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PARADIGM B2B

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2023 | Midmarket Edition

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The 2023 Paradigm B2B Combine

Informed by leading B2B eCommerce practitioners and designed to zero in on the individual strengths and weaknesses of vendors, the Paradigm B2B Combine (Midmarket Edition) is targeted directly at the key interests of the eCommerce technology buyer. In my years covering the B2B industry, VPs of eCommerce and their IT counterparts rarely asked me to force-rank software solutions. Rather, not only did they ask me about the capabilities of the product (e.g., promotions, upgrades), but they frequently asked me how well companies have historically delivered on their promises (e.g., vision, pricing).

For example, I was often asked by VPs of eCommerce and their IT counterparts how responsive a particular vendor's team was if there was an outage, or how many and what kind of partners they had in their services ecosystem, or how open they were to feedback and product roadmap suggestions. These questions mattered to the buyers I worked with as much as, or more than, how many features a product had or what it cost relative to a competitor's offering.



I created the Paradigm B2B Combine to give the people who buy eCommerce solutions my unvarnished assessment of how well vendors are performing in critical categories. I'm mirroring the combine process that professional sports teams use to evaluate the capabilities and fit of draft candidates across key performance areas. My goal is to make it possible for eCommerce teams to easily determine where and how a solution best meets their customer needs and aligns with their culture, technology stack and partner ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Andy Hoar

Andy Hoar

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The Paradigm B2B Combine Difference

The Combine is an all new tool that was built from the ground up in 2019. Andy Hoar established the criteria based on years of experience in the space and recent interviews with senior B2B VPs of eCommerce and IT decision-makers, as well as eCommerce platform vendors.

The decision-making dynamic for eCommerce platform technologies today is too complex to capture in a single, two-dimensional graphic. It's also the case that there is no single solution that addresses all of the needs of eCommerce platform technology buyers. The Paradigm B2B Combine scores each solution in mutually exclusive categories and awards Gold, Silver, and Bronze medal distinctions to finishers within certain scoring ranges.

The purpose of the Paradigm B2B Combine is not to force-rank solutions, but rather to score the capabilities of certain offerings against objective criteria and enable buyers to see where individual solutions are relatively strong vs. weak. The goal is to put the eCommerce platform vendors through the paces so that buyers can make well-informed decisions without having to spend months of time executing their own research.



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Digital Commerce Solutions Defined

Digital Commerce Solutions enable the merchandising and sale of goods and services via internal and external websites, mobile devices and contact centers. They are designed to be used by B2B manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, and resellers. These solutions include (but are not limited to) functionality modules and capabilities such as: shopping cart, content and data management, sales and channel enablement, and promotions and pricing. In general, vendors offer solutions in this space that take either a substantially best-of-breed approach (e.g., buyers can mix and match core functionality with third-party solutions) or adopt a best-of-suite philosophy (e.g., the offering includes most, if not all, of the functionality modules needed as one integrated solution).

The Midmarket Combine evaluated 12 leading solutions

Adobe Commerce	Adobe	OroCommerce	OROCommerce™
BigCommerce	BIGCOMMERCE	ROC Commerce	ROCCOMMERCE
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	commercetools Next generation commerce	Shopware 6	shopware
HCL Commerce Cloud	HCLSoftware	Unilog CX1 CIMM2	unilog
Miva	MIVA	VTEX Commerce Platform	VTEX
Optimizely Configured Commerce	Optimizely	Znode	znode

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Scoring Methodology

Paradigm B2B selects all vendors to evaluate and only allows invited companies to participate. The evaluation is a pure "no pay for play" process—no vendors can pay for admission to or placement within the Combine. All evaluated vendors are given the same opportunity to present their company vision, product capabilities and roadmap, go-to-market strategies and tactics, partner ecosystem, and customer case studies.

Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the "voice of the customer" via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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Strategic Pillars Defined

Ability to Execute

Understaffed and underfunded eCommerce platform vendors struggle to deliver on promises—and clients know it. Everyone has had a bad experience with a vendor over-promising and underdelivering. Savvy practitioners are now doing deep due diligence on the quality of the management team and the resources of the company to determine whether vendors can actually make good on their claims.

Customer Service & Support

Problems always arise in the implementation and operation of an eCommerce platform. Most of the time the issues are minor, but sometimes they're major. Vendors today must maintain detailed processes and policies in order to ensure that they are highly-available and eminently-qualified to fix problems.



Partner Ecosystem

B2B companies know that they're no longer buying a one-size-fits-all platform that's owned and operated by one company. Every platform is augmented by independent developers and implementation partners. The breadth and depth of the ecosystem is now a critical factor in the decision-making dynamic.

Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

Whether a B2B company has millions or just tens of thousands of dollars to spend on installing and implementing a solution, the price of the platform matters. Beyond the initial price, a platform can quickly go from affordable to unaffordable over a 3-5 year time period when the full costs of implementation, operation, and maintenance are incorporated.

Vision & Strategy

Choosing an eCommerce platform is a major investment of time and money. B2B companies know that their digital success is tied to their vendor's success. It's important that vendors be crystal clear about their near-term roadmap and long-term vision and how they plan to recruit partners and acquire customers.

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Product Capabilities Defined

Content & Data Management

Without command of their data, B2B companies can neither create compelling customer experiences nor customize and personalize buyer interactions. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of a solution to create, store, and search-enable content and data for purposes of driving commerce and sustaining customer loyalty.

Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure

As vendors move to the Cloud, how they deliver their solutions, perform and scale, and incorporate key partner functionality and services increasingly matters. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of the solution to monitor, activate, and extend the commerce capabilities of the system.

Marketplaces

With buyers increasingly starting the path to purchase on marketplaces, B2B companies realize that they need to be where buyers make decisions. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible for buyers to purchase a seller's products or services via that seller's owned or operated marketplace as well as on horizontal and vertical marketplaces.

Promotions Management

All buyers today expect personalized buying experiences, including custom catalogs and pricing. Increasingly, they also expect to make recurring purchases and establish subscriptions. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to price products and services and promote them to targeted audiences.

CONTINUES ▶



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Product Capabilities Defined (continued)

Sales & Channel Enablement

A website is just one channel by which customers can buy products and services. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible to enable customer-facing sales reps and customer service reps, as well as channel partners, to participate in the digital sales of goods and services.





Site Search

It is a truism in the world of B2B eCommerce that buyers cannot buy on a site what they cannot find on a site. This section describes the functionality that enables B2B buyers to use keywords, natural language search, and semantic search to find desired products and services.

Transaction Management

At the end of the day, buyers need to be able to add an item to a cart and check out in order to complete a purchase. They may also need to configure purchases and ask for quotes. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to record and report on orders and transaction activity.

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Ability to Execute

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
Adobe Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud	Shopware 6
BigCommerce	OroCommerce	Znode
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	VTEX Commerce Platform	
Miva		
Optimizely Configured Commerce		

Criteria

Understaffed and underfunded eCommerce platform vendors struggle to deliver on promises—and clients know it. Everyone has had a bad experience with a vendor over-promising and underdelivering. Savvy practitioners are now doing deep due diligence on the quality of the management team and the resources of the company to determine whether vendors can actually make good on their claims.

- Management team experience and domain expertise
- Resourcing levels
- B2B priority/focus
- Overall staffing levels

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Customer Service & Support

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	Adobe Commerce	OroCommerce
Miva	BigCommerce	Shopware 6
Optimizely Configured Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud	
Unilog CX1 CIMM2	ROC Commerce	
VTEX Commerce Platform	Znode	

Criteria

Problems always arise in the implementation and operation of an eCommerce platform. Most of the time the issues are minor, but sometimes they're major. Vendors today must maintain detailed processes and policies in order to ensure that they are highly-available and eminently qualified to fix problems.

- SLAs, customer policies, and maintenance contracts
- (Customer Service Rep) CSR structure, staffing, and training
- Customer service metrics and measures

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Partner Ecosystem

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
Adobe Commerce	Shopware 6	HCL Commerce Cloud
BigCommerce		OroCommerce
Optimizely Configured Commerce		VTEX Commerce Platform

Criteria

B2B companies know that they're no longer buying a one-size-fits-all platform that's owned and operated by one company. Every platform is augmented by independent developers and implementation partners. The breadth and depth of the ecosystem is now a critical factor in the decision-making dynamic.

- Implementation partner footprint
- Front-end design and customer experience partner footprint
- Developer footprint

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Total Cost of Ownership

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
BigCommerce	ROC Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud
Miva	VTEX Commerce Platform	Optimizely Configured Commerce
Shopware 6		OroCommerce
Unilog CX1 CIMM2		
Znode		

Criteria

Whether a B2B company has millions or just tens of thousands of dollars to spend on installing and implementing a solution, the price of the platform matters. Beyond the initial price, a platform can quickly go from affordable to unaffordable over a 3-5 year time period when the full costs of implementation, operation, and maintenance are incorporated.

