

# B2B eCommerce: Getting Started



An eBook brought to you by



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# An Introduction to B2B eCommerce

You either have your own brand or are a distributor and a good one at that. You have quality products, a reputation for being reliable, and your customers are happy.



You might have also have built up a great online retail business with your Shopify, Magento or WooCommerce store, and now you're looking for new ways to grow.

You see a huge opportunity that you're not taking advantage of – and that's going wholesale. So maybe it is time to explore more about what this channel has to offer. In this eBook, we will walk you through the process of starting or moving your wholesale business online successfully.

To get started, let's look at the benefits of switching over to selling wholesale online, or as well call it here, B2B eCommerce. By bringing your wholesale customers to place orders online, you can save so much time!

Imagine never having to:

- take orders over the phone or email
- manually checking if your products are in stock,
- creating a quote or sales orders for each order, or
- updating the customer with their order status



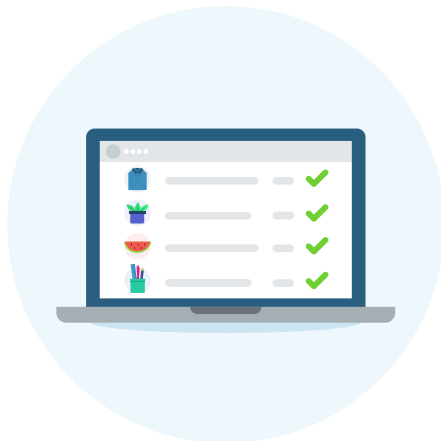
Here is an overview of what B2B eCommerce can do:



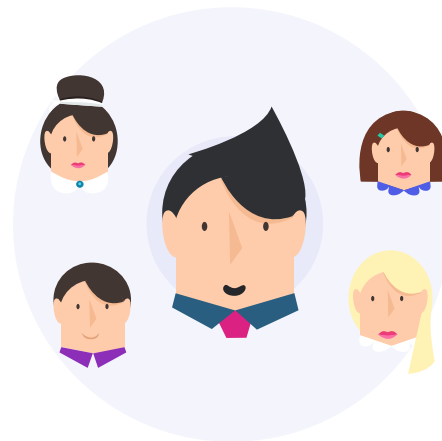
**1** Think of your B2B eCommerce store as a free marketing tool.



**2** Customers can order exactly what they need with maximum efficiency.



**3** View your full order history in one place.



**4** A professional sales channel to help build trust and make your customer feel in control of their purchasing.

Take your wholesale business online by starting a free trial with TradeGecko to setup your own [B2B eCommerce Store!](#)

Still not convinced? Read on to learn more about the current state of B2B eCommerce, and why you should move your wholesale business online.



# The state of B2B eCommerce

Before making any commitments, let's get an idea of what you're getting yourself into. What's the current B2B eCommerce market, and why is it going to stick around?

The numbers pretty much speak for themselves. In fact, 74% of B2B buyers prefer to buy online than from a sales rep. It's faster, more convenient, and always available. Buyers want you to make their lives easy - bringing your wholesale business online does that and more.

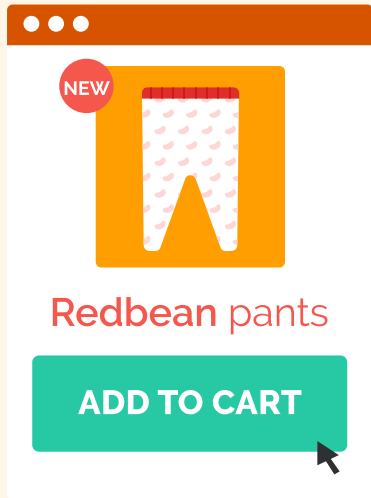
If the big players like Alibaba and Amazon are investing in B2B eCommerce (and they are), it's a pretty good sign that the industry is shifting. TradeGecko's B2B eCommerce Store allows you to create a private eCommerce storefront for your wholesale customers.

If you already have an existing online store on Shopify, WooCommerce, and Magento, TradeGecko can automatically pull your products and publish them on your wholesale store.

TradeGecko streamlines the purchasing process for your buyers so that they can buy from you, 24/7.

Customize the look and feel of your store, and decide which products each buyer will see, and what prices they can purchase products for.

**?** Did you know?



87% of TradeGecko's B2B eCommerce platform users say that they prefer ordering online versus over the phone, fax or by email.



