

WHY STARTING AN ONLINE SALES CHANNEL IS KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS AS A BUSINESS

THE BENEFITS OF B2B E-COMMERCE



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INTRODUCTION

B2B e-commerce is a hot topic. Everybody talks about it, but few really get how it works. We do. We understand how it affects your changing business. We'd like to share with you how B2B e-commerce can benefit your company.

You want your business to move forward and your customers to stay happy. Considering taking your business online is a big step. It's okay to be confused and unsure. It's okay to have questions like: Is it like B2C? How will my customers experience this online platform?

[Read more and learn about how your business can succeed online.](#)

1

B2B E-COMMERCE IS GOING SKY-HIGH

B2B e-commerce is going through a transformation. The market is changing fast. More and more companies are adding an online sales channel to their business. Why is this?

The more you know your customers, the better you can serve them. With a B2B e-commerce platform you can start selling outside office hours and still offer customer-specific catalogs and prices. These features optimize your business efficiency, improve your internal processes and reduce costs.

Your customers are aware of the popularity and usability of B2C e-commerce. They expect the same quality of service from your B2B platform. Meeting their expectations will keep you ahead of your competition.

“We started selling online in 2009. Currently 90% of our business goes through our sales portal. We are ahead of our competition, who are only starting now with their web store.”

Jeroen Koppenaal, ICT manager
at Euretco

68% OF B2B BUYERS NOW PURCHASE GOODS ONLINE

UNCOVERING THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE IN B2B COMMERCE,
ACQUITY GROUP, 2014

57%

2013

68%

2014

2

B2B AND B2C ARE DIFFERENT

At first glance, comparing B2B and B2C e-commerce can seem like comparing apples and oranges. But is this really the case?

B2B and retail web stores both have search functions, breadcrumb navigation, detailed product information and personal account history pages. However, B2B platforms present additional challenges.

“Higher revenue and more satisfied customers. B2B sales portals can quickly bring your business to the next level.”

Bram Streefkerk, Product
Marketing Director Sana Commerce

Most B2B businesses have complex ordering processes, large collections of attributes and elaborate back-end systems.

We are seeing more and more B2B sales portals trying to recreate the same user experience B2C offer consumers. Wish lists, simple checkout processes, and cross and upselling are typical retail tricks that are also used to boost online B2B sales.



72%

**72% OF SANA B2B WEB STORES
ALSO USE THEIR SALES PORTAL TO
EMPHASIZE THEIR BRAND IMAGE**

3

YOUR B2B CUSTOMERS WANT TO BUY ONLINE

With online shopping becoming peoples' favorite pastime during weekends, it's only logical for your clients to expect the same purchasing experience of your B2B sales portal.

Customers want to be able to purchase goods whenever and wherever it suits them. They want to see the right inventory level, their order history and their own negotiated discounts. If you want to meet these expectations, we recommend an omni-channel solution for your B2B organization.

An omni-channel solution is one that provides a seamless shopping experience for your customers across all environments: brick-and-mortar stores, mobile devices, and online.

These types of sales portals have proven to be successful, not only for their enhanced shopping experience, but for the true ERP integration they reflect.



66%

66% OF B2B COMPANIES SAY THEIR CUSTOMERS EXPECT OMNI-CHANNEL WEB STORE CAPABILITIES

CUSTOMER DESIRES VS. RETAILER CAPABILITIES: MINDING THE OMNICHANNEL COMMERCE GAP, FORRESTER RESEARCH COMPANY, 2014

4

A B2B WEB STORE MAKES YOUR CUSTOMER'S LIFE EASIER

Imagine you are a customer and you find a web store that has all the things you are looking for with your specific discounts, and to top it off, a personal sales agent at your service 24/7. Wouldn't that make your life easier?

With a B2B omni-channel solution, this is what you could offer your customers:

- **INSIGHT INTO INVENTORY LEVELS**
- **REAL-TIME DELIVERY PREDICTIONS**
- **DETAILED CATALOG INFORMATION**
- **ORDER HISTORY VISIBILITY**
- **EASY UPSELL - RELATED PRODUCTS AT A GLANCE**
- **OPEN 24/7 - CUSTOMERS CAN ORDER OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS**



5

YES, B2B E-COMMERCE CAN BE THAT SIMPLE

A long project, complex to build and maintain, and expensive - B2B web stores can sound like a hassle. And although they can be, they don't have to be. You just need to know where to start - In your ERP.

If you use your ERP system as the driving force for your web store, starting up can be very easy. A sales portal that is integrated with your ERP can be set up right out of the box. Plus, it does not require a big investment because it enables you to leverage the information already stored in your ERP.

Simplicity is guaranteed



“For any B2B business, the ERP should be the starting point. Integration is key for B2B e-commerce success.”

Michiel Schipperus, Managing Partner Sana Commerce

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A B2B SALES PORTAL IS NOT EXPENSIVE

A well maintained ERP system is the center of your business.

Leveraging your ERP system has great advantages for online sales. Setting up is fast and there is only one system to maintain. Your running costs are low and you save time and money.

Once you start selling online, you'll be amazed by how easy it is. Not only can you meet the needs of your customers better, you can also reach new customers without enlarging your sales team.

“We got a return on our investment in 9 months. Moreover, we’re now selling in Surinam as well!”

Gerard Wijma, Broekhof Floral Packaging

37%

37% OF B2B COMPANIES THAT START USING E-COMMERCE HAVE AN ADVANTAGE OVER THEIR COMPETITION.

THE CASE FOR CHANNEL-SHIFTING CUSTOMERS ONLINE, FORRESTER RESEARCH COMPANY, 2014



7

B2B E-COMMERCE IS A QUICK WIN

Competitive Advantage

The online market is changing and B2B e-commerce is growing fast. Businesses that have added an online portal to their sales channels now have a serious advantage over their competition.

B2B is Not Just Like B2C

B2B e-commerce needs to overcome more challenges than B2C web stores. Internal processes are inherently complex. Additional information is available and a greater number of interconnections are possible. All these factors need to be considered when you are creating a B2C user experience for a B2B web store.

Higher Customer Service

On a mobile phone, tablet or computer. Enhance your web store experience on all the devices your customers use and you will make their lives easier. Your customers will also appreciate the 24/7 service, and the detailed product and personal account information they can retrieve from your B2B sales portal.

Simple and Easy to Maintain

The key to a successful B2B sales portal is to leverage your ERP system and use it as a starting point. This will make your web store easier to maintain, and increase the return on your investment.

ABOUT SANA COMMERCE

Sana helps businesses all over the world reach their full potential. We offer the shortcut to e-commerce. How? Through 100% seamless integration with SAP and Microsoft Dynamics. Our e-commerce solution leverages existing business logic and data in powerful and user-friendly web stores. This lets our clients focus on improving customer experience, streamlining sales processes, and increasing sales volume and frequency.

Sana Commerce is a certified partner of Microsoft Dynamics and SAP. Our innovative approach and strong partner network make Sana the driving force behind over 1,200 web stores worldwide. Because of our experience and expertise, we can go all the way, offering not only a product but also supporting services such as online marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) advice, hosting, design and online payment providers.

**Make your business future-proof and join our e-commerce movement.
For more information, visit www.sana-commerce.com.**

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