- Average annual license or subscription pricing (including maintenance)
- Average implementation cost by size of project

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Vision & Strategy

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
	BigCommerce	
	commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	
Adobe Commerce	Miva	Shopware 6
	Optimizely Configured Commerce	
HCL Commerce Cloud	ROC Commerce	VTEX Commerce Platform
	Unilog CX1 CIMM2	
	Znode	

Criteria

Choosing an eCommerce platform is a major investment of time and money. B2B companies know that their digital success is tied to their vendor's success. It's important that vendors be crystal clear about their near-term roadmap and long-term vision and how they plan to recruit partners and acquire customers.

- 3-5 year vision
- 18 month roadmap
- Sales momentum
- Partner momentum

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Content & Data Management

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
OroCommerce	Shopware 6	Adobe Commerce
ROC Commerce		BigCommerce
Unilog CX1 CIMM2		commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B
Znode		HCL Commerce Cloud
		Miva
		VTEX Commerce Platform

Criteria

Without command of their data, B2B companies can neither create compelling customer experiences nor customize and personalize buyer interactions. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of a solution to create, store, and search-enable content and data for purposes of driving commerce and sustaining customer loyalty.

- Product Information Management (PIM) and/or Digital Asset Management (DAM)
- Content Management System (CMS)

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	Adobe Commerce	Optimizely Configured Commerce
HCL Commerce Cloud	BigCommerce	ROC Commerce
VTEX Commerce Platform	Miva	Unilog CX1 CIMM2
	OroCommerce	
	Znode	

Criteria

As vendors move to the Cloud, how they deliver their solution, perform and scale, and incorporate key partner functionality and services increasingly matters. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of the solution to monitor, activate, and extend the commerce capabilities of the system.

- Microservices-based architecture/APIs
- Workflow
- eProcurement integration
- Performance & scalability
- Deployment
- Releases and upgrades

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Marketplaces

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
VTEX Commerce Platform	Adobe Commerce	commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B
	BigCommerce	HCL Commerce Cloud
		OroCommerce

Criteria

With buyers increasingly starting the path to purchase on marketplaces, B2B companies realize that they need to be where buyers make decisions. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible for buyers to purchase a seller's products or services via that seller's owned or operated marketplace as well as on horizontal and vertical marketplaces.

- Company-owned or operated marketplace offering 3rd party sellers
- Selling on horizontal and vertical marketplaces

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Promotions Management

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
Adobe Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud	ROC Commerce
BigCommerce	Optimizely Configured Commerce	Znode
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B		
Miva		
OroCommerce		
Shopware 6		
Unilog CX1 CIMM2		
VTEX Commerce Platform		

Criteria

All buyers today expect personalized buying experiences, including custom catalogs and pricing. Increasingly, they also expect to make recurring purchases and establish subscriptions. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to price products and services and promote them to targeted audiences.

- Promotions
- Subscriptions
- Pricing

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Sales & Channel Enablement

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
Adobe Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud	Optimizely Configured Commerce
BigCommerce	Miva	Shopware 6
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	OroCommerce	VTEX Commerce Platform
Unilog CX1 CIMM2		
Znode		

Criteria

A website is just one channel by which customers can buy products and services. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible to enable customer-facing sales reps and customer service reps, as well as channel partners, to participate in the digital sales of goods and services.

- Sales enablement
- Traditional channel enablement

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Site Search

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
		
	Adobe Commerce	
	BigCommerce	
ROC Commerce	HCL Commerce Cloud	Optimizely Configured Commerce
Unilog CX1 CIMM2	OroCommerce	
	VTEX Commerce Platform	
	Znode	

Criteria

It is a truism of eCommerce that buyers cannot buy on a site what they cannot find on a site. This section describes the functionality that enables B2B buyers to use keywords and natural language search to find desired products and services.

- Traditional keyword search
- Natural language & semantic search

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CATEGORY ANALYSIS

Transaction Management

Top finishers (in alphabetical order)

EXCEPTIONAL	SUPERIOR	DIFFERENTIATED
Adobe Commerce	BigCommerce	OroCommerce
commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B	HCL Commerce Cloud	Shopware 6
	Miva	VTEX Commerce Platform
	Optimizely Configured Commerce	Znode
	Unilog CX1 CIMM2	

Criteria

At the end of the day, buyers need to be able to add an item to a cart and check out in order to complete a purchase. They may also need to configure purchases and ask for quotes. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to record and report on orders and transaction activity.

