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Unified Commerce System Design

A Modern Architecture for Scalable Digital Commerce

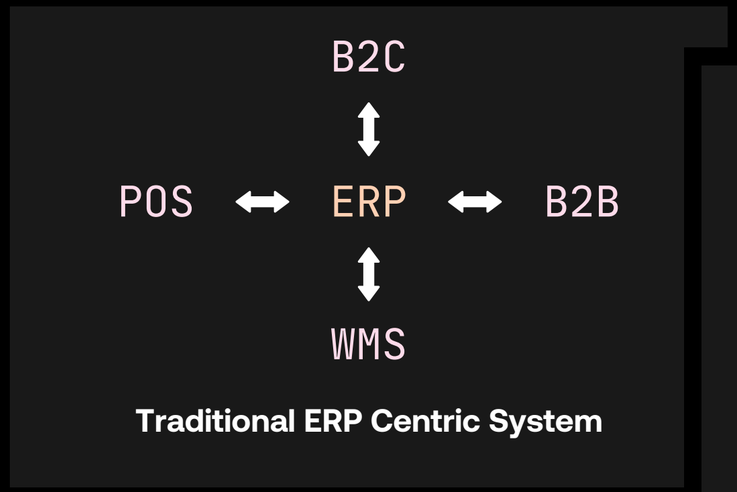
Channels: B2B B2C

Technologies: Shopify BigCommerce Lightspeed Qooly

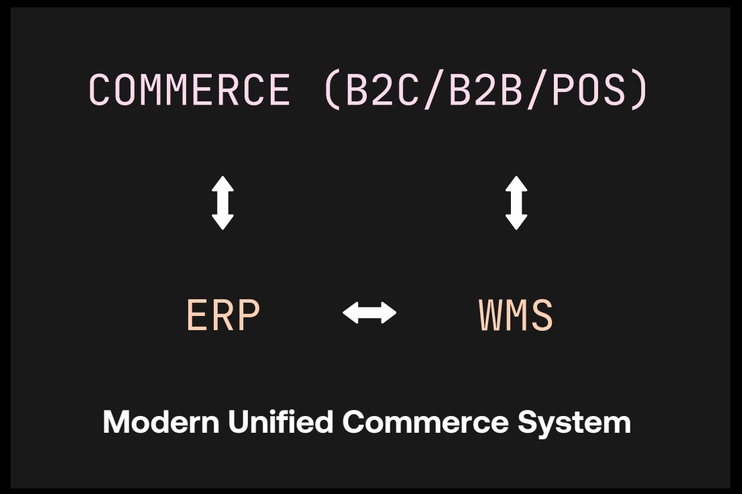
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What is Unified Commerce?



Traditional ERP Centric System



Modern Unified Commerce System

Moving Beyond ERP-First Systems

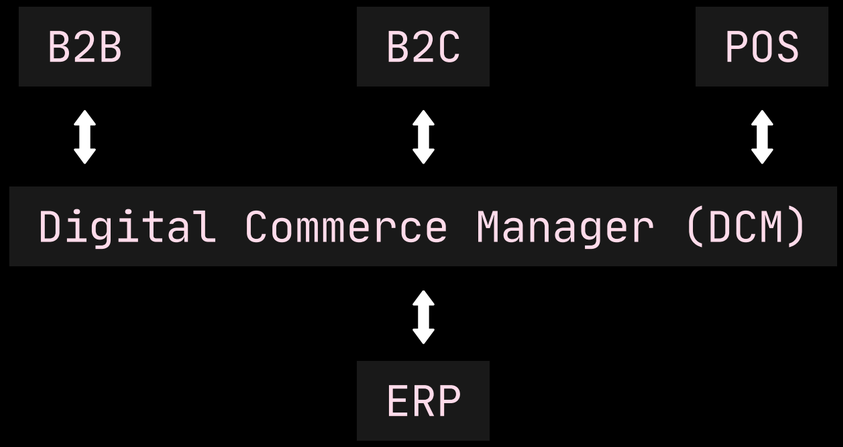
Traditional commerce relied on ERP to manage operations, but this approach is slow, complex, and limits flexibility. Unified commerce separates digital commerce from ERP, using specialised platforms like Shopify, BigCommerce and Qooly.io to manage real-time inventory, pricing, and customer interactions. This improves speed and agility, allowing businesses to respond faster to market changes. Instead of forcing ERP to handle all commerce operations, unified commerce shifts eCommerce and POS management to dedicated platforms, reducing integration complexity.

