

# The “Amazon Experience” Dominates Customer Expectations, and B2B is No Exception



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What does digital innovation mean for the manufacturing industry? For those that have already achieved high levels of collaboration across their direct and indirect sales channels, the next natural step is to leverage the revenue growth potential and strategic advantage of B2B commerce.

When businesses sell to other businesses, those transactions and experiences can take different forms. Oftentimes, it means the sale of physical products, from sub-components and spare parts ordering, to consumables replenishment. However, these inter-company transactions can also include services such as installation, warranty replacement/repairs, and recurring maintenance orders. Additionally, B2B transactions add another layer of complexity with product entitlements and contractual pricing for different partners. Solidifying “frictionless” B2B commerce as a primary sales and distribution channel can make doing business easier and substantially more profitable.

## **The Future of B2B is Digital**

Online commerce and the consumer purchasing journey have transformed the B2C world and shaped expectations in the commercial setting. The expectations of business buyers have been molded by the “Amazon Experience” and other leading eCommerce sites which offer convenience, timeliness, and intelligent personalization above all. Many brands are already offering their B2B partners self-service options, so further optimizing the experience is the next natural step.

Here's what commercial decision makers say about B2B commerce:

51%

believe it helps enable upselling and cross-selling with current customers

59%

say that it helps with new customer acquisition

89%

of customers prefer low-effort experiences to highly personal ones.

Source: Salesforce

## Possibilities Unlocked

Whether working with customers, dealers, distributors, franchises, or retailers, the potential of a truly effective B2B commerce platform is endless:

\* **Empower business customers with a stellar e-commerce experience.** Offer your customers a robust shopping experience that is designed specifically for business buyers and their unique purchasing journeys.

\* **Turn business into a 24/7, flexible operation.** With "always-on" availability and self-service options that streamline collaboration and make ordering more efficient, business customers can experience ultimate ease and convenience. Easily replicate routine orders regardless of how simple or complex.

\* **Create personalized recommendations that work for your customers and for you.** Powered by a full 360-degree view of your business clients, brands can personalize recommendations, and even create custom product sets with pre-negotiated prices.

\* **Drive customer retention and brand loyalty.** Leverage a suite of tools that fosters cross-sell and up-sell opportunities and present the most relevant promotions and options right when the customer is most likely to want them.

\* **Generate insight that drives smart action.** With an added layer of insight into Salesforce CRM data, businesses across all industries can understand more about their distributors, retailers, and the associated product performance.

As a part of a larger strategy that focuses on how brands can better collaborate with their partners, commerce can play an important part in streamlining operations and generating growth.

## Global Manufacturer Improves Sales Efficiency with B2B Commerce

Would you rather have sales agents chasing six-figure deals, or have them tied to their desk handling an endless stream of smaller, time-consuming orders? The answer was obvious for an Acumen Solutions client that decided to implement B2B Commerce and not only free up their team to pursue larger sales, but offer a better experience to their partner businesses. Through a powerful commerce platform, they were able to improve productivity for sales teams spending as much as half of their time on small orders and instead allow them to focus on deals leading to dramatic revenue growth.

# Relationships Aren't Dead

Traditionally, B2B organizations are about relationships, and that hasn't changed. What has changed is that technology can make those relationships stronger and more profitable. By reducing transaction-based interactions with B2B customers, brands can strategically shift to consulting customers and becoming trusted advisors. Buyers also value a business relationship with efficient ways to transact; they see the added value of digital functionality, as well as a redefined relationship with their brands. This enables businesses to be more proactive, better anticipate the needs of the customers, distributors, or retailers, and drive growth.

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