- Shopping cart
- Configurator
- Order Management System (OMS)
- Reporting
- Analytics

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Adobe Commerce

Adobe Commerce medaled in 12 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (6 gold medals, 4 silver medals, and 2 bronze medals). Adobe Commerce is a highly-customizable solution that combines a single tenant commerce platform with multitenant SaaS search, product recommendations and analytics. The platform offers significant core functionality out-of-the-box that can be easily augmented by thousands of point solution applications available via a dedicated extension marketplace called the Adobe Commerce Marketplace. Pricing tiers are based on a combination of Average Order Value (AOV) and the Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV) passing through the system. Adobe Commerce is offered by Adobe, a publicly traded company headquartered in San Jose, California (US).

Customers spoke highly of Adobe Commerce's enhanced pricing capability, global partner ecosystem (for both finding implementation partners and peers to share best practices), and its broad and deep product extension marketplace. Some customers expressed concern about Adobe Commerce's upgrade process and cited the solution's Product Information Management (PIM) as falling short of industry standards for ease of use.

STRENGTHS

- Impressive partner ecosystem
- Rich extension marketplace
- Purpose-built to support both B2B and B2B2C use cases
- Sizable legacy Adobe Commerce (formerly Magento Commerce) customer population around the world
- Enhanced pricing capability

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Limited Order Management System (OMS)
- Limited built-in subscriptions capability
- Underpowered Product Information Management (PIM)
- Passive direct customer service support via Adobe
- Weighty upgrade process

BOTTOM LINE

Adobe Commerce is particularly well-suited to midmarket B2B companies looking for a vendor with a platform that is purpose built to support both B2B and B2B2C use cases, incorporates industry-leading reporting and analytics capability and offers an impressive ecosystem of both point solution applications and implementation services.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Adobe Commerce

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the "voice of the customer" via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

BigCommerce

BigCommerce medaled in 12 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (5 gold medals, 6 silver medals, 1 bronze medal). BigCommerce uses a curated partner-centric implementation model and leverages open APIs as well as an extensive open application marketplace (many of which come pre-installed) to deliver a value-priced, multitenant B2B eCommerce solution. Pricing tiers are based largely on order volume passing through the system but may also include calculations for Average Order Value (AOV) for enterprise-level contracts. BigCommerce is a publicly traded company headquartered in Austin, Texas (US).

Customers spoke highly of BigCommerce's extensive partner ecosystem and rich open application marketplace with robust APIs, as well as the ease with which the solution can be configured by a business user. Some customers expressed concern about limits to BigCommerce's out of the box B2B functionality and a user's ability to create and modify B2B workflows, as well as the solution's underpowered Product Information Management (PIM) and Order Management System (OMS).

STRENGTHS

- Well-developed implementation partner ecosystem
- Robust set of APIs
- Rich extension marketplace offering tight integrations with best-of-breed solutions
- Strong pricing engine
- Impressive channel enablement capabilities

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Limited ability to create and modify B2B workflows
- Lightweight Order Management System (OMS)
- Limited native marketplace offering
- Underpowered Product Information Management (PIM)
- Lightweight reporting capabilities

BOTTOM LINE

BigCommerce is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a value-priced, partner-centric, multitenant SaaS eCommerce solution that leverages an extensive open application marketplace to deliver robust functionality.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

BigCommerce

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the "voice of the customer" via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

commercetools
Next generation commerce

commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B

Commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B medaled in 9 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (6 gold medals, 1 silver medal, and 2 bronze medals). Commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B is a multitenant SaaS solution that was purpose-built for a cloud-native environment. The offering is priced based on the number of orders processed. Commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B is offered by commercetools, a privately held company headquartered in Munich, Germany.

Customers spoke highly of commercetools's versionless approach, with one customer saying, "it makes the upgrade process rather effortless." Customers also commented on the platform's flexibility, with another customer saying, "You can bend it to your needs." Some customers expressed concern that commercetools requires technical expertise to setup and operate, with one customer saying, "It provides a robust set of capabilities that requires someone with relative technical skill to harness."

STRENGTHS

- Flexibility and extensibility
- Strong pricing and promotions capability
- Extensive set of APIs
- Programming language agnostic
- Strong Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) capabilities

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underdeveloped Order Management System (OMS)
- Lightweight reporting capabilities
- Limited footprint of front-end design and experience development partners
- Limited number of out-of-the-box B2B connectors
- Underpowered native search

BOTTOM LINE

Commercetools is well-suited for technically-inclined midmarket B2B companies looking for a well-supported and flexible B2B eCommerce solution that offers an array of APIs from which a capable development team can build compelling commerce experiences.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

commercetools
Next generation commerce

commercetools Composable Commerce for B2B

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute (Gold)
- Customer Service & Support (Gold)
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy (Silver)

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management (Bronze)
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure (Gold)
- Marketplaces (Bronze)
- Promotions Management (Gold)
- Sales & Channel Enablement (Gold)
- Site Search
- Transaction Management (Gold)

Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the "voice of the customer" via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

HCLSoftware

HCL Commerce Cloud

HCL Commerce Cloud medaled in 12 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (2 gold medals, 6 silver medals, 4 bronze medals). HCL Commerce Cloud combines several industrial-strength capabilities into one integrated commerce platform and goes to market with two different pricing models, PVU (cores) or RVU (order lines), both of which are based on utilization. HCL Commerce Cloud is offered by HCLSoftware, a division of HCL Technologies, a publicly traded company headquartered in New Delhi, India, with US offices in New York, New York.

