. Most importantly, a composable approach helps B2B firms minimize complexity because it's easier to:

- ☑ Tap into the power of best-of-breed applications as integrations are plug-and-play.
- ☑ Leverage low/no-code commerce solutions for business practitioners.
- ☑ Deploy components incrementally, reducing the risk of large-scale implementation projects as well as accelerating time to value.
- ☑ Empower developers to scale tech stacks and drive innovation without the burden of proprietary technology as they can work with a tech-agnostic approach.

**“We're already seeing returns on the average order value size 2.5 times what we had previously. And a big part of that is just because we can create a better experience, we can get things out faster. Our team doesn't have to work within the confines of the monolith anymore.**

— Matt Swan, Technical Product Manager, [ACE Southern](#)



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# Leveraging composable technology with commercetools: Top best practices

Before we explore the steps to digitize your commerce, here's an overview of best practices to help leverage composable technology with commercetools to its fullest.

## Pre-composed solutions to accelerate time to value

Many technology professionals fear that a digital project may take years and cost millions of dollars. They're rightfully concerned, as [70% of digital transformations](#) fall short of their objectives, go over time or budget, and don't always show results for sustained internal interest and support. That's where pre-composed solutions come in: With a pre-configured set of components, features, best practices and launchpads, the adoption of composable commerce becomes much easier and faster, especially for new-to-digital businesses.

Since a pre-composed solution typically provides already integrated components that are ready to use, it also allows for greater flexibility and customization, so businesses can scale and grow without constraints.



**commercetools Foundry Blueprint for B2B Manufacturing** brings together all the components you need to build and run outstanding purchasing experiences as a pre-composed solution that allies commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B, Frontend and Connect. Find more information on [page 25](#).

## Pre-built integrations speed up time to market

Simplifying integrations in a composable environment is critical for success. With pre-built connectors, vetted and hosted on commercetools, you can expedite your eCommerce launch.



**commercetools Connect** enables B2B firms to easily integrate best-of-breed components, such as OMS, Payments, PIM, and more, effortlessly with three connector options:

- **Pre-built:** Ready-to-use connectors without the need to change the code.
- **Enhanced:** Low-code/pre-built options enable you to leverage core functionality while making modifications to meet your business needs.
- **Custom built:** Integrate a completely tailored solution into your tech stack. For instance, you can tap into custom connectors to integrate CPQ and ERP systems to fit your unique requirements.

## Harness data management and analytics with flexible data models

With 63% of B2B decision-makers saying that the cleanliness of their data is the biggest impediment to robust B2B eCommerce growth, it's clear that much of your digital success hinges on data. Establish a robust data management strategy from the beginning, ensuring secure storage and utilizing data lakes or warehouses for in-depth analytics and reporting. Plus, using GenAI can be immensely beneficial to performing data hygiene, helping companies restructure product data for personalized recommendations and more.



**Flexible data models** powered by a composable approach empower you to easily handle, edit and orchestrate multiple data scenarios, attributes, locations and relationships without affecting performance.

## Manage all things commerce with a no-code UI

Low- and no-code tools enable business practitioners, such as marketers, as well as content and product managers, to have a more active role in digital commerce initiatives through easy-to-use business user tooling. Not only does this accelerate time to market to create new promotions, manage discounts and set up new sales outlets, but you can also improve employee productivity and manage commerce data seamlessly end-to-end.



The **Merchant Center**, commercetools' business tooling, empowers marketers and other business users to create, manage and execute commerce experiences with an easy-to-use interface without having to depend on tech teams.

## Tap into the support of implementation partners and B2B-specific accelerators

Navigating the world of digital commerce doesn't have to be a solo endeavor. Leverage the expertise of implementation partners and accelerators to get to market faster, and utilize them throughout the digital journey as needed for innovation initiatives big and small.



**A vast network of accelerators** and solution partners helps expedite implementation timelines.

## Integrate commerce components with an incremental rollout approach

An incremental approach is an invaluable method for companies to develop and integrate each component into the digital platform gradually, which reduces risk and sets up a virtuous cycle of release-win-learn-iterate. For example, B2B companies can start with a smaller scope, such as digitizing a product catalog and checkout, instead of trying to create a complete digital commerce experience from day one.

This minimum viable product (MVP) approach enables you to establish a first base for what the rest of your commerce solution will look like — and optimize it over time.