# Your wholesale workflows and how they'll get better

Your day-to-day workflows as a wholesaler will also benefit from getting online. Overall, they'll be simpler, with all the information you need in one centralized place, your workflows will get more efficient and accurate.

Here are a few examples:

<b>1</b> <b>Sales team workflows</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Invoices, sales orders and purchase orders</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Order fulfillment</b>
Sales teams have better information when you're online, along with quick and easy access to product catalogs, product photos and updated inventory levels.	These workflows will benefit from real-time updates and centralized data. When the status of any of these items changes, i.e. from packed to shipped online updates simplify the process.	With in-house fulfillment, everyone in the company will be working from the same, updated inventory levels. With a 3PL, operating online means better communication and transparency.

These are all to do with the more technical aspects of the day-to-day. Your high-level workflows will also benefit from online operations.



4

### Marketing activities

An online presence and storefront will improve your marketing activities without much effort on your part. Making it easier to reach your store only improves awareness and interest in what you have to offer.

5

### Business decisions

As everyone within the company will work from the same, updated information (rather than individual files and folders), major business decisions can be streamlined and easily communicated throughout departments.

6

### Individual workflows

Having all the information in one place gives autonomy to your employees, allowing them to move through their own daily activities at their pace, rather than having to wait for reports from other departments.

Overall, the technical operations of your workflows won't change much - with the exception of the time and accuracy with which you can do them!

Check out this [workflow blog post](#) for detailed descriptions of each of these improvements.



# Factors Defining The Future Of B2B eCommerce



Increasing interest on the part of wholesalers for their eCommerce platform to **support complex configuration** and pricing workflows.

Order management integrated at the platform level to enable **greater synchronized order processing** across every channel.

B2B buyers expect a consistently **high-quality customer experience** across all channels and are loyal to companies who deliver excellence daily.

Being able to deliver unique eCommerce buying experiences for multi-tier distribution channels including **partners, distributors, dealers, resellers, service providers and OEMs** is in high demand today.

The need for greater price optimization and **Configure-Price-Quote (CPQ)** flexibility across every selling channel.

The number of capabilities in eCommerce technology is increasing **Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)**, making companies consider a unified cloud platform more than before.

Interested in giving B2B a go? Set up your **B2B eCommerce Store** in 5 minutes with **TradeGecko!**

[GET STARTED NOW](#)



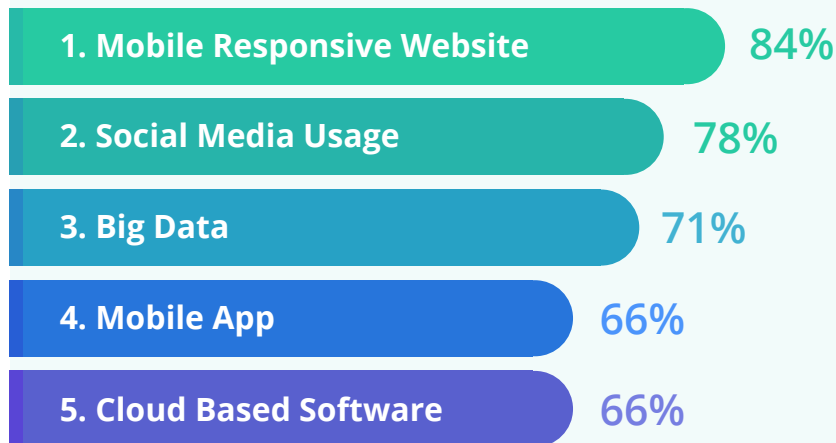


# Why you should be wholesaling online

Thinking about making the move online but not sure whether your wholesale customers are ready to buy online? Read on to find out why a digital transformation strategy should become your top priority.



## B2B Priority for a **Digital Transformation Strategy**



**52%** of SME's have mobile-optimized their website.



# How to transition from selling retail to wholesale online

Moving your wholesale ordering systems online can seem a bit intimidating. But having all your information in one centralized place has numerous advantages you can't afford to miss.

There's opportunity for higher profit margins, a bigger customer reach, and the advantage of taking control of your supply chain by moving into online wholesale. Start with these 5 tips for making the move and transition to B2B eCommerce smoother.

**1** **Make it all about you.** The wholesale process does move slower than B2C and a lot of your sales will depend on long term relationships. But setting up a detailed product description, using clear product photos and addressing common enquiries will help you sell your products online before the customer even contacts you.

**2** A big part of your decision to move into wholesale is to grow your business and let's put it bluntly - **to make more money**. Making sure that your pricing and minimum order quantities are set up to make orders worth your while is an essential part of the wholesale model.

