

WHITEPAPER

Digital Transformation

Are you business ready?



Introduction

Driven by the rapid consumerization of technology, B2B eCommerce is changing how business is done. No industry is immune from this transformative change.

56% of B2B Buyers purchase online.

- Forrester

eCommerce is changing how companies interact with their customers and, most importantly, how their customers want to interact with them. B2B customers want to research their buying decisions without having to talk to a sales representative and when they make a decision to buy, they want to be able to do it easily and quickly.

So eCommerce is causing this digital transformation for businesses of all sizes, including yours. The only question remaining is...

Are you business ready?

Likely you have some sort of web presence today, but that doesn't mean you are business ready for B2B eCommerce.

You might even have the ability to take orders via your website, but does your B2B eCommerce site "talk digitally" to your Sage system? Or is that task left to your staff?

eCommerce must be embraced throughout your company for you to realize the benefits of this digital transformation:

- **A shift in how business is conducted internally and externally.** It is about being agile in how you adapt to new technologies, so that you can scale and expand into existing and new market segments at digital speed.
- **A shift in how you interact with your customers.** It is about providing your customers with a truly end-to-end digital experience whilst putting your customers at the center of your decision-making and allowing them to digitally interact with you at their convenience.

So, back to the question. Is your business ready? Whether you are looking to implement a B2B eCommerce strategy or already have some semblance of strategy in place, you need to make sure you are ready to embrace this digital transformation.

You need to be able to leverage B2B eCommerce to drive incremental revenue, improve operating efficiencies, and create a positive customer experience.

5-step plan

to ensure successful B2B eCommerce

1. Integrate with Sage

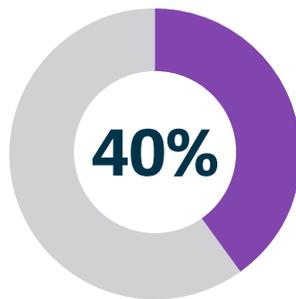
Your Sage system is the heartbeat of your business and you have invested considerable time and energy making it so.

You have set up inventory, customers, pricing, taxes, fulfillment processing, and reporting, so it is only logical to leverage this investment when you implement a B2B eCommerce solution. The most critical questions to ask any B2B eCommerce developer is:

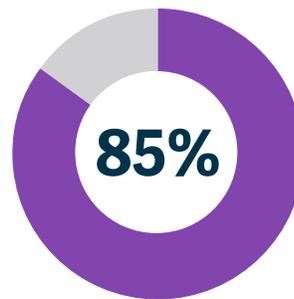
- “Do you have experience integrating a B2B eCommerce solution with Sage?”
- “How can you be sure my customer’s prices will be correct?”
- “How do you translate orders and payments to Sage?”

If the answer is “We’re not sure” or “We can figure that out later. Let’s work on the copy and information architecture first”, you should run, not walk, to the nearest exit.

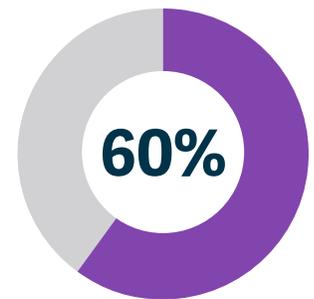
Real-time, bi-directional integration with your Sage system should be considered fundamental to any B2B eCommerce implementation.



40% of buyers identified back-end integration with financing, accounting, order management systems (OMS), or enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems as a key feature for suppliers to offer.*



Nearly 85% of large Industrial Machinery and Equipment organizations indicated that their ERP is a vital platform for delivering a good customer experience.*



60% of B2B executives cite integration with ERP and Accounting system is a top technology priority.*

*Source: ecommerceandb2b.com

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2. Move fast

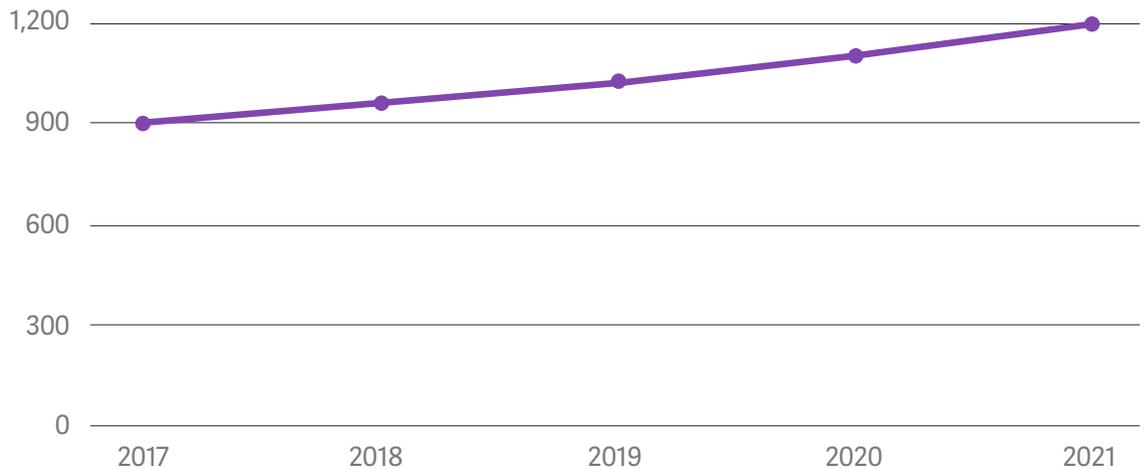
The longer you wait to implement a B2B eCommerce solution, the further behind you will fall. Your competitors are embracing the digital world now and you need to move fast.