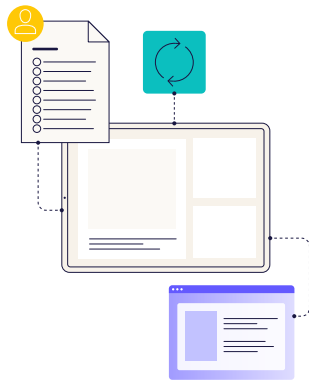


The strategic use of the **strangler pattern**, a migration process from an old system to a new one that gradually replaces functionalities piece by piece, enables organizations to adopt composability in bite-sized chunks, which provides a sense of control and low risk.

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# 6 steps to launch your eCommerce

While there's no standardized process for getting B2B eCommerce going — your business is unique, after all — these steps can help you organize and streamline the cadence of your digital journey.



## Step 1 Start a discovery phase

As a starting point, don't be too concerned about implementing advanced features: Focus on the basics to get your commerce online and start delivering customer value. With that in mind, you can start your **discovery phase** from a business perspective by looking at the areas of your transactional process that are causing issues, frustrating customers or holding your business back. A general rule of thumb is to first tackle any particular pain points causing unnecessary friction or customer dropout.

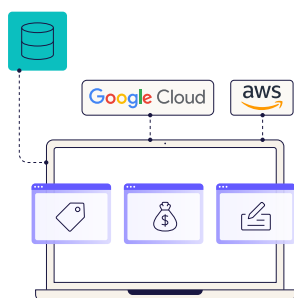
To nail this down, ask for **feedback from your customers**: How would they like to shop with your business? What do they see in your competitors' eCommerce experiences that you could replicate? Remember to focus on the essentials and take it from there.

Another path you can take is to **ask customer-facing teams** what would make their work more efficient when interacting with prospects and buyers. We recommend collecting that feedback and getting sales teams involved from the get-go as a way of alleviating concerns as well as collecting data to make the sales process more streamlined.

Armed with customer insights, map them together with your business goals and answer questions such as:

- What short and mid-term goals would you like to achieve (e.g., reduce shopping friction, improve operational efficiency, automate manual processes, increase revenue)?
- What makes sense to put online as a first step?
- What product information should be listed?
- Should there be a public or gated version of the website?
- How can customers find the product information they need?
- What would be a basic shopping flow that your business can support?
- What experienced employees do you have to help your business take off in eCommerce? Do you need to hire specialists?
- What critical processes and functions should be part of your initial eCommerce offering, e.g., order and payment processing, invoicing, custom order quoting, customer-specific product catalogs?

As an outcome of this phase, you should be able to prioritize your goals and set a scope for the initial phases of your digital journey.



## Step 2 Plan and design your architecture and integration strategy

Leverage this phase to design and build an architecture that brings the business vision to life, without compromise. Here are our recommended steps before starting the integration of eCommerce components:

### 1. Design and build the eCommerce backend

#### infrastructure

The underlying infrastructure of composable commerce is based on **cloud-native SaaS** and serverless architecture. It provides the foundation for best-in-class solutions, automation and deployment workflows, an end-to-end testing (E2E) suite, and more. This may include the cloud environment powered by your cloud provider of choice (e.g., Google Cloud, AWS), an API management tool (e.g., Google Apigee), orchestration tools such as Digital Experience Platforms (DXPs) and more.

### 2. Design the data integration flows

Define the applications needed, data flows and the critical systems of record that need to be involved (ERP, OMS, CPQ, CRM and CMS). Before designing an integration, review the [Integrations Marketplace](#) for existing solutions, so you can save time and effort.

Here are a few considerations for your plan:

- First, you must model your customers' organizations within commercetools. This data typically lives in your enterprise resource planning (ERP) or customer data platform (CDP). To model your customers' organizations, you can create Business Units and configure Associate Roles.
- Customer profiles take the most amount of effort since customer passwords cannot be copied over to commercetools.
- You do not need to manually migrate types of data where the source of truth is not commercetools. For example, if you have a product information management (PIM) system, you use your commercetools integration to sync the Product data initially. The same goes for Orders, Inventory, Pricing, etc.

