



Magento for Wholesalers and Distributors

The secret sauce of B2B eCommerce success

Ziffity
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I. INTRODUCTION



B2B is All About the Relationship

Is your wholesale or distribution business considering building a new site? If yes, you need to look for an eCommerce platform that has been designed to address the specific needs of a B2B relationship.

Many platforms have been built around the B2C model, where metrics like time-on-page or number of page views are a high indication of purchase. But that's not at all appropriate for a B2B site visitor.

Unlike the B2C world, wholesale and distribution businesses begin their relationships with customers offline. Most don't even access the wholesaler or distributor's website until they've agreed to do business, negotiated prices and agreed to terms, and have established a payment method.

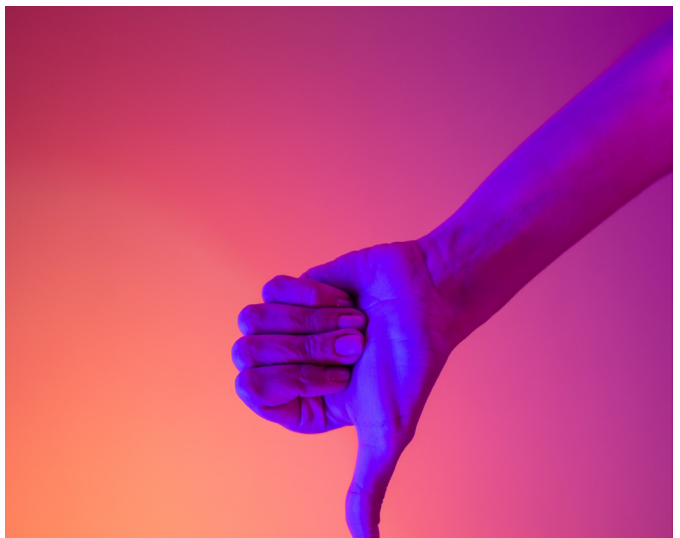
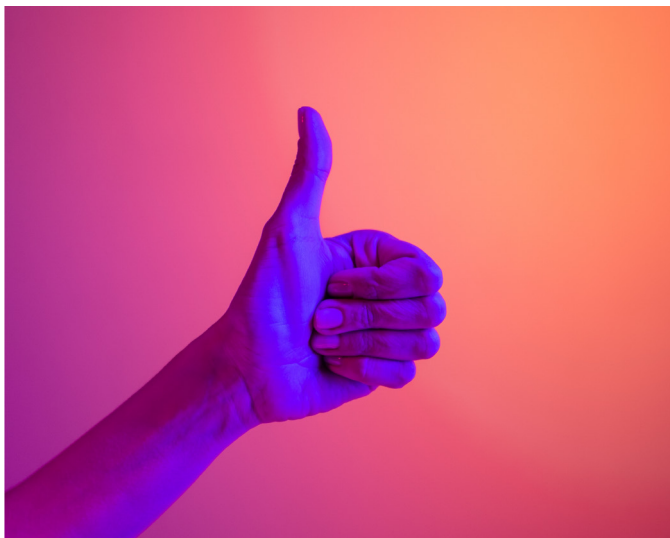
Self-service is essential for a B2B site. The purpose of a B2B website is to eliminate telephone calls and emails to place orders and reorders. Your customers are also extremely busy people who don't have a lot of time to wade through product pages and enter items one-by-one to an order. To them, good customer experience is one that allows them to sign on quickly, see their negotiated prices, and place a bulk order quickly. Perhaps by uploading a spreadsheet or modifying a previous one with just a few keystrokes -- and then submit a P.O. for invoicing.

All of these features fall outside of the scope of platforms like Shopify or BigCommerce, which are meant for B2C. Magento Commerce, on the other hand, is the perfect solution for wholesalers and distributors who want to provide their valued customers without efficient website experiences.

II. Features Required for B2B eCommerce

Differentiated Pricing	Because your customers will begin using your site after you've signed a contract with them and have negotiated prices, they expect to see every order they place to reflect their volume discounts or price breaks agreed to beforehand. The ecommerce platform you select must support differentiated pricing based on the customer.
Flexible Payment Options	In all likelihood, your customers rely on purchase orders to track expenses to the right accounts and to analyze their operating costs. Support for purchase orders is a table-stakes feature.
Custom Catalogs	It's highly unlikely that your customers will want access to your entire product catalog. Your eCommerce platform should allow you to create custom catalogs your customers can easily sort
Robust Search	Your customers need intelligent and intuitive search capabilities, including filtering down by item, category, brand, or SKU level.
Role-Based Permissions	All companies place spending limits on their employees, requiring additional authority and approval for high ticket items. Your customers are no different. Your website needs to support your customers' internal procedures with role-based permission functionality.

Request for a Quote	B2B relationships are all about working closely with your customers to open new doors and seize new opportunities. Sometimes that requires a price that falls outside of what you've pre-negotiated. Your ecommerce platform should allow authorized buyers to raise quotes.
Flexible Ordering	This is one of the most critical considerations for the success of your B2B website. Your customers need the ability to place bulk orders quickly and easily. Some may prefer to upload a spreadsheet with quantities and SKUs, while others may prefer to order via a product grid or a list, or from a previous order. Your eCommerce platform should be able to support a wide range of order workflows.
Shared Quotes / Shopping Lists	Your customers are likely to have multiple buyers who want to share quote requests and shopping lists from one another to save time.
Streamlined Order Management and Inventory Workflows	Your customers demand accurate and real-time inventory information. If you fail to make your delivery date, their businesses are at risk.



III. How Magento Commerce Can Help



Magento Commerce includes everything you need to build and manage your eCommerce site. The platform allows your customers to manage their company accounts (e.g., set up multiple tiers of buyers with specific roles and permissions). They can also track quotes, view detailed order histories, and manage their credit online, rather than calling you with their questions and requests.

Magento also has staying power. More than 250,000 eCommerce sites use Magento, and it adds new businesses to its rolls every quarter (in Q1 2020, Magento Commerce experienced 40% growth).

With so many businesses dependent on Magento (about 1.2% of the Internet), you can be sure the platform will be supported for a long time to come. Here are some of the B2B-Centric features of Magento:

Custom Catalog & Pricing

Magento Commerce fully supports custom catalogs and price lists, as well as supports multiple payment options.

Quote Management

Magento Commerce offers a request for quote workflow. It can be managed entirely within Magento, or connect to your systems via APIs.

Friction-Free Ordering

Your customers will have maximum flexibility for placing orders: entering SKUs, uploading CSV files, or selecting items from pre-set requisition lists. Or, your sales team can place orders on their behalf, if desired.

Marketing

Magento Commerce comes with a host of marketing tools, such as customer segmentation and personalization, product recommendations, and the ability to launch, manage and optimize email, digital, social media, and SMS campaigns. Magento also integrates with standard mar-tech platforms like Marketo and Hubspot.

Open Source

With built-in PHP, Magento Commerce can easily integrate with your existing inventory and order management systems.

Magento Community

As an open-source platform, Magento has a large community of developers that offer thousands of extensions that add functionality and automate integrations.

Give Us A Call



As a U.S based Magento eCommerce agency that has garnered expertise working with global retail brands and growing startups, Ziffity can provide solutions for companies of all sizes. From fresh builds and complex customizations to improving underperforming websites and fixing security vulnerabilities, our dedicated teams can provide tailor-made solutions for every B2B challenge. Reach us out at contactus@ziffity.com