Key Elements of a Unified System

A unified commerce system connects all sales channels to a centralized data platform, ensuring real-time data consistency. Key elements include a Digital Commerce Manager for enriched product data, multi-channel integration for seamless order management, automated inventory tracking, and a customer data engine for personalisation. These elements reduce integration overhead, enhance scalability, and provide a real-time view of sales and operations, leading to more informed decision-making.

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Core Components of a Unified Commerce System



What Powers Unified Commerce?

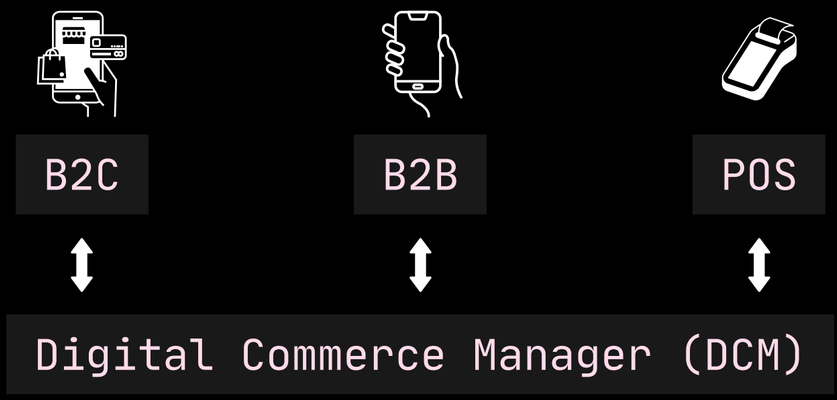
Unified commerce is built on a foundation of specialized digital commerce platforms. The Digital Commerce Manager (DCM) acts as the core, managing enriched product data, inventory, pricing, and promotions. Sales channels, including B2B, B2C, and POS, connect directly to this platform, ensuring consistency. The Customer Data Engine collects and processes customer behaviors, enabling better segmentation and personalisation. Unlike ERP-centric commerce, this architecture focuses on flexibility and digital commerce-specific needs.

The Role of Integration

Instead of deeply integrating commerce into ERP, a unified model syncs only essential data, such as financial records and supplier transactions. This approach reduces complexity, speeds up deployments, and decreases IT maintenance costs. Businesses can quickly update pricing, promotions, and inventory without waiting for ERP system updates. API-driven integrations ensure scalability and adaptability, allowing businesses to evolve their commerce stack without extensive reconfiguration.

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Consolidating Sales Channels into One System