Your commercetools Composable Commerce project comes with a **B2B-specific sample data set** designed to reflect realistic commerce use cases. This data simulates an example online shop specializing in heavy machinery and spare parts products to help you explore all the capabilities of our composable commerce platform for B2B manufacturing and understand how B2B data can be modeled, regardless of the type of products you sell. Once you're familiar with the key concepts of working within the commercetools platform, you can remove the sample information and import your own data, kickstarting your implementation process.

More information on [how to plan your migration of data](#).

### 3. Design and build the components

When it comes to defining the components that need to be integrated, these are the first ones to focus on:

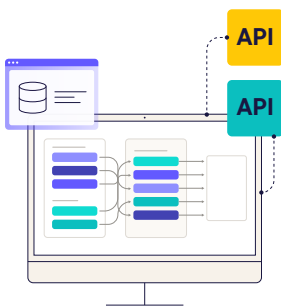
- **Plan your product data integration:** One of the primary considerations revolves around the origin and handling of your product data. Your product master data is likely stored and managed in a central place like a PIM or ERP system. This is the source with which you need to integrate Composable Commerce. For scenarios in which you have multiple data sources, we recommend consolidating product data in a central place first and then building one integration with Composable Commerce in this central place. Find more information about [product data integrations](#).
- **Plan your price and inventory information:** Price and inventory updates are more frequent and time-critical than updates to core product information. We strongly recommend implementing them as separate, event-based integrations. Even if data for pricing and inventory are managed within the same system, separating the processes ensures fast and accurate updates.
- **Analyze and design requirements for promotions:** Ensure the product catalog data model can support promotions and discounts, e.g., certain promotions may require specific product attributes to define the needed discounts accurately. Check our [discount overview documentation](#) for more information.
- **Model Business Units:** To take full advantage of the features in Composable Commerce for B2B, consider modeling your customers' buyer organizations inside commercetools. You can use Business Units to model companies in hierarchical structures and determine which Associates can act on behalf of the company. You can assign specific roles to Associates, which control what permissions they have in a given Business Unit. Check more information about [modeling Business Units](#).



## Do you already have eCommerce-ready components?

You may already have some components within your existing tech stack that are eCommerce-ready without having an online store, e.g., SAP for product and inventory. If that's the case, you may be tempted to keep those systems, which means that your teams have to design and build digital commerce around the requirements and limitations of those platforms. This may impose constraints on your eCommerce ambitions, as it's likely you'd have to scale down functionality or customization options.

Usually, we recommend an evaluation around whether keeping those legacy systems will add complexity and restrictions, and, if so, to consider modern systems that support a composable/modular infrastructure, or store the data elsewhere.



## Step 3 Map and migrate your data

Now that you have planned and designed integration flows, it's time to map and migrate your data to commercetools. First, it's crucial to invest the time to assess, clean and enrich your data. We recommend following these steps:

- 1. Identify the data you intend to use.** Ensure that you only map and transfer data that is directly relevant to eCommerce. This may include primary data types, such as product order and customer data. This may also encompass other kinds of data, such as category taxonomy, graphical and multimedia data, as well as marketing content that fleshes out the customer experience.

### Is migrating historical orders to commercetools necessary?

It is not recommended to migrate all of your historical orders to commercetools. If the source of truth for your orders is another system, the data in commercetools is redundant. The recommendation is to migrate only the orders that are still in the return period or not migrate orders at all.

- 2. Clean up your data prior to loading it into a new system.** Make sure that the data you don't need is discarded. This is an important step to ensure that your data is clean from the beginning, so you're able to leverage data later without issues.
- 3. Ensure structure compatibility.** The data structure should be tailored to eCommerce utility and according to our [Product Modeling Guide](#). We suggest prioritizing essential

attributes, especially those crucial for search functionalities or specific features. Generative AI can significantly reduce the effort of mapping data to the commercetools format as you can generate the import format automatically and execute the script.

## Data integration tools and APIs in commercetools Composable Commerce

- **Subscriptions API:** For event-driven integrations, you can subscribe to Messages for changes to resources in Composable Commerce. Check the [Subscriptions API](#) documentation.
- **Import API or Java Sync for bulk integrations:** When using the [Import API](#), monitor the container summary and operations for error detection and to confirm the process completion, especially before starting dependent processes. Alternatively, consider using tools like the [Java Sync Library](#).
- **Products, Inventory and Prices APIs:** When using the Composable Commerce APIs for integrations, design each [API Client](#) with the necessary permissions for its specific role. By having dedicated API Clients for each process, you can enhance security and prevent unnecessary permissions from being granted.