**3** Modify your order fulfilment processes and workflows. While your basic order fulfilment processes can probably stay the same, it's **important to modify for wholesale** by including an increase in capacity for volume and making sure your pick, pack, ship process is streamlined.

**4** Use all of that retail or B2C eCommerce experience to your advantage by **transferring the convenience** of the online buying experience to your new online wholesale environment.

**5** Look at wholesale as an opportunity to grow your business. Essentially moving into wholesale is **another sales channel and way to increase your sales**, so it's definitely worth your time investment.



# Wholesale metrics, KPIs and measuring performance online

Now let's focus on measuring how well your wholesale business is doing by taking a look at the metrics and KPIs that matter. The great thing about moving your wholesale order operations online is that all of your data is stored in one place, and so these metrics become much easier to track.

There are three types of wholesale metrics you should be measuring:

QUALITY METRICS	SERVICE METRICS	OPERATIONS METRICS
<p><b>These measure the quality of your products.</b></p> <p>When setting the KPIs for your quality metrics, you might be looking at things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Production efficiency</i></li><li>• <i>Percentage of defective products</i></li><li>• <i>Shipping accuracy</i></li></ul>	<p><b>These measure how you're serving your customers.</b></p> <p>The KPIs for service metrics might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Customer retention</i></li><li>• <i>Customer purchasing frequency</i></li><li>• <i>Customer satisfaction</i></li><li>• <i>Buyer demographics</i></li></ul>	<p><b>This looks at the overall state of your business.</b></p> <p>The KPIs for business operations focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Return on equity</i></li><li>• <i>Return on assets</i></li><li>• <i>Inventory ratios</i></li><li>• <i>Warehouse expenses</i></li></ul>