Unifying B2C, B2B, and POS

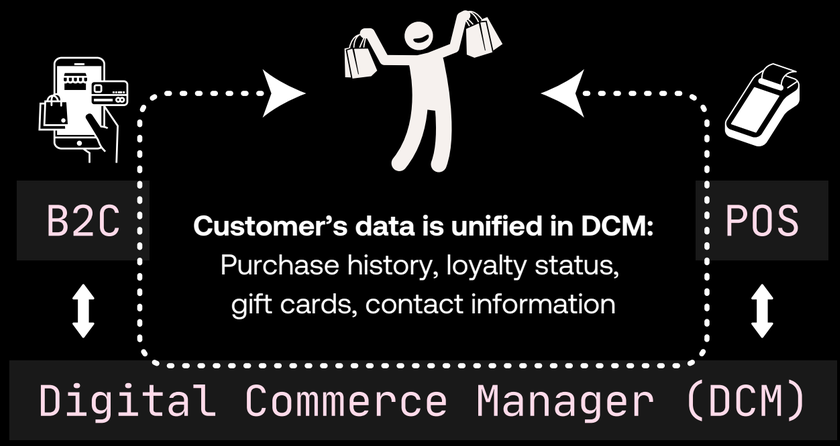
Businesses operate across multiple sales channels, including direct-to-consumer (D2C) eCommerce, B2B portals, in-store POS, and marketplaces. Without a unified commerce model, managing data across these channels becomes complex and inefficient. A modern commerce system centralizes product information, real-time inventory, and customer pricing into a single platform. This ensures that all channels receive consistent data, reducing errors and improving operational efficiency.

Why This Matters

Operating multiple disconnected sales channels leads to data inconsistencies and costly inefficiencies. By consolidating sales channels into a unified system, businesses can streamline inventory management, improve customer experiences, and reduce IT complexity. A single platform ensures that sales, marketing, and inventory teams work with the same up-to-date data, leading to better decision-making and faster go-to-market strategies.

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The Role of the Digital Commerce Manager



A Centralised Source for Key Data

A Digital Commerce Manager (DCM) serves as the single source of truth for product catalogs, inventory, and pricing. Unlike ERP, which is designed for accounting and supply chain management, a DCM is optimised for digital commerce. It ensures that all sales channels, including eCommerce, POS, and marketplaces, receive accurate, real-time data, eliminating inconsistencies and errors. Merchants utilising Shopify for POS and ecommerce channels are using the Shopify platform as their DCM where information is consolidated in one database, feeding into multiple frontend “contexts” built for different use cases. Systems using BigCommerce can add any POS as a sales channel to the DCM so that ecommerce and POS run from the same data.

Benefits of a Dedicated Data Platform

Implementing a Digital Commerce Manager reduces manual data entry, improves operational efficiency, and accelerates digital innovation. Businesses that adopt a DCM experience shorter product launch cycles, optimised pricing strategies, and better customer engagement. By automating commerce data management, businesses can scale effectively while reducing overhead costs and IT complexity.

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Managing Data in a Unified Commerce Model

“Reduction in Operating Costs: Retailers utilizing unified commerce platforms have experienced a 22% decrease in operating costs.”

Shopify, Feb 2025

What Data Needs to be Centralised?

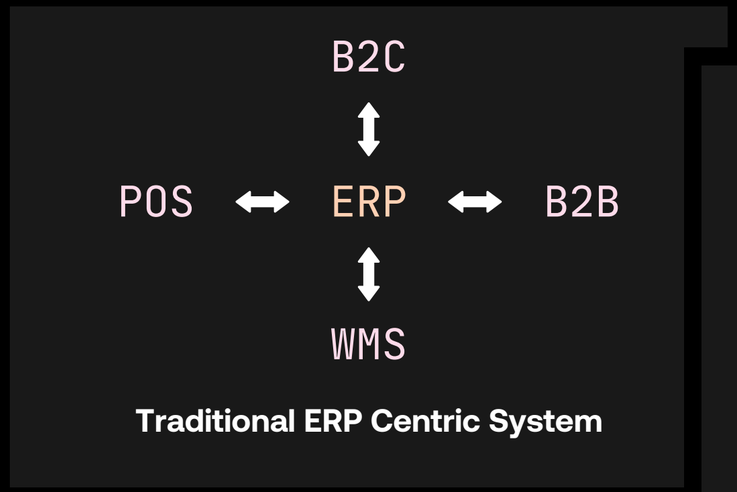
A unified commerce system centralises essential business data, including enriched product information, real-time inventory levels, customer-specific pricing, and order history. By keeping this data in a dedicated commerce platform rather than ERP, businesses gain greater control over commerce operations while ensuring data consistency across all channels.

