

# The Time to Modernize is Now

Why enterprises need a composable commerce solution



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# Introduction

Modern commerce requires the ability to quickly adapt to ever-changing shopper behaviors while also navigating turbulent economic conditions. However, agility can be difficult for many enterprises to achieve with their current tech stack.

Legacy technologies and monolith ecommerce platforms not only hinder your ability to deliver cutting-edge shopping experiences, but also limit what your teams can accomplish, posing challenges such as marketers not being able to make changes swiftly and developers spending the majority of their time on security and maintenance rather than innovation.

Enterprises need to invest in technology that provides the flexibility to respond to unexpected changes today, and the capabilities to adapt to customer and business needs of the future. As **Forrester research shows**, companies committed to a future-fit technology strategy grew revenue 1.8 times faster than their peers.

Companies committed to a future-fit technology strategy grew revenue **1.8 times faster than their peers**

**“Is the tech stack that you have today future-proof? That means considering a composable commerce approach that will allow you to be innovative and build best-in-breed functionality into the experience your shoppers expect in today’s ecommerce world,”** explains Meghan Stabler, SVP, Global Product Marketing, BigCommerce.

**In this white paper, we’ll review why now is the right time to evaluate your existing tech stack, how a composable commerce approach enables enterprise longevity, and how BigCommerce will help you build a future-proof commerce solution.**



# Why Now is the Time to Invest in Digital Commerce Innovation

Needless to say, the last few years have brought waves of unprecedented change — from the explosive ecommerce growth during the pandemic to the proliferation of omnichannel commerce. As consumer behaviors shift once again due to macroeconomics, enterprises must seize the opportunity to fortify their market position and secure their staying power.

During the Forrester Tech and Innovation Summit, Forrester stressed that businesses should not pull back on digital innovation or investment during economic slowdowns — rather, this is the best time to invest in ecommerce and find the right tech stack to survive and thrive.

BigCommerce Chief Information Officer, Rosie Rivel, couldn't agree more. "Businesses need to protect their digital investments and not succumb to the natural organizational response in budget-cutting during economic downturns," she stresses.

**“Downturns should cause organizations to tighten the discipline around digital investments — such as a laser focus on customer experience and revenue-generating tech like ecommerce platforms — so the anticipated value is fully realized.”**



**Rosie Rivel**, Chief Information Officer, BigCommerce

By protecting digital investments and implementing the organizational discipline required for value realization, enterprises will find themselves ahead of competitors and better prepared to scale when the economic cycle rebounds.

Consequently, enterprises must start thinking about what their customers expect and really understand what their ecommerce platform needs are for the future. As Forrester states, a future-fit technology strategy will enable customer-obsession, because you can respond to ever-changing expectations with adaptability, creativity and resilience.

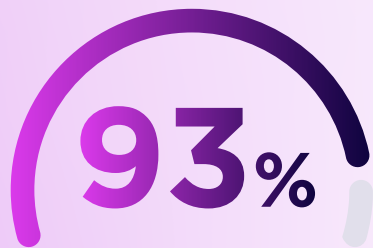


## Economic uncertainty is driving shoppers to be more selective with their spending.

Throughout the pandemic, it was simple for businesses to spin up an ecommerce site and make it successful — because shoppers were forced to buy online. With shopping in physical stores no longer an option, buyers turned online for an increasing number of their purchases, including categories that were predominantly reserved for in-store buying, such as grocery or furniture.

Now, behaviors are shifting again to a post-pandemic world, where currently, **inflation has been high in the United States** and the United Kingdom, hitting roughly 9% between May and June, 2022.

While some verticals like grocery and consumer products may see upsides of a new way of purchasing, others are seeing shoppers pull back on spending.

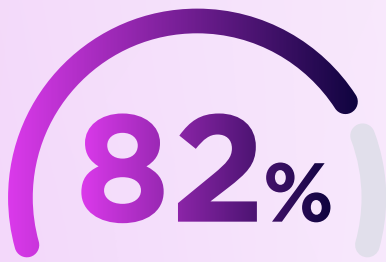


**93% of US adults are cutting back on their purchases due to inflation, prioritizing food, gas and housing.**

Research from eMarketer

Shoppers are also becoming more particular about what they buy and who they buy it from, as evidenced by the fact that 82% of US adults are looking for sales and less expensive ways to shop. Moreover, McKinsey & Company research found that 74% of consumers surveyed in July 2022 said they're trading down by taking actions, such as adjusting the quantity of their purchases, delaying purchases, going to lower-priced stores and switching to brands that cost less.