According to a report by Statista, "B2B business is now dwarfing that of B2C business." In 2017, global B2C eCommerce sales totaled \$2.3 trillion whereas global B2B eCommerce sales stood at \$7.7 trillion. That is a difference of 234.78% in market size!

Once a competitor establishes trust with search engines, like Google, it is extremely difficult and expensive for you to get ahead of them on search results pages. So getting an optimized B2B eCommerce solution up quickly, focusing on your fastest moving products, is critical.

Avoid the temptation to get bogged down with minor, low impact features.

US B2B eCommerce sales (in billions of dollars)



Source: Forrester Research

5-step plan

to ensure successful B2B eCommerce

3. Get mobile

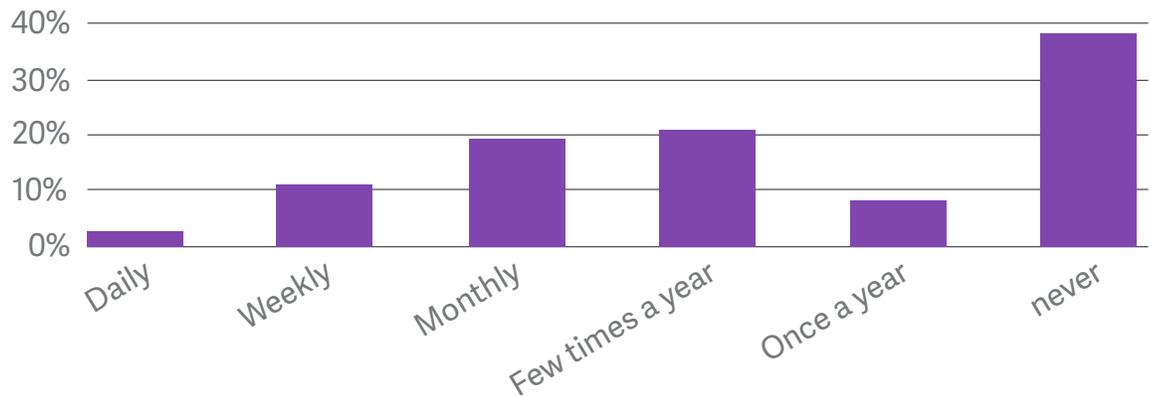
Did you know that 62% of people use their mobile device to make an online purchase at least once a year? Within that 62%, 11% make purchases weekly and 19% make purchases monthly (refer to graph below).

While not every buyer uses a smartphone or tablet to make purchases, 82%* of smartphone users turn to their devices to help them make a product decision and 93%** of people who use a mobile device for research go on to make a purchase.

Having a mobile-friendly site also gives you a significant SEO advantage and increases your SERP (Search Engine Results Page) ranking.

These are some of the reasons why we recommend that your B2B eCommerce solution is built using mobile friendly Responsive Web Design.

Digital shopping device usage and frequency worldwide in 2017



Source: Statista; PwC

* Google/Nielsen, "Mobile Path to Purchase" study, November 2013, United States.

** Google/Ipsos, "Consumers in the Micro-Moment" study, March 2015, United States.

5-step plan

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4. Manage and optimize

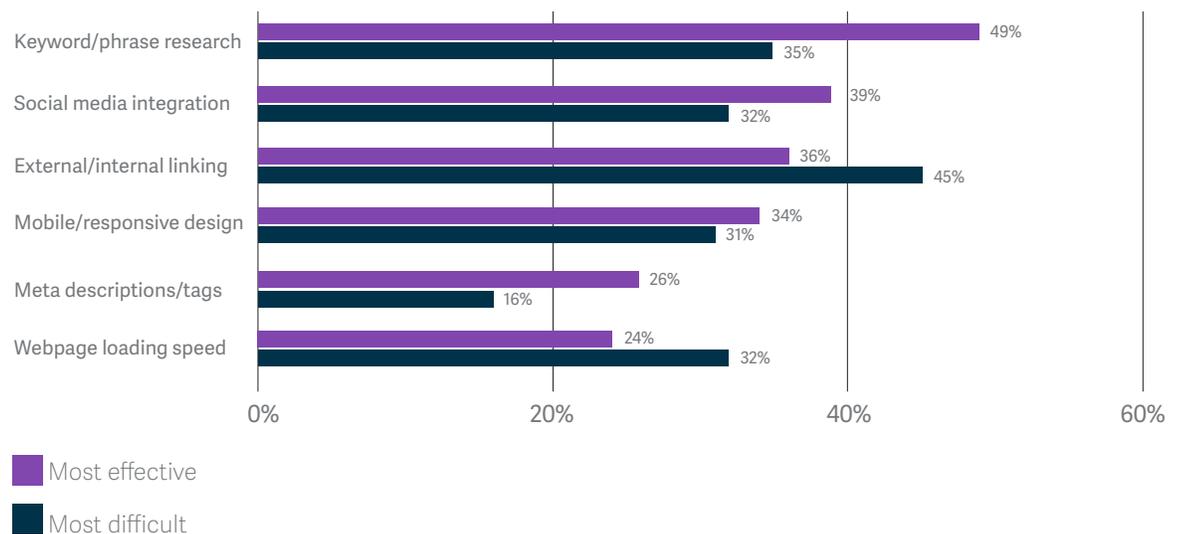
Building a B2B eCommerce solution is just the first step in your digital transformation journey. You must give careful consideration to how you manage and optimize your B2B eCommerce solution in order to effectively drive awareness and increase traffic.