Customers spoke highly of HCL Commerce Cloud's platform stability, reliability, and scalability with customers calling it "high-performance" and "fully functionally out of the box." Some clients commented that HCL is "still a bit of a heavy platform" and "requires a learning curve." They also cited underpowered functionality in product areas such as Site Search and OMS.

STRENGTHS

- Handles complexity well
- Ability to create custom catalogs
- Facility for spinning up and managing dealer sites
- Strong promotions functionality
- Mature back-end interfaces and punchout-related workflows

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underdeveloped Product Information Management (PIM)
- Developing Site Search
- Limited independent systems integrator partner footprint
- Underpowered Order Management System (OMS)
- Underdeveloped reporting

BOTTOM LINE

HCL Commerce Cloud is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies seeking a stable and high-performing commerce platform capable of handling complex B2B eCommerce scenarios, like creating and managing a multitude of customer catalogs and sophisticated promotions.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

HCLSoftware

HCL Commerce Cloud

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS



Ability to Execute



Customer Service & Support



Partner Ecosystem



Total Cost of Ownership



Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES



Content & Data Management



Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure



Marketplaces



Promotions Management



Sales & Channel Enablement



Site Search



Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Miva

Miva medaled in 9 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (4 gold medals, 4 silver medals, 1 bronze medal). Miva goes to market with their eCommerce platform as a value-priced SaaS offering that's highly-customizable but also easily upgraded. The solution is priced based on a revenue share model. Miva is offered by Miva, a privately held company headquartered in San Diego, California (US).

Customers spoke highly of Miva's flexibility and customizability, affordable price, and especially responsive customer service—with one customer calling Miva's support "exceptional." Some customers expressed concern about the company's lightweight functionality in a few core areas (e.g., PIM, OMS) and the need for customization to be done by developers who know Miva's proprietary scripting language.

STRENGTHS

- Inexpensive license price
- Much flexibility to customize the solution
- Impressive customer service
- Strong quoting functionality
- Strong Content Management System (CMS)

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Lightweight Product Information Management (PIM)
- Order Management System (OMS) lacks batching capability
- Limited network of Miva-trained developers
- Underdeveloped analytics functionality
- Limited Marketplace offering

BOTTOM LINE

Miva is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for an affordable and reliable solution that is highly-customizable (especially for strong sales enablement and quoting capability) delivered by a company that goes the extra mile for customer service and support.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Miva

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Optimizely

Optimizely Configured Commerce

Optimizely Configured Commerce medaled in 10 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (3 gold medals, 3 silver medals, 4 bronze medals). Optimizely goes to market in B2B with Optimizely Configured Commerce as a headless-centric .NET offering focused on companies in the industrial distribution and manufacturing space. The solution is priced based on transaction volume. Optimizely Configured Commerce is offered by Optimizely, a privately held company headquartered in New York, NY (US).

Customers spoke highly of Optimizely Configured Commerce's flexibility and the ability to access the system to the database level, as well as the system's extensibility and broader connection to the .NET framework ecosystem. Some customers expressed concern about the company's continuing disjointed back-end experience (e.g., separate logins) and ongoing discrete challenges with system upgrades.

STRENGTHS

- Extensive global partner footprint
- Impressive customer satisfaction measurement framework
- Strong sales enablement capability
- Impressive analytics functionality
- Robust pricing rules engine

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Limited ability to sell on horizontal and vertical marketplaces
- Underdeveloped native channel enablement functionality
- Underpowered Order Management System (OMS)
- Limited subscriptions capability
- Underpowered native Content Management System (CMS)

BOTTOM LINE

Optimizely Configured Commerce is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a solution with strong sales enablement capability and a deep focus on measurement and optimization that can be built and maintained by a global network of certified partners.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Optimizely

Optimizely Configured Commerce

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

OroCommerce

OroCommerce medaled in 11 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (2 gold medals, 4 silver medals, 5 bronze medals). OroCommerce is a solution aimed especially at companies seeking an all-in-one Customer Relationship Management (CRM), eCommerce, and Marketplace solution. The platform is priced based on gross merchandise volume (GMV). Developed by some of the founders of Magento, Oro is a privately held company headquartered in Los Angeles, California (US).