## Step 4 Integrate your best-of-breed components



Now that your data is on commercetools and you're all set up, the next step is to integrate best-of-breed components to complete your solution. In a composable environment, you're not locked in with any particular vendor, so you have complete freedom to choose what services best match your needs. This incremental approach to choosing initial components will help you create your first digital buyer experience.

One of the many benefits of a composable architecture is that it supports a “build and buy” strategy, so you're free to plug and play components from in-house development as well as best-of-breed providers. You can leverage [commercetools API portfolio](#) as well as a range of best-of-breed solutions (see integration to [third-party components](#)). To facilitate this process even further, you can use connectors available from our [Integrations Marketplace](#) and/or [commercetools Connect](#) to add new components with ease.



**Product catalog:** Digitize your product catalog and customize it according to your customer needs, including support for custom and complex products.



**Search:** Language-aware, full-text search powers comprehensive product searches. Easy navigation and faceted filters allow you to create an experience where customers scope down results by countries, channels, currencies and more. It's easy to integrate with other search providers. Visit the [Integration Marketplace](#) to see our integration offerings or build one yourself with the help of our [search integration guide](#).



**Pricing:** Pricing at scale serves the needs of B2B companies with multiple stores or business lines reliant on customer-specific pricing.



**Promotions:** Set discounts and gifts with ease, e.g., set discounts per business unit on the cart/order, enable one-off deals, etc.



**Ordering and payment:** Support checkout capabilities with multiple payment methods and shopping carts that are updated across channels seamlessly. If you'd like to support more than checkout by invoice, integrate with one of our payment service providers featured in the Integration Marketplace.



**Order and inventory management:** Manage the order, inventory and fulfillment process from start to finish.



**Tax:** Find an integration with Avalara in our Integrations Marketplace. If you want to build your own tax service integration, read our [tax integration guide](#) in which we evaluated integration approaches based on two architectural patterns.

Also, if you're using an incremental rollout approach, you can integrate and enhance components one at a time, until you have completed an MVP to launch the initial online purchasing journey.

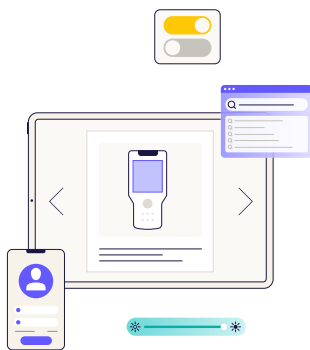
## Integrating your ERP and CPQ with commercetools

Integrating a commerce solution, such as commercetools, with an ERP and/or CPQ system is often a central aspect of a commerce project.

When integrating commercetools with an ERP system, consider middleware to bridge the commerce platform and the ERP system, facilitating communication and data exchange. It plays a vital role in ensuring that the integration is seamless, efficient and reliable. Read our [ERP integration guide](#) to learn more.

The integration of complex systems like SAP or Oracle Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) with commercetools bridges the gap between traditional back-office operations and modern digital commerce. If you use a CPQ system to manage your pricing and quoting, check out our [CPQ integration guide](#).

## Step 5 Plan and integrate the user experience layer (digital storefront)



Working in tandem with your commerce backend functionalities is the digital storefront, where your customers will be able to search for, find, add to cart and check out the products they want. Your business can pull it off without complexity and high costs by using a Frontend-as-a-Service (FEaaS), which provides companies with the ability to develop individualized frontends without running into time-intensive projects.

A FEaaS provides optimal storefront delivery and orchestration with the commerce backend, so your business can develop storefronts faster and more reliably. Also, you don't have to worry about infrastructure aspects such as performance, speed and responsiveness, and can focus on crafting the customer experience.

### Why use commercetools Frontend

[commercetools Frontend](#) is a leading frontend-as-a-service (FEaaS) solution for businesses to develop, differentiate and deliver digital storefronts at lightning speed. Seamlessly integrated with commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B, this solution provides intuitive tools, workflows and pre-built component libraries to accelerate frontend development, out-of-the-box and SEO-friendly capabilities, and so much more.