With increased competition for less dollars, it's critical that brands find ways to stand out. A key part of that is to focus on how to best serve customers, or as Forrester calls it, becoming customer-obsessed, as they predict shoppers will be looking for brands and businesses that care more about them when times are hard.

A graphic showing the number 82% in a bold, purple font. The number is enclosed within a purple arc that starts above the '8' and ends below the '2', with a light purple shadow behind it.

**82% of US adults are looking for sales and less expensive ways to shop.**

Serge Albohayre, Head of Partnerships, E2X, recommends investing in your brand by researching who your customers are, defining who your brand is to the customer throughout the end-to-end product experience, and focusing on communicating that message. This enables you to craft digital commerce experiences that make your customers think “this brand really gets me and how I need to buy.”

## **Omnichannel expectations drive the need for flexible commerce technology.**

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Omnichannel commerce has never been more of an imperative. Over the last few years, the most successful channels that have driven ecommerce growth for brands have all been geared toward reducing friction — mobile commerce, digital wallets, direct-to-consumer (DTC) and buy online, pickup in store (BOPIS).

Google Insights data also illustrates how the shift to omnichannel is continuing to grow, reporting significant increases in online and offline shopping searches, such as “online shopping dresses,” “delivery partner app,” “shopping centers” and “store open.”

**“Another trend we’re seeing is people investing heavily in unifying their operations to be able to support multichannel shopping use cases and the fulfillment of those orders.”**



**Sharon Gee**, VP and GM Omnichannel, BigCommerce

As shoppers are discovering products on social media, checking inventory online before visiting a store or buying on third-party marketplaces, brands are expanding warehousing and fulfillment capabilities. Take BigCommerce merchant **Solo Stove** for example.

“At the end of 2018, we decided to open a warehouse to do all of our own fulfillment — which ended up being a massive differentiator that not only enabled us to provide a better experience for our customers by delivering the product faster and more accurately, but we could also do it more affordably,” said John Merris, CEO, Solo Stove.

Still, many businesses struggle to deliver these omnichannel experiences that shoppers expect — in large part due to legacy technology. Enterprises are struggling to integrate their many technology systems, such as inventory management, point-of-sale (POS) and commerce platforms, because they were never meant to work together in the first place.

Without a flexible commerce solution that can adapt, it’s next to impossible for enterprises to proliferate growth across channels, regions and segments — particularly during economic downturns.

“If your spend is increasing and revenue is decreasing because of the economy, can you utilize certain technologies to streamline return on ad spend and get that more under control?” asks Stabler.

“Enterprises need technology solutions to enable selling across more channels, to therefore reach more shoppers where they are and get a better return on their investment.”



**Meghan Stabler**, Senior VP, BigCommerce



# How Composable Commerce Provides Flexibility for Enterprises

For many years, the go-to structure for many ecommerce businesses has been an all-in-one monolithic structure. This approach ties together the front end — the digital storefront — and the back end — the server side. Since both sides are tightly coupled, certain capabilities of a monolithic application cannot be deployed independently.

Although a monolith may work for businesses with limited requirements, this kind of technology can present challenges for enterprise-level businesses with greater complexity — such as expanding into new regions or selling through several marketplaces and social channels.

The solution? Composable commerce. Coined in a 2020 [report](#) by Gartner, composable commerce is a modular digital commerce approach that allows businesses to customize their tech stacks by choosing best-in-breed solutions to suit their unique business requirements.

However, according to BigCommerce Lead Principal Architect, Stuart Guest-Smith, composable commerce isn't exactly a new concept — in fact, before monoliths entered the picture, composable commerce was the norm.

“Back in the early 2000s, oddly enough, it was all composable. You had a commerce system and a content system, because nobody had actually thought, ‘Could we pull this stuff together into one platform?’” explained Guest-Smith.