Customers spoke highly of the platform's particularly robust combination of eCommerce and marketplace functionality and the offering's ability to be customized fairly easily by trained resources. Some customers expressed concern about Oro's limited native site search functionality with one customer saying, "I wish search was a little stronger." Other customers commented that finding PHP developers is getting harder with increased competition for programming mindshare.

STRENGTHS

- Strong Content Management System (CMS)
- Impressive promotions and pricing engine
- Hands on and accessible executive team
- Robust first-party marketplace functionality
- Strong Product Information Management (PIM)

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underpowered Order Management System (OMS)
- Learning curve for business users to configure and customize
- Limited developer footprint
- Underdeveloped network of front end design partners
- Underpowered reporting

BOTTOM LINE

OroCommerce is particularly well-suited for B2B midmarket companies looking for a three-in-one solution consisting of CRM, eCommerce, and Marketplace functionality that can deliver on both self-service and assisted selling scenarios.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

OROCommerce™

OroCommerce

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

ROC Commerce

ROC Commerce medaled in 7 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (2 gold medals, 3 silver medals, 2 bronze medals). ROC Commerce offers a value-priced platform aimed especially at companies operating in the industrial and commercial supply vertical. The solution is priced based on online revenue and the number of records under management. ROC Commerce is a privately held company headquartered in Des Plaines, Illinois (US).

Customers spoke highly of the platform's particularly robust Product Information Management (PIM), tightly integrated search options (now including Algolia), as well as the ability of companies to leverage pre-built functionality to spin up prototypes quickly. Some customers expressed concern about ROC Commerce's limited number of out-of-the-box pre-integrations and connectors with popular third-party applications, its underdeveloped promotions and CPQ functionality, and its new arm's length relationship with Hawksearch (formerly a sister company of ROC Commerce but now under independent ownership).

STRENGTHS

- Strong customer service and support
- Enhanced Content Management System (CMS)
- Robust Product Information Management (PIM)
- Low Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
- Tight relationship with systems integrator (SI) American Eagle

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underdeveloped Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ)
- Underpowered promotions functionality
- Limited punchout capabilities
- Underpowered analytics functionality
- Limited number of out-of-the-box pre-integrations and connectors with popular third-party applications

BOTTOM LINE

ROC Commerce is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a value-priced, robust, and flexible eCommerce platform that is well-supported by strong customer service.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

ROCCOMMERCE

ROC Commerce

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Shopware 6

Shopware 6 medaled in 9 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (2 gold medals, 2 silver medals, 5 bronze medals). Shopware goes to market with Shopware 6 as a partner-centric, value-priced SaaS offering with a strong heritage in B2C. Pricing tiers are based on a combination of Average Order Value (AOV) and the Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV) passing through the system. Shopware 6 is offered by Shopware AG, a privately held company headquartered in. Schöppingen, Germany.

Customers spoke highly of Shopware 6's business user-friendly approach, large community of helpful users, and API-first framework. Some customers expressed concern about the need to develop Shopware 6 for front-end applications that Progressive Web Apps (PWAs) should otherwise deliver, as well as the need to customize the system for some standard B2B use cases.

STRENGTHS

- Inexpensive license price
- Strong Product Information Management (PIM)
- Impressive customer satisfaction measurement framework
- Robust global developer footprint
- Strong promotions capability

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Go-to-market and marketing support in the US improving but still underdeveloped
- Limited ability to sell on horizontal and vertical marketplaces
- Underpowered Order Management System (OMS)
- Limited subscriptions capability
- Underdeveloped analytics functionality

BOTTOM LINE

Shopware 6 is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for an affordable, extensible API-first solution with strong promotional features and a well-developed global partner network.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Shopware 6

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Unilog CX1 CIMM2

unilog

Unilog CX1 CIMM2 medaled in 9 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (6 gold medals, 2 silver medals, 1 bronze medal). Unilog goes to market with CX1 CIMM2 as a value-priced combination single tenant and multitenant SaaS solution that offers an additional "product content-as-a-service" subscription along with its traditional commerce functionality. The solution is priced based on total number of stocking locations and/or unique number of distinct storefronts. Unilog CX1 CIMM2 is offered by Unilog, a privately held company headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (US).

Customers spoke highly of Unilog's product SKU enrichment services and robust site search offering, as well as the solution's ability to easily create microsites and landing pages. Some customers expressed concern about Unilog's slow product development cycles and the company's small partner network for eCommerce implementation services.