To accelerate the development of outstanding storefronts at speed, manufacturers can tap into the [Store Launchpad for B2B Manufacturing](#), regardless of the size or complexity of their business. This ready-to-use store leverages pre-built frontend components seamlessly connected with commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B as the backend. Plus, this launchpad follows the latest UX and UI best practices, so you can launch digital storefronts aligned with buyer expectations from the get-go.

Learn how to [plan the migration of your storefront](#) with commercetools Frontend.



## Step 6 Test, deploy and improve continuously

It's time to unveil your new store! Here are the final steps to get your website up and running:

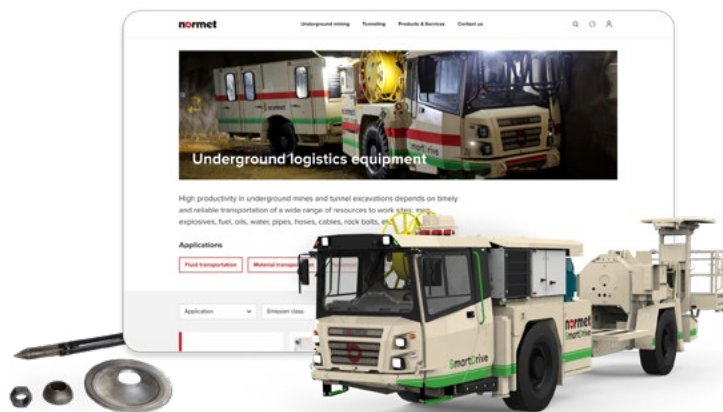
- Testing is a crucial step to identify compatibility issues and ensure data integrity. It's important to always keep track of user monitoring, analytics and performance metrics such as page load time, server response time and transaction processing time to identify areas that could be optimized, as well ensuring that any changes you're deploying don't adversely affect performance. You can follow this [demo flow](#) to see your commerce solution in action. Also, read our [go-live checklist](#) for additional information on your deployment.
- Real-time monitoring tools are an invaluable investment as they help you identify issues instantly, like system crashes or slow page load times, so you can address them quickly. In addition, it's important to continuously analyze data like customer behavior, product performance, and sales data to identify trends and patterns that could be used to optimize performance over time. Check our [supported APM \(application performance monitoring\) options](#).

Moving forward after your initial launch, it's key to seek continuous improvement, actively iterating, testing and monitoring to deliver the best experience for your customers. To achieve this, we also recommend having open communication with your customers, so your business can stay on top of expectations, creating innovations that cater to the people who matter the most.

# From zero to hero: B2B digital newcomers that have successfully done it

Here's how some new-to-digital B2B organizations are succeeding with composable commerce.

## Normet digitized an extensive product catalog of 65,000 spare parts



Backed by over 60 years of experience, [Normet](#) is a manufacturer and service provider of underground mining and tunneling equipment. The Finland-based company has had decades-long relationships with customers, nurturing those connections via one-to-one interaction with sales reps involving emails and phone calls. Predictably, the ordering process was inefficient and time-consuming for customers and sales reps alike.

With a 65,000-product catalog of highly specialized spare parts, it was time for Normet to deliver improved experiences by enabling customers to find and order products online. As a first step, Normet digitized the extensive product catalog and automated the purchasing process, allowing customers not only to order but also to check the availability and pricing for single products quickly. The pivot to eCommerce was also game-changing for sales reps: Instead of spending time taking orders manually, they now focus on more strategic tasks. Finally, Normet collects customer feedback on the new digital experiences continuously so that they can iteratively develop new features molded to their buyers' exact needs.

Normet's implementation process with partner [Columbus Global](#) — from the first line of code to full production deployment — took only 4.5 months and stayed within budget. The results were immediate, as customers quickly embraced the eCommerce portal for their ordering needs.



