



11 Obstacles to B2B Business Growth

Presented by



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What started as a revolution in the B2C world, with Amazon and eBay leading the front, eCommerce is now impacting the world of B2B commerce. eCommerce is permanently altering the way B2B businesses work—from customer acquisition to customer retention, and from order fulfilment to building a relationship with customers.

From our experience of working with B2B companies across industries, we have curated a list of 11 most common obstacles to B2B eCommerce success.

1. Working with The Wrong eCommerce Vendor

B2B and B2C eCommerce have their differences, so be sure to choose an eCommerce vendor that understands and has experience with B2B businesses is essential. Nothing is worse than working with a company that does not know enough about your business to help you succeed.

2. Ignoring Your Competition

With so much at stake, ignoring competition is a major mistake that a number of B2B businesses still commit. Assuming your competition is still operating with legacy platforms can be a huge mistake. They are adopting (if not already adopted) the best and most advanced technology revamping their entire business. For example, B2B merchants like Grainger, Fisher scientific, Pasternack and Haas Automation have completely changed the game for their competition by leveraging technology to drive B2C kind of experience in B2B eCommerce.

3. Thinking about eCommerce In Isolation

B2B eCommerce does not work in isolation. Omni-channel experience is what customers expect today, so identify all channels you can engage with your customers on and build a strategy that considers how these multiple channels interact with each other. For example, field sales representatives will need be trained to leverage the power of eCommerce to increase conversion and drive sales.

4. Not Considering Integration

Don't ignore the integration needs of your eCommerce system. Your eCommerce store only covers the front-end needs of the businesses and there is so much more that happens after an order is placed. Manually entering data is tedious, prone to errors, and not scalable, so your website needs to integrate with systems like accounting, ERP, OMS, and CRM to automate syncing information like orders, customers, pricing, and inventory between systems.

5. Ignoring Customer Experience

B2B eCommerce stores are notorious for bad user experiences, from slow site speed, to lack of modern features, and no personalization options. With consumers' expectations shaped by the modern B2C eCommerce store, the traditional B2B eCommerce stores need to adapt. Your B2B eCommerce store must offer similar, if not better, experience as any B2C eCommerce store, including features like custom pricing, product recommendations, and order history display.

6. Not Enough Content

Be it B2B or B2C, Content is KING, from improving your SEO to helping customers make informed buying decisions. On their sites, you should go beyond the traditional text and basic image content, and incorporate other content types like videos, but you should also invest in relevant marketing content such as blogs, and social media.

7. Forgetting SEO

SEO is one of the most critical aspects of your eCommerce store, and there are a few ways you can set yourself up for success from the start. For example using the right keywords in your landing pages, appropriate use of HTML tags, including Meta content, using alt attribute for images, and more. Also, in a bid to keep their competitors from prying, some B2B businesses keep their pages hidden. While sometimes required, businesses using this as a blanket rule are making a huge mistake. If search engines cannot index your pages, they will never appear in their search results. Which means decreased visibility for your business and products.

8. No Online Pay Option

Don't limit customers to the traditional payment methods such as credit limits and purchase orders if you don't have to. Allowing customers to pay online means they can shop when and where they want, removing one more barrier to making the sale.

9. Not Engaging Customers

Just because they're shopping online, doesn't mean your customers don't want to interact with you. As your sales team knows driving customer engagement can play an important role in driving customer loyalty. With digital automation tools, your teams can keep consumers engaged even after the sale is made (and even if the sale is not made) with how-to videos, new product launch emails, and exciting offers, with far less time and effort than previous manual processes.

10. No Advanced Analytics

We see many B2B business either not collecting site data or not leveraging what they are collecting. Advanced analytics will help you identify what is working and not working for your business, discover new trends, customize your marketing and sales activities, build new customer engagement strategies, and more.

11. Failure and Maintain and Improve Systems

B2B eCommerce projects are often intense and resource consuming, any some businesses launch their eCommerce store and forget about it. To be effective, it is important to monitor your eCommerce store, apply patches and upgrades, and incorporate feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve the setup and stay relevant. eCommerce is not a one-time effort and only sustained efforts can drive benefits that businesses desire.

i95Dev is an eCommerce Agency specializing in complex ERP integrations for Microsoft Dynamics GP, AX, NAV + SAP, SAGE ERP. Multichannel B2B is their specialty.