STRENGTHS

- Best-of-breed PIM with opportunity to bundle leading "product content-as-a-service" subscription
- Novel go-to-market via associations and trade groups (e.g., Orgill and Affiliated Distributors)
- Ability to quickly and easily provision new sites, create microsites, and produce landing pages
- Site search analytics functionality
- Strong promotions capability

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Limited partner ecosystem
- Faster product development cycles
- Limited developer network
- Underdeveloped ecosystem of front-end design and customer experience partners
- Limited number of out-of-the-box pre-integrations and connectors with popular front-end, third-party applications

BOTTOM LINE

Unilog CX1 CIMM2 is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a vendor with a powerful product content-driven commerce value proposition that can spin up microsites relatively quickly and easily and offers compelling value for the money.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Unilog CX1 CIMM2

unilog

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

VTEX Commerce Platform

VTEX Commerce Platform medaled in 12 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (4 gold medals, 3 silver medals, and 5 bronze medals). VTEX Commerce Platform integrates eCommerce functionality, an Order Management System (OMS) and Marketplace capabilities into a single, multitenant offering. The solution is priced based on Gross Merchandise Volume (GMV) passing through the system or by total number of annual orders processed. VTEX Commerce Platform is offered by VTEX, a publicly traded company headquartered in London with US offices in New York, New York.

Customers spoke highly of the integrated eCommerce/OMS/Marketplace solution and VTEX's low cost of ownership. Some customers expressed concern about VTEX's limited systems integrator partner footprint in the US and underpowered B2B functionality in key product areas such as PIM, reporting and CPQ.

STRENGTHS

- Impressive customer service
- Strong Order Management System (OMS)
- Impressive out-of-the-box marketplace functionality
- Strong promotions functionality
- Modern multitenant architecture

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underdeveloped Product Information Management (PIM)
- Limited partner footprint in the US
- Underpowered Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ)
- Underdeveloped reporting capability
- Limited number of out-of-the-box B2B connectors

BOTTOM LINE

VTEX Commerce Platform is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a modularized eCommerce, OMS, and Marketplace solution that possesses strong promotions capability offered in a flexible, multitenant SaaS environment.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

VTEX Commerce Platform

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS


Ability to Execute


Customer Service & Support


Partner Ecosystem


Total Cost of Ownership


Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES


Content & Data Management


Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure


Marketplaces


Promotions Management


Sales & Channel Enablement


Site Search


Transaction Management

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PRODUCT ANALYSIS

Znode

Znode medaled in 10 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation (3 gold medals, 4 silver medals, 3 bronze medals). Znode is a value-priced, architecturally-headless .NET commerce platform. The solution is priced based on online revenue tiers, Average Order Value (AOV), and the number of stores supported. Znode is offered by Amla Commerce, a privately held company headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (US).

Customers spoke highly of Znode's customer service mindset (some calling it "white glove"), the ease with which it's possible to create and manage multiple stores simultaneously (as well as spin up new stores quickly and easily), and the ability to customize Znode's system. Some customers expressed concern about the scarcity of user groups for Znode clients to share lessons learned and best practices, as well as Znode's limited partner network for eCommerce implementation services.

STRENGTHS

- Robust multi-store capabilities (e.g., store-specific catalogs, content, pricing) easily configurable by business users
- Easy to create and manage complex catalogs
- Responsive customer service
- Free quarterly product "updates" (similar to typical multitenant SaaS upgrades)
- Extensive API library

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Underdeveloped partner network
- Limited subscription-based pricing capability
- Limited native ability to sell on horizontal and vertical marketplaces
- Underpowered natural language and semantic search capability
- Underdeveloped ecosystem of front-end design and customer experience partners

BOTTOM LINE

Znode is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies looking for a value-priced, architecturally-headless .NET commerce platform capable of handling complex multi-store scenarios.

SCORING RESULTS ▶

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PRODUCT SCORES

Znode

Category breakdown

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- Ability to Execute
- Customer Service & Support
- Partner Ecosystem
- Total Cost of Ownership
- Vision & Strategy

PRODUCT CAPABILITIES

- Content & Data Management
- Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure
- Marketplaces
- Promotions Management
- Sales & Channel Enablement
- Site Search
- Transaction Management

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Ability to Execute



Shopware 6

shopware

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Ability to Execute"
DIFFERENTIATED

Criteria

Understaffed and underfunded eCommerce platform vendors struggle to deliver on promises—and clients know it. Everyone has had a bad experience with a vendor over-promising and underdelivering. Savvy practitioners are now doing deep due diligence on the quality of the management team and the resources of the company to determine whether vendors can actually make good on their claims.

