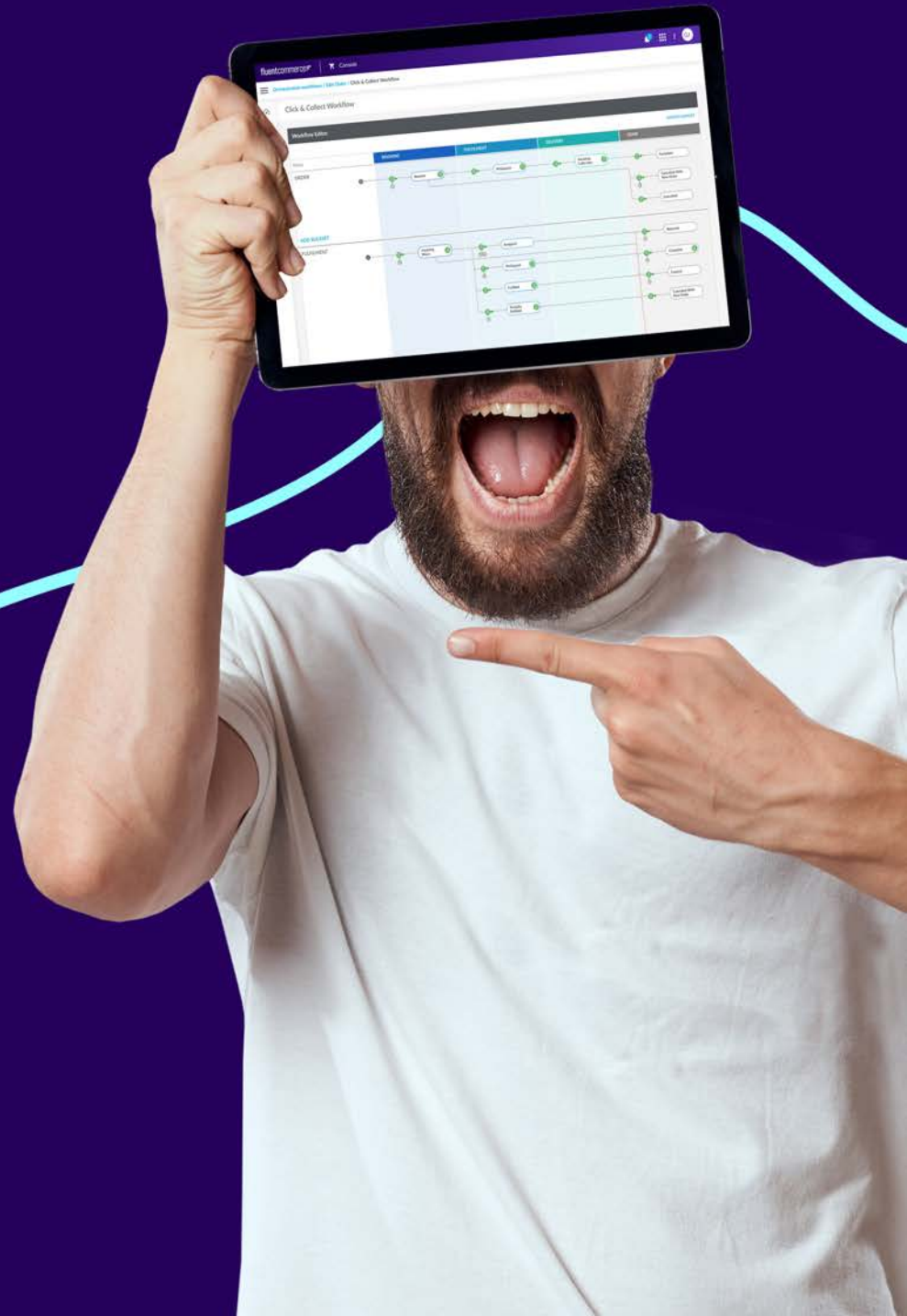


The Role of Order Management in Headless Commerce

3 benefits of Headless Commerce
and 5 key roles of an
Order Management System



Headless commerce—we hear the term everywhere. But what is headless commerce, and why is it important to your business model?

Headless commerce: how we got here

The ecommerce world ebbs and flows according to consumer behavior. As consumers changed how and where they shopped—via mobile devices, social media, marketplaces, kiosks—it became clear that legacy systems could not keep up. Customer demands were ever changing yet traditional systems were rigid. They didn't offer the flexibility or adaptability that is needed to serve today's consumer. Changes took too long or were too complex. There had to be a better way.

Enter Headless Commerce. By comparison, a headless approach lets you create the user experience your customers desire, without the complexity, cost or constraints of a traditional platform. In simple terms, headless commerce lets you decouple the presentation layer—

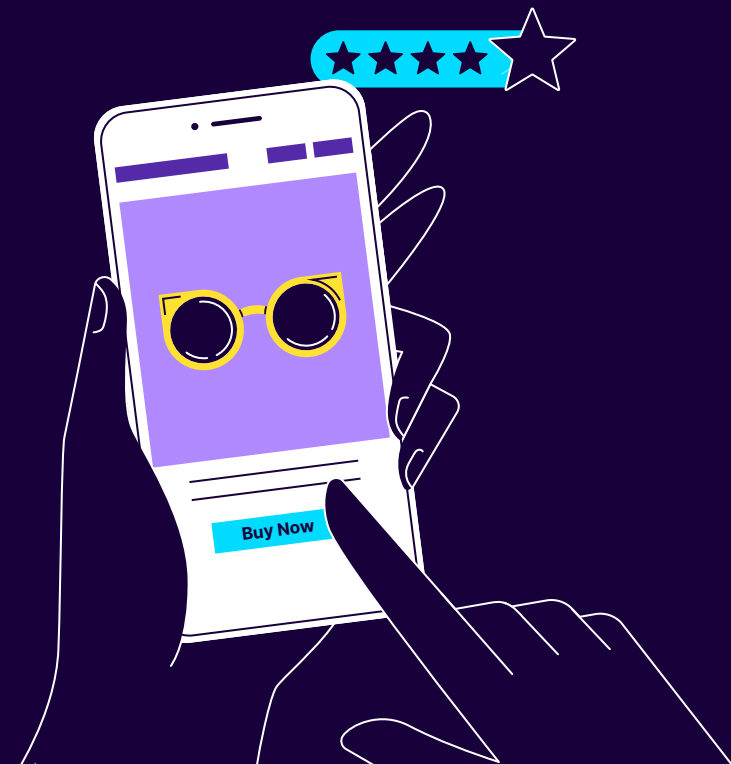
the environment in which you create customer experiences—from the back-end systems. All without compromising the flexibility of the front end.

Be ready for what today's consumer expects tomorrow

Modern consumers demand seamless shopping experiences, fast and accurate delivery, and easy returns. This means, as an omnichannel merchant, you need to adapt quickly to changes in demand. You also need to offer the personalized experiences and the flexibility that customers expect—fast