**“ You need to have the agility to adapt to your changing requirements and needs. I believe that the MACH approach suits that quite well. If we are thinking about 2... 3... 4 years into the future, we need to be prepared in case something changes, for example, in customer behavior or connecting to IoT. If we would have built the system with a traditional monolith eCommerce system, we would have lost that agility for the future. This is why we chose composable architecture.**

— Pekka Jaarinen, Director of Digital Services, Normet

## Dawn Foods created the recipe for success with self-service eCommerce



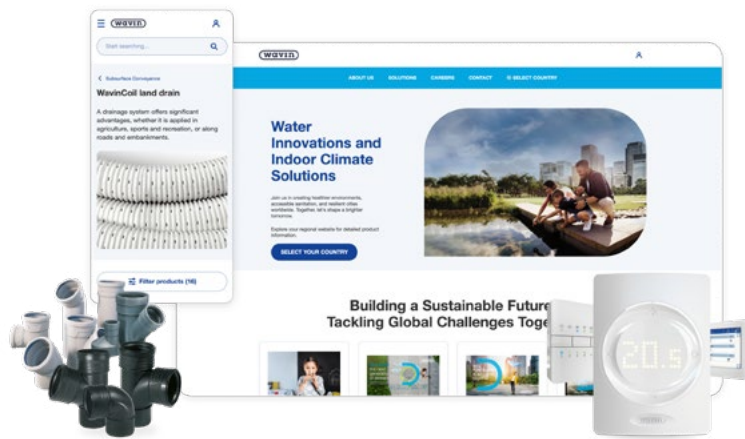
The century-old American manufacturer of baked goods and baking ingredients, [Dawn Foods](#), implemented an eCommerce solution for SMB retail bakery customers as an alternative option to phone and in-person orders.

The company's first inroads into digital allowed customers to browse through its extensive product catalog online, place orders with one click without having to enter shipping or billing information, and make payments. With the seamless cart and checkout processes powered by commercetools, customers can also see their order history, select desired items and reorder in only three clicks. Since the launch, Dawn Foods has witnessed a remarkable increase in sales orders, with a significant increase of 25% of all orders being processed online. To achieve this successful implementation, Dawn Foods relied on the support of commercetools' partner [EPAM](#).

**“ We are focused on providing the best experience for our customers, and the ability to easily scale and evolve to meet their changing needs was a critical step in our digital strategy. commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B provided us with incredible flexibility and allowed us to make our customers' lives easier by elevating the digital experience they have with Dawn. By providing customers with seamless account management and checkout processes, and the ability to view, search and browse our entire product catalog online, we continue to grow by delivering an industry-leading experience. Since launching eCommerce to our customers in the United States two years ago, the success we've seen so far has been astounding. More than half of our customers are registered to buy online and that number continues to grow on a daily basis.**

— Gireesh Sahukar, Vice-President of Digital, Dawn Foods

## Orbia Wavin added eCommerce to meet the needs of buyers globally



Orbia Building & Infrastructure (Wavin), an innovative solutions provider for the global building and infrastructure industry, started to digitize its commerce operations for the first time as part of a global expansion strategy. For the manufacturer, it was paramount to tap into the most modern commerce technology available today: commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B.

Orbia Wavin first created a pilot webshop for one of its core markets catering to merchants in only eight months. Next, the company launched 35 localized webshops across Europe, Latin America and APAC, delivering an average of 1.5 localized webshops per month over the course of two years.

As a result, the manufacturer witnessed continuous growth in revenue generated through digital channels, amassing a 9-digit turnover in 2023. Notably, the manufacturer generated these tremendous results with relatively low investment in development resources by engaging a system integrator and only two internal architects.

**“ As we plan to have 60% of global sales being digital, Orbia Building & Infrastructure (Wavin) is now poised to keep up with the pace of change thanks to composable commerce. From creating personalized journeys and integrating with a multitude of systems to rolling out eCommerce internationally, we now have the flexibility and scalability our business needs.**

— Sam Brands, Global Product Manager - Digital Ordering, Orbia Building & Infrastructure (Wavin)

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# More than tech: Holistic recommendations for your digital future

Achieving eCommerce success goes beyond technology — it requires a strong digital team as well as support and involvement from senior leadership. Below are some of the best practices that will empower you to not only dip your toes into digital but also enable you to dive deeply into a pervasive long-term digital strategy.

## Defining your strategy

Gain executive support and set the strategic direction.