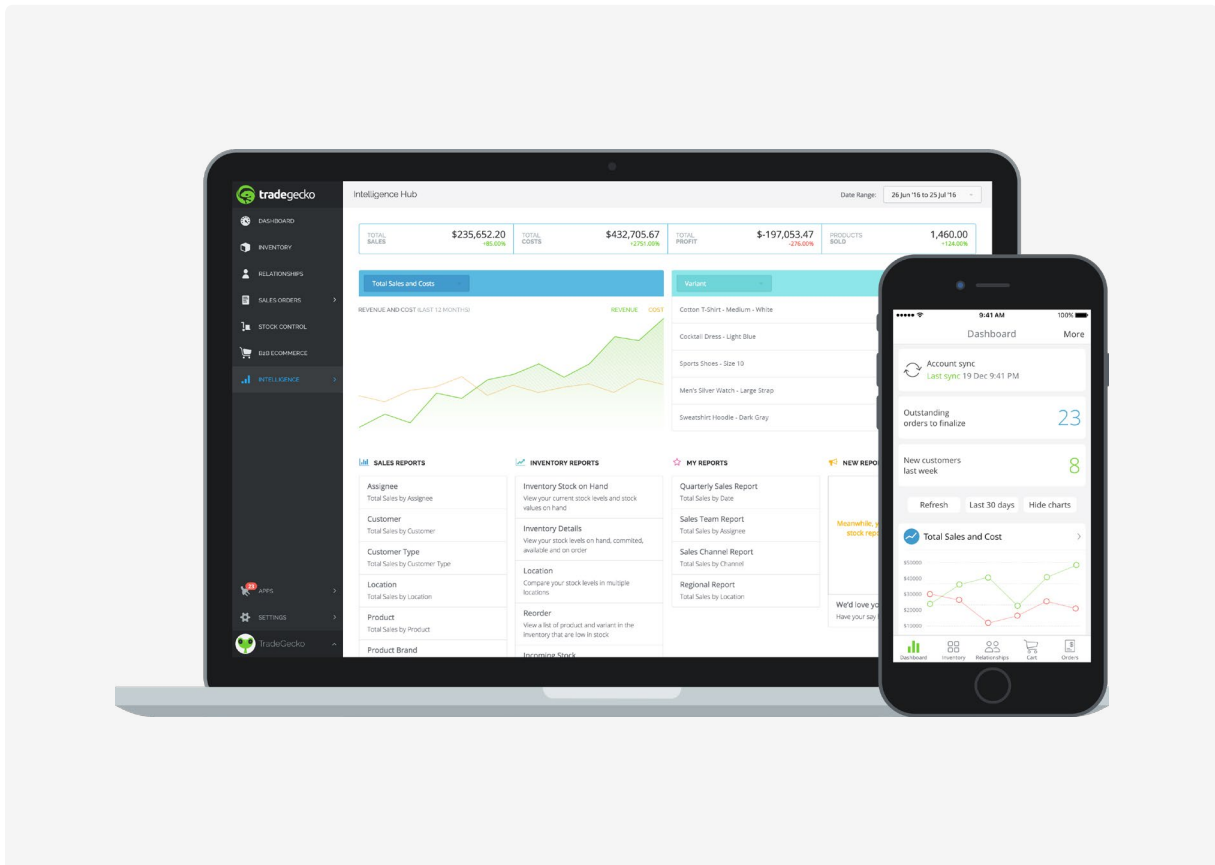
## Metrics and KPIs explained

Each of these three categories include various metrics, and you should focus on metrics relevant to your operations, areas to improve, and those that help you make informed business decisions. When you attach measurable dates and goals to any of these metrics, they become your KPIs. For more on KPIs, [check out this blog post](#).



## How going online makes you more intelligent

Using an online platform with cloud technology means your data is centralized and up-to-date, eliminating the potential for errors due to manual data entry. Going online makes tracking results easier and means less manual calculations when measuring KPIs. TradeGecko's online B2B eCommerce Store provides intelligence reports that let you pull up sales insights from reports that previously would have taken more time and manual calculations.



# How to take your B2B eCommerce platform to the next level

With these 10x tips you can easily customize your B2B eCommerce store to the needs of each buyer, promote your products, set up automated processes and have full control.

**1** **Control access** to your wholesale customers.

**2** Create **custom price lists** and discounts.

**3** **Control stock order statuses:**  
1. Set minimum order quantities  
2. Choose whether the commit or not commit to stock orders

**4** **Personalize your B2B eCommerce Store** to match your branding by adding your company logo, colour theme, and your store name / header.

**5** **Add a custom domain.**

**6** **Customize** your email order forms.

**7** **Showcase your products** with quality photos & descriptions.

**8** Invite customers by sending **personal invitations**.

**9** **Setup tax types** by:  
1. Country  
2. Product Category  
3. Customer

**10** **Filter your product catalog** by customer, categories, brands and tags.



# How a B2B eCommerce platform will empower your customers

You might be worried about how your customers will react to being invited to a B2B platform... You may think “What happens when they’re asked to do something differently? Can they adapt?”

Making the move to online wholesaling allows your customers to take control of the ordering process. They’ll be able to get online when it’s convenient for them, regardless of time zones, weekends, or holidays.

And the ordering process itself becomes much simpler. Gone are the days of a tedious back-and-forth over the phone, fax or by email, whereby stock levels are checked manually, and quotes are issued, accepted, and then hopefully converted to sales orders.

With our B2B eCommerce Store, your customers - once invited - simply log in and then browse new products, view their entire order history or re-order items directly.

Stock levels can be displayed in real-time if tracking is enabled on the product in question, or you can allow users to place orders regardless, so they’ll never be disappointed. The store is customizable with your brand and colors, so it’ll fit right alongside your existing online presence. What’s more, it can be tailored with a custom price list and discounts per customer.

 Did you know?



According to a report of B2B eCommerce trends, **89% of B2B customers** research products on the internet before they buy and do 12 Google searches before starting the buying process.<sup>1</sup>

Sources: <sup>1</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolombus/2016/09/12/predicting-the-future-of-b2b-e-commerce>



Overall, you can make the entire process of wholesale ordering for your customers as easy, convenient, and fun as online shopping. And who doesn't enjoy that?

So... what are you waiting for? If you want time savings and customer empowerment, then it's time to take wholesaling online seriously. Why not start a free trial with TradeGecko today?

**PERSONALIZED**

The image shows a computer monitor displaying a B2B eCommerce storefront for 'ACME STORE'. The page features a search bar at the top left, the store logo 'ACME STORE QUALITY STUFF SINCE 1984' at the top center, and a shopping cart icon at the top right showing '55 Items' and a total of '\$1,667.65'. Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs for 'PRODUCTS', 'NEW ARRIVALS', 'ORDER HISTORY', and 'CONTACT US'. A yellow banner below the navigation bar reads 'Special Offer! 10% off all wholesale orders this month!'. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar with 'CATEGORIES' (Acme, Unilever, Young) and 'Brands' (A-Z, CLEAR SELECTION), and a main 'ALL PRODUCTS' section. The product list includes items like 'Cocktail Dress' (\$120.00), 'Diamond Ring' (from \$1,833.00), 'Cotton T-Shirt' (\$23.00), 'Silver Watch' (\$388.00), and 'Sports Shoes' (\$89.00). Each product has 'MORE INFO' and 'ORDER NOW' buttons. At the bottom left of the page, there is a 'Get in touch' section with a 'SEND US A MESSAGE' button and contact information for the website and email.