Reducing Overhead with a Centralized System

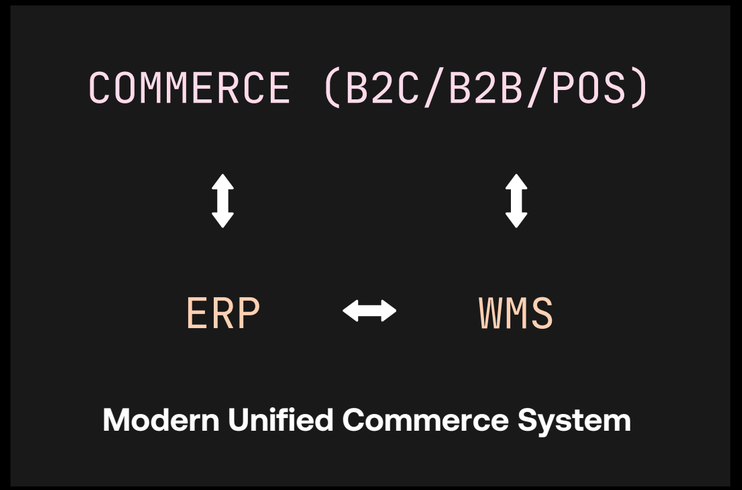
Centralising commerce data simplifies operations, reduces manual data entry, and ensures a seamless customer experience. Businesses that unify their data in a single commerce platform experience fewer errors, reduced IT maintenance, and better analytics for decision-making. This approach also future-proofs the business by enabling easy integration with emerging technologies such as AI-driven recommendations and predictive analytics.

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Decoupling ERP from Commerce



Traditional ERP Centric System



Modern Unified Commerce System

Why ERP Should Not Be the Center of Commerce

ERP systems were designed for back-office functions like finance, procurement, and supply chain management. They are not optimized for digital commerce. A modern commerce system allows businesses to separate customer-facing operations from ERP, ensuring better agility, faster updates, and more efficient data flow.

Reducing Integration Complexity

A commerce-first approach reduces the complexity of integrating multiple sales channels with ERP. Instead of forcing ERP to manage customer experiences, businesses can use a dedicated DCM to handle pricing, inventory, and order processing, while syncing only essential financial and supplier data with ERP.

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Real-World Example of a Unified Commerce System

> “Automation and unified commerce capabilities have resulted in up to a 30% reduction in operational costs for modern retailers.”
>
> **Longview Systems, Feb 2025**