- **Engage senior leadership:** Foster a culture of digitization by involving business and technology leaders in discussions about the why and how of digital transformation. Share and evangelize even the smallest successes to garner support from the top.
- **Get buy-in from the top management** and ensure that your C-level executives are committed to a digital transformation plan.
- **Customer-centric approach:** Engage with your customers to identify pain points and gather insights on what impresses them about B2B digital offerings. Your digital initiatives should prioritize how to make their lives easier, e.g., integrate their desired payment methods. Customer needs evolve, so engage with your customers constantly to get not only their feedback right now but what they expect from your organization in the future.
- **Prioritize strategic investments:** Start by investing in opportunities that will have the most significant impact on your customers and bottom line, as well as a clear path to implementation. Taking an incremental approach will help you accelerate the time to value of these opportunities.
- **Leverage quick wins:** From reordering to leveraging generative AI, quick wins help you improve efficiency and automation, plus drive an uplift in orders and customer stickiness.

## Pursuing organizational transformation

Digital transformation requires a mindset shift. Bring in digital enthusiasts and tackle hesitation head-on to win hearts and minds across your organization.

- **Build a digital team:** [62% of B2B sellers](#) agree that the lack of qualified eCommerce team members is a significant barrier to their growth. Establish a dedicated digital team, even if it's modest in size, to spearhead your digital exploration and strategy.

- **Work in tandem with sales teams:** Sales reps fear being sidelined or even replaced, so take the time to show them how digital commerce can help close deals faster and more efficiently. Digital capabilities can help the salesforce streamline buyer journeys big time, especially when sales reps are compensated for deals completed online. After all, [85% of B2B practitioners](#) expect hybrid sellers will be the predominant sales role within the next three years.
- **Agile mindset and development:** More and more B2B firms are recognizing the benefits of an agile framework for development. This project management methodology uses an iterative and flexible approach that focuses on short, time-boxed sprints. Allied with an incremental approach, your team can achieve big results with small steps.
- **The rise of a [composable organization](#):** Many businesses have started to create small and cross-functional teams around a specific function, such as a shopping cart, which increases collaboration and results.

## Evolving your digital future

Don't stand still! Get your plans in motion for your digital commerce.

- **Simplify the buying process:** Streamline the buyer journey by incorporating approval flows with quote generation, negotiation and more. This simplifies the purchasing process for multi-layered organizations.
- **Unlock the power of data:** Streamline and centralize your organization's master data source, including product, inventory and customer data, with the help of AI tools. This is crucial for achieving success in omnichannel experiences.
- **Unleash omnichannel:** B2B companies that invest in personalized and omnichannel customer journeys are improving their market share by [at least 10% annually](#). To achieve this, it's key to excel in your core channels: In-person, hybrid, inside sales, eCommerce and/or marketplaces. Using predictive-based AI models and analytics will help you personalize interactions at scale, as well as cross-sell and upsell more effectively.
- **Enhance site search:** Ensure B2B buyers can easily find what they're looking for across millions of SKUs by integrating semantic, predictive and even AI-powered search into your eCommerce platform.
- **Harness the full power of AI:** Stay ahead of the curve by investing in AI tools. As [61% of B2B decision-makers](#) planned to spend on AI in 2023, it is crucial to develop a crawl/walk/run strategy that allows your team to leverage the various applications of this technology both now and in the future.

# The commercetools starter toolkit for B2B digital newcomers

The commercetools product portfolio provides the essential elements to create a commerce solution that's not only the right choice for the beginning of your eCommerce journey — it's a future-ready platform that lets you evolve your digital footprint without limits. Our composable approach ensures that your team can experiment and innovate at speed to meet the outstanding experiences your customers now expect from B2B purchasing journeys.

Named a Leader in 2023  
Gartner® Magic Quadrant™  
for Digital Commerce

Named a Leader in IDC MarketScape:  
Worldwide B2B Digital Commerce  
Applications for Midmarket Growth  
2023-2024

Recognized with a record-  
breaking 14 gold medals by  
Paradigm B2B Combine 2023

## commercetools Foundry Blueprint for B2B Manufacturing

Leverage the pre-composed solution that brings together all the components you need to build and run outstanding B2B purchasing experiences.

### commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B

The leading composable commerce platform helps businesses deliver outstanding buying experiences, no matter the size of the business or level of buying complexity.

### commercetools Frontend

The frontend-as-a-service solution that enables you to deliver stunning digital storefronts at lightning speed.

### commercetools Connect

Facilitate integrations with easily pluggable, performant and reliable connectors powered, hosted and validated by commercetools.