In order to drive more traffic to your platform, it is important to meet your customers where they are most likely to be. Do they use social media more, or email? Do they respond to re-targeting and ads?

Narrow down on the platforms your customers use and make sure that you have an influential presence on these platforms.

In regards to your eCommerce platform, ensure that your catalog and product pages are configured with Google in mind. Pay special attention to page load speeds, adding relevant keywords and optimizing your product images. The table below shows some of the most effective SEO tactics for eCommerce platforms:

Most effective and difficult SEO tactics



Source: Marketingcharts.com; Ascend2 and Research Partners

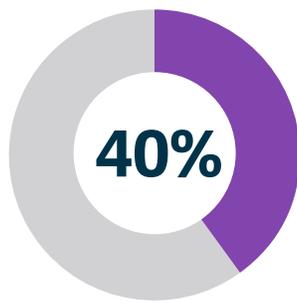
5-step plan

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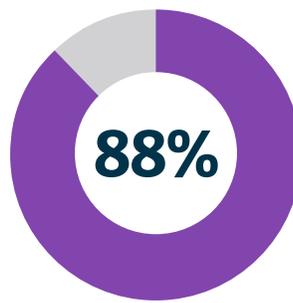
5. Get personal

You know who your customers are, so get personal with them. When they log in to your B2B eCommerce site, you need to ensure the pricing they see is identical to what you have in your Sage system, the product catalog is relevant to them, that they can access all of their orders and transaction history in real-time, and that the content you are producing is relevant and helpful to them.

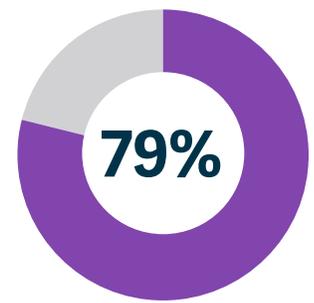
Personalized product recommendations are a huge driver in increasing the average order value. B2B buyers want to find what they want quickly, and then be able to purchase easily. Give your customers powerful buying tools, such as an intuitive search experience, guided Product Finders, Quick Order forms, Order Templates, Category and Search Faceted Filters, and Product Configurators.



40% of buyers have left an eCommerce store to buy from another site because they were overwhelmed with too many options. ^[1]



88% of buyers say they're more likely to shop with merchants that deliver personalized and connected cross-channel experiences. ^[2]



79% of organizations that exceeded revenue goals have documented a personalization strategy. ^[3]

Source: ^[1] Accenture. ^[2] <https://blog.optimizely.com/2016/08/30/website-personalization-shopper-stats/>
^[3] <http://www.business2community.com/marketing/10-surprising-stats-personalization-01791432#VyXl1Vbb72cShGEz.97>

In conclusion

Integration, integration, integration

An eCommerce solution that doesn't integrate with your current Sage system will guarantee you three outcomes:

1. That budget you allocated for your B2B eCommerce project? It is not going to be enough as you are going to spend significantly more money trying to integrate your B2B eCommerce solution to your Sage system.
2. That launch date you had planned and the accompanying marketing material? Better put that on hold as implementation is going to take much longer than you forecasted.
3. The order entry staff you had planned to reallocate to more high-value projects? Hold the transition plan because they are still going to be doing order entry for a long time.

Like any far reaching project, there are lots of moving parts with rolling out B2B eCommerce. However, there are steps you should take to ensure you get the most of your B2B eCommerce solution and to successfully embrace the digital transformation of your business:

- Engage both employees and customers alike
- Think about optimizing, not just building
- Focus on integration, integration, integration
- Move quickly to launch



Sage eCommerce

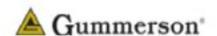
About XM Developments

XM Developments is the developer of Sage eCommerce, the world's only Sage certified eCommerce solution fully integrated with Sage.

We enable you to seamlessly extend your Sage platform to the digital world with secure and real-time connectivity, delivering you Intelligent eCommerce.

Sage eCommerce has been successfully implemented for hundreds of customers across a wide range of industries, from small start-ups to global organizations.

Meet some of our clients:



Sage eCommerce

It's time for intelligent eCommerce

We'll take care of the data.

You take care of growing your business.

Ready to integrate?

Schedule a demo with a Sage eCommerce specialist:

Email us at sage@xmdevelopments.com



For more info, visit: <https://get.sage.com/ecommerce>
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