How a Modern Business Operates

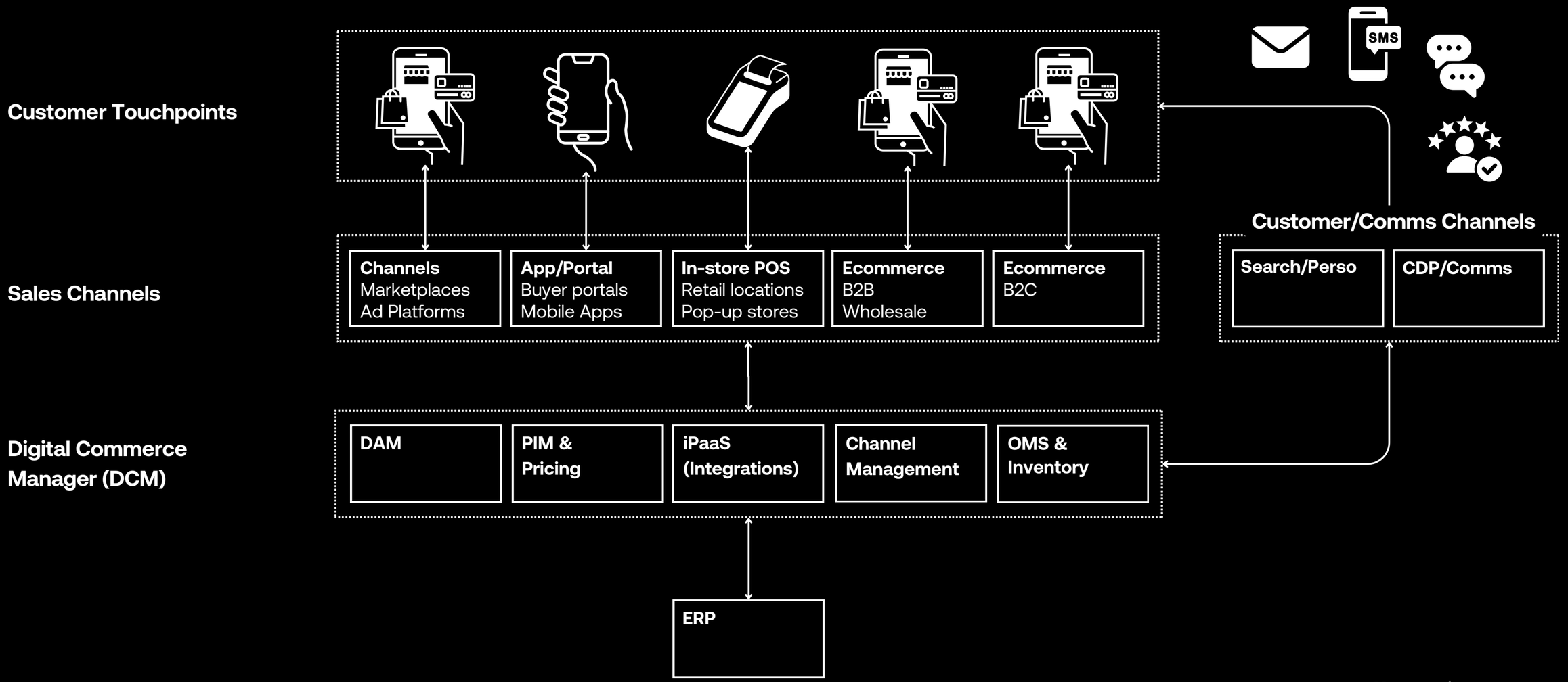
A business using Shopify or BigCommerce for B2C and B2B, Lightspeed for POS, and marketplaces can centralise product and inventory data in a commerce platform. This ensures real-time synchronisation across channels while reducing reliance on ERP.

This architecture enables businesses to move quickly, opening up new sales channels, such as a new ecommerce store in a new region, or feeding their data into marketplaces.

Business Impact

Companies adopting this model see a 30% improvement in operational efficiency and faster time-to-market for new product launches. Unified commerce reduces the need for custom ERP integrations, lowering costs and complexity while enabling better customer experiences.

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Customer Touchpoints
Sales Channels
Digital Commerce Manager (DCM)
SMS
Customer/Comms Channels
Channels
Marketplaces
Ad Platforms
App/Portal
Buyer portals
Mobile Apps
In-store POS
Retail locations
Pop-up stores
Ecommerce
B2B
Wholesale
Ecommerce
B2C
Search/Perso
CDP/Comms
DAM
PIM & Pricing
iPaaS (Integrations)
Channel Management
OMS & Inventory
ERP

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Summary & Next Steps

Key Takeaways

A Unified Commerce System enables omnichannel success by consolidating data into a single platform, reducing reliance on ERP for digital commerce, and ensuring seamless customer experiences.

How to Get Started

Assess your current system, define which data should be centralized, and adopt a phased approach to transitioning from an ERP-centric model to a commerce-first architecture.

For a free digital commerce system audit, contact Matter Design & Digital at hello@matterdesign.com.au

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New Business Enquires:



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See also:

Decoupling Commerce from ERP: A Faster Path to eCommerce Success

How reducing ERP reliance can accelerate B2B & B2C eCommerce projects