“We started to move into this headwind of monoliths for 15 years, and now we're realizing that composable commerce — full circle — is the best way.”



**Stuart Guest-Smith**, Lead Principal Architect, BigCommerce



# How Composable Commerce Works

By definition, composability is the ability to break an entity into various modules, all of which combine to form the whole. Therefore, according to Gartner, a composable enterprise is one that creates its organization out of interchangeable building blocks.

**Below are the four key tenets of composable commerce:**

**MODULAR** — Each component of the system can be deployed and interchanged independently.

**OPEN** — Applications can be seamlessly integrated with all other applications in the system, with no vendor lock-in.

**FLEXIBLE** — With your unique stack, you can create unique commerce experiences tailored precisely to your business.

**BUSINESS-CENTRIC** — This system allows merchants to quickly and cost-effectively respond to changing business requirements.

Venturing away from the traditional, all-in-one monolithic approach, composable commerce is achieved by assembling and combining Packaged Business Capabilities (PBCs). PBCs are software components that meet specific business needs, such as a virtual shopping cart, order management or account management.

Rather than relying on one vendor for all of your business requirements, taking a composable commerce approach allows businesses to choose best-in-breed vendors to create a robust, functional technology stack. This also means that businesses have the flexibility to customize their tech stack, rather than simply being told “no” when a requirement isn’t precisely met by the platform.

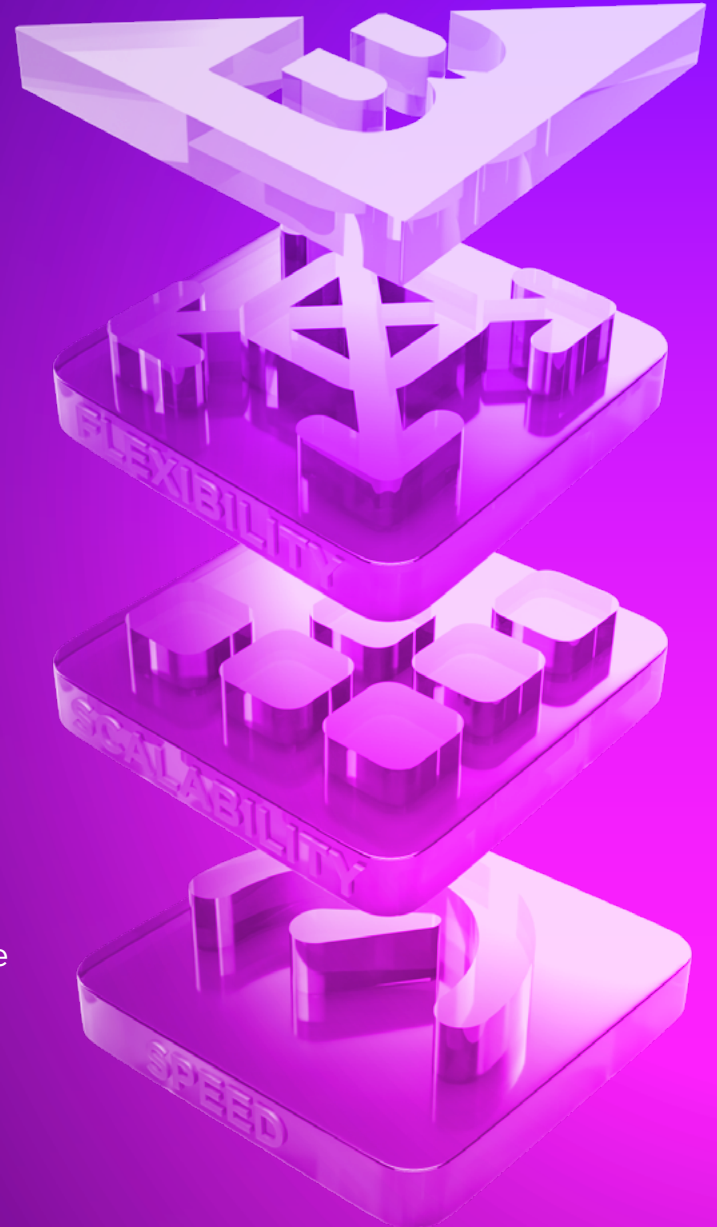
“We know you need partners in these categories: channels, marketing, operations and fulfillment. How you choose to architect them is based on your use case and needs — from self-serve-simple all the way through complicated, partner-powered integrations for enterprise merchants,” explained Gee.