- Management team experience and domain expertise
- Resourcing levels
- B2B priority/focus
- Overall staffing levels

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Customer Service & Support



Shopware 6

shopware

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Customer Service & Support"
DIFFERENTIATED

Criteria

Problems always arise in the implementation and operation of an eCommerce platform. Most of the time the issues are minor, but sometimes they're major. Vendors today must maintain detailed processes and policies in order to ensure that they are highly-available and eminently qualified to fix problems.

- SLAs, customer policies, and maintenance contracts
- (Customer Service Rep) CSR structure, staffing, and training
- Customer service metrics and measures

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Partner Ecosystem



Shopware 6

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Partner Ecosystem"
SUPERIOR

Criteria

B2B companies know that they're no longer buying a one-size-fits-all platform that's owned and operated by one company. Every platform is augmented by independent developers and implementation partners. The breadth and depth of the ecosystem is now a critical factor in the decision-making dynamic.

- Implementation partner footprint
- Front-end design and customer experience partner footprint
- Developer footprint

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Total Cost of Ownership



Shopware 6

shopware

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Total Cost of Ownership"
EXCEPTIONAL

Criteria

Whether a B2B company has millions or just tens of thousands of dollars to spend on installing and implementing a solution, the price of the platform matters. Beyond the initial price, a platform can quickly go from affordable to unaffordable over a 3-5 year time period when the full costs of implementation, operation, and maintenance are incorporated.

- Average annual license or subscription pricing (including maintenance)
- Average implementation cost by size of project

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Vision & Strategy



Shopware 6

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Vision & Strategy"
DIFFERENTIATED

Criteria

Choosing an eCommerce platform is a major investment of time and money. B2B companies know that their digital success is tied to their vendor's success. It's important that vendors be crystal clear about their near-term roadmap and long-term vision and how they plan to recruit partners and acquire customers.

- 3-5 year vision
- 18 month roadmap
- Sales momentum
- Partner momentum

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Content & Data Management



Shopware 6

shopware

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Content & Data Management"
SUPERIOR

Criteria

Without command of their data, B2B companies can neither create compelling customer experiences nor customize and personalize buyer interactions. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of a solution to create, store, and search-enable content and data for purposes of driving commerce and sustaining customer loyalty.

- Product Information Management (PIM) and/or Digital Asset Management (DAM)
- Content Management System (CMS)

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Promotions Management



Shopware 6

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Promotions Management"
EXCEPTIONAL

Criteria

All buyers today expect personalized buying experiences, including custom catalogs and pricing. Increasingly, they also expect to make recurring purchases and establish subscriptions. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to price products and services and promote them to targeted audiences.

- Promotions
- Subscriptions
- Pricing

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Sales & Channel Enablement



Shopware 6

shopware

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Sales & Channel Enablement"
DIFFERENTIATED

Criteria

A website is just one channel by which customers can buy products and services. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible to enable customer-facing sales reps and customer service reps, as well as channel partners, to participate in the digital sales of goods and services.

- Sales enablement
- Traditional channel enablement

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MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

Transaction Management



Shopware 6

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar
MIDMARKET EDITION
"Transaction Management"
DIFFERENTIATED

Criteria

At the end of the day, buyers need to be able to add an item to a cart and check out in order to complete a purchase. They may also need to configure purchases and ask for quotes. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to record and report on orders and transaction activity.

- Shopping cart
- Configurator
- Order Management System (OMS)
- Reporting
- Analytics

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About Paradigm B2B

Digital innovation produces an ever-changing, unpredictable, and challenging environment that can make or break a B2B company. To be successful today, B2B companies must transform archaic business practices and business models and fundamentally rethink how they interact with customers.

Paradigm B2B's purpose is to help guide B2B companies through today's complex, digital-first environment. B2B companies need world-class strategies and roadmaps, as well as clearly differentiated customer experiences, in order to thrive in an increasingly disrupted commerce landscape. Paradigm B2B focuses on offering high-quality advice that's well-informed and immediately actionable.

About Andy Hoar

Andy Hoar is one of the world's leading authorities on B2B eCommerce business and strategy. He's written about, and consulted extensively with, distributors and manufacturers at global Fortune 100 companies and leading midmarket B2B companies that are digitizing their direct and indirect selling initiatives. Prior to founding Paradigm B2B and Master B2B, his joint venture with Brian Beck, Andy was a vice president and principal analyst at Forrester Research, where he authored the seminal work on B2B eCommerce.

Andy has been quoted in various media outlets including The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, and CNBC. He is a summa cum laude graduate in economics from the University of Dayton and holds advanced degrees from Harvard University and Northwestern University.

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