## Introducing your new B2B eCommerce Store

Start taking bulk orders in minutes with a private wholesale ordering platform tailored to your customers and brand.

[TRY OUR B2B ECOMMERCE STORE NOW >](#)



# B2B eCommerce, it's the future

B2B eCommerce is expected to quickly outgrow B2C eCommerce by the time we reach 2020, as more businesses adopt this new way of selling wholesale.

Customers are ready to have their wholesale buying work as quickly and simply as their retail buying - a service that's quickly becoming a necessity, rather than just a convenience. They're already looking for you online - make sure you give them something to find!



All signs point to a channel shift - to websites and increasingly, mobile apps, streamlining the whole B2B sales process. Going online is the future. In fact, it's already the present. The world is only growing more connected and as a result, business operations are getting faster, easier and more effective. It makes sense that wholesale is moving along with that trend.

So what does a successful B2B website look like? See who's [doing online wholesale](#) right at the moment. B2B eCommerce isn't just a fad, it's looking to become the way to do business - is your business ready to evolve with the times?

If you're ready to give wholesaling online a try, our [B2B eCommerce Store](#) would be a great place for you to start!

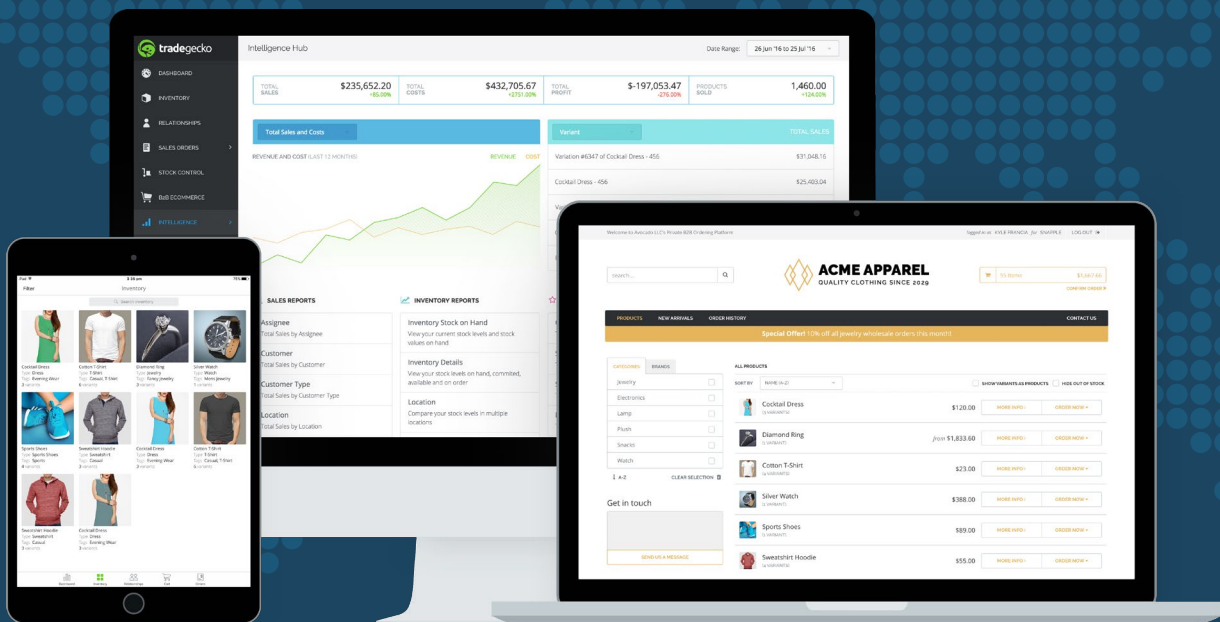






TradeGecko makes powerful inventory and order management software available to every business!

[CLICK HERE TO START A FREE TRIAL](#)



About TradeGecko | [tradegecko.com](https://tradegecko.com)

TradeGecko is powerful inventory and order management software on web and mobile. Every product, order and customer is managed in one place along with the best eCommerce, accounting and shipping integrations. Also includes a customizable B2B eCommerce Store so you can sell wholesale online with unique prices for each customer.