Composable also means, should businesses want to replace other commerce components down the line, they're not locked into a system or a way of doing things — in essence, it's how businesses build for the future.

80%

**By 2023, organizations that have adopted a composable approach will outpace the competition by 80% in the speed of new feature implementation.**

To evaluate a technology to understand if it truly is a composable solution, look to the industry tech standard of MACH, which stands for microservices, API-first, cloud-native SaaS and headless, set by the **MACH Alliance**. By ascribing to these principles, enterprises can ensure they are choosing commerce solutions that can deliver future-proof technology.



**At the end of the day, it's about flexibility. You don't want to have to tie yourself to any one construct, because no one business is the same as any other business. So flexibility is critical. Scalability is critical. And being able to deal with complexity in a simple way is critical."**



**Sean Lipman**, CEO and Co-Founder, Feedonomics

# Examples of How Composability Supports Customization

A modular approach offers the agility to deliver innovative experiences at speed and scale to stand out from a growing number of competitors.



## LA PERLA

### Delivering digital innovation, globally

Planning for future growth, **La Perla chose a composable approach** because it offered the flexibility and agility the brand required to deliver a long-term omnichannel commerce strategy across Europe, the Middle East, the US and Asia that's mobile-first and user-focused.

Composable also allowed the brand to bridge their premium luxury presence with innovative digital expression. "When it comes to the La Perla Beauty digital experience, we place huge value on education, community and demonstrating our Clean Beauty credentials — and typically these considerations are beyond the capabilities of a traditional CMS," explained Reynolds.

“With only a small, focused team, we looked to the technology to do a great deal of the heavy lifting such as the issues of multiple languages, localisation, and the addition of new technologies, whilst still being easy to use.”



**Pamela Reynolds**, Vice President of Ecommerce, La Perla Beauty





## Expertly achieving a seamless experience

By selecting best-in-breed technology solutions, **King Arthur Baking Company** provides shoppers with a seamless experience across its content and commerce sites. While both are styled to look complementary and consistent, syndicated primary navigation ensures one point of content entry for the global menu.

Using **Algolia's search and discovery platform**, the brand also gives shoppers a faster, cleaner search experience by providing results from recipes, products and blogs. Additionally, customized checkout functionality that's integrated with Google Address Autocomplete, ensures ease of use and a streamlined checkout experience.





## Perfectly marrying content and commerce

**Black Diamond leveraged composable commerce** to integrate content and stories throughout their ecommerce site. For example, if a shopper was looking to read stories about the brand's ambassadors or athletes, they are presented with a clear path from the homepage to quickly get to content or

products. This design ensures that the essence of the Black Diamond brand is ever-present throughout the site experience.

While content and commerce are connected on the site, behind the scenes, the separation of the frontend and backend enables Black Diamond's US and EU marketing teams to have direct access and capability to manage the site and campaigns — without having to rely on developers to make changes.

# Build a Future-Proof Commerce Solution with BigCommerce

Moving away from a monolithic solution isn't simply about upgrading your website — it's about having the right tech stack to future-proof your business in the face of change.

“What makes BigCommerce the best ecommerce platform for enterprise is that they allow merchants to choose what is going to fit best for their business — rather than making them fit all into one box — while still providing the benefits of SaaS, so that enterprise merchants aren't having to worry about being an IT company on top of an ecommerce company.”



Stuart Guest-Smith, Lead Principal Architect, BigCommerce

BigCommerce is laser-focused on one thing — enabling enterprises with a future-ready, future-fit ecommerce platform. As a member of the MACH Alliance, BigCommerce has a commitment to not be a conglomerate, and instead, subscribes to a best-in-breed approach, offering the flexibility and extensibility that enables businesses to compose the best commerce system for their specific needs.

**MACH**  
ALLIANCE

# 1. Modern flexibility that simplifies customization.

The BigCommerce platform is built for composability without complexity. Enterprises are no longer locked into proprietary languages, tools and systems that lead to subpar solutions and extensive technical debt.