#### Tailored resources

Comprehensive **Blueprint** for B2B Manufacturing

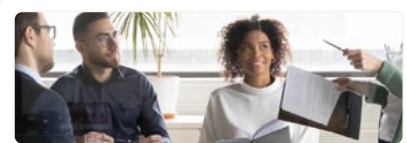
**Best practice guides** covering specific use cases

**AI-powered** developer assistants



#### Launchpads

Pre-built Store **Launchpad** for B2B Manufacturing



#### Expert services

Leverage **commerce know-how** to turbocharge your implementation and accelerate time to value

**Packaged** CSE services

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# Final words:

## Are you the new kid on the digital block? Use it to your advantage

This is the right time for your business to level the playing field and gain a competitive advantage in the digital world. While early movers in B2B digital commerce have gained market share and brand recognition, many of these are struggling today with the challenges posed by legacy platforms (whether third-party or homegrown), such as the inability to support growth initiatives, meet customer expectations or improve internal efficiency. As a matter of fact, a staggering [60% of B2B executives plan to find new eCommerce platforms](#) in the next 24 months as their outdated infrastructure keeps holding them back.

As a new kid on the digital block, you have the opportunity to embrace the latest technology from the get-go and leapfrog your competitors with composable commerce. This flexible and scalable approach enables you to start with eCommerce on your own terms, free from the constraints of all-in-one solutions or hard-to-maintain homegrown stacks. And, you can avoid the pitfalls other companies have made during their transformation processes, which can help you shape the strategy and roadmap of what works best for your company and its needs.

As you embark on this digital journey, you'll likely face internal skepticism from colleagues who still believe composable commerce is too complex for new-to-digital companies. However, our observations tell a different story: **B2B companies digitizing for the first time are the most ardent advocates of composable.** Remarkably, about 25% of commercetools B2B customers came to us possessing zero (or very little) digital experience, and yet many have successfully implemented a composable infrastructure with fewer than 10 developers in under six months.

Using **commercetools Foundry Blueprint for B2B Manufacturing**, as well as the best practices recommended in this guide, will prove invaluable during this process to decrease time to market and reap rewards early on.

That said, debuting your commerce straight away with composable will give you the tools to speed up your digital estate at a much faster pace than early movers stuck with legacy solutions.

Now that you're on the path to digitizing your commerce, there's no doubt that you and your team have a substantial task ahead — and **we're ready to support your eCommerce future:**

- Explore the in-depth documentation of [commercetools Foundry Blueprint for B2B Manufacturing](#) and learn how to jumpstart your commerce project.
- Take advantage of our free [60-day trial](#) to create your MVP or POC and get a glimpse of how commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B can work for you.



- Don't hesitate to reach out to our team of commerce experts and [tell us about your business and goals](#) so we can advise on the best next steps for you. Alternatively, explore our [network of implementation partners](#), who are well-equipped to assist in planning and executing your digital vision.

## Continue exploring

### Blogs

- [B2B manufacturers provide it: Implementing composable commerce at speed with lean dev teams is becoming the rule, not the exception](#)
- [The hero's journey to composable: How B2B business leaders are adopting a customer-obsessed operating model to succeed](#)
- [What makes B2B buyers tick in digital commerce?](#)
- [Composable commerce for B2B 101: Everything you need to know in one place](#)
- [Composable commerce for B2B 101, Part 2: How complex and costly is it really?](#)
- [4 success stories that showcase how B2B leaders boost revenue streams](#)

### B2B customer stories



### White papers and booklets

- [Establishing your baseline: Assessing B2B digital maturity](#)
- [Frictionless B2B customer experience guide](#)
- [commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B: Feature Guide](#)
- [Pivotal Trends and Predictions in B2B Digital Commerce in 2024](#)

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# About commercetools

commercetools is the leading composable commerce platform, allowing companies to dynamically tailor and scale shopping experiences across markets. We equip some of the world's largest businesses with tools to future-proof digital offerings, reduce risks and costs, and build outstanding experiences that drive revenue growth.

Headquartered in Munich, commercetools has led a global renaissance in digital commerce by combining cloud-native, technology-agnostic, independent components into a unique system that addresses specific business needs. We empower brands — including Audi, Danone, Eurorail, NBCUniversal, Sephora and Volkswagen Group — to stay ahead of changing consumer and buyer behavior.

More information at [commercetools.com](https://commercetools.com).

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