The API-first architecture gives businesses freedom and flexibility. Essential commerce components are available out-of-the-box and the extensibility allows businesses to innovate and tailor the platform to their specific needs. Easily connect to leading third-party business applications, such as an ERP, OMS, PIM and more, through reliable integrations.

By building on a solid technical foundation with BigCommerce, enterprises can remain agile and quickly respond to ever-changing consumer expectations.

**“ BigCommerce’s open API architecture, large and growing set of pre-integrated apps, multi-storefront and ongoing commitment to the principles of composable commerce enable us to quickly and easily innovate new products and services.”**

TED BAKER  
LONDON

**Leon Shepherd**  
Chief Information Officer,  
Ted Baker

## 2. A trusted team of ecommerce experts.

With BigCommerce, enterprises partner with a team that has the technical expertise, organizational structure in place, and commitment to ensuring they launch their site successfully and flourish on their new platform. Depend on BigCommerce's ecommerce expertise to architect the optimal solution for your business and provide support at every stage.

BigCommerce helps ease the pain of migrating platforms with a wide range of services that include implementation project management, solution architecting, data migration services and various training and education programs, including developer training.

Once launched, customer success managers stay connected to ensure businesses get the most out of the platform while technical account managers are dedicated to ongoing technical health.

““ The other platforms we spoke to didn't invest nearly as much time into coming up with a framework or solution that would work for our business, but instead tried to fit our business into their framework. Truly, the flexibility that BigCommerce has offered in terms of guidance, support and solutioning has been immense.”

**BURROW**

**Kabeer Chopra,**  
Co-Founder and CPO,  
Burrow



# 3. Built for enterprise scale.

BigCommerce provides the scalability to test new growth strategies, expand revenue channels, launch new products and optimize conversion — without compromising platform performance.

Enterprises can keep up with customer demands, knowing they have a platform that can handle complex catalogs and high transaction volumes. With easy-to-implement growth solutions, such as search, marketplace and social connections, accelerated checkout buttons and powerful B2B tools, enterprises can deliver a seamless omnichannel experience that stands out from the competition.

**“ Now that we’ve seen how the scalability of BigCommerce performs in terms of its ability to handle increased transaction volume and velocity, we’re even more convinced it was the best solution for us to build on.”**



**Mark Hopkins,**  
Chief Information Officer,  
Skullcandy



## 4. Low maintenance, high efficiency.

Unreliable platforms force businesses to waste time, money and resources securing their site. BigCommerce offers peace of mind by handling platform maintenance, hosting, security, updates and compliance. Enterprises can rest easy knowing that BigCommerce is ISO 27001 Certified, Sitewide HTTPS, PCI DSS, GDPR, and CCPA compliant.

With lower costs, more time and energy, and the peace of mind that data is secure, businesses can increase efficiency and focus on the activities that enable longevity.

**“ BigCommerce makes sure that everything is secure. We don't have to worry about our site being hacked or maintaining it, so we can focus on selling products.”**



**Chelsey Eggert,**  
Director of Operations,  
BB Wheels

## The Moment of Disruption is Now

Emerging from the other side of a global pandemic, ecommerce businesses everywhere can attest to rapidly changing consumer behaviors and economic headwinds — which goes to show that no one is immune to change.

And while a one-size-fits-all solution might be a quick fix for today's roadblocks, a monolithic platform won't sustain businesses in the long-term. Today's businesses need a composable commerce solution that provides the flexibility and agility needed to respond quickly to unexpected change.

“The moment of disruption is now. Companies are overwhelmingly picking SaaS for their digital future, and we at BigCommerce do enterprise SaaS, we believe, better than anyone else. Our mission ultimately is to help our customers turn their long-term digital transformation into a competitive advantage.”



Brent Bellm, CEO, BigCommerce

The right time for adopting a composable architecture is now. With BigCommerce as your platform, you'll have a trusted partner that will enable you to deliver cutting-edge commerce experiences today — and into the future.

**Take the next step in your composable commerce journey by reading our guide to replatforming and schedule a consultation with one of our ecommerce experts.**

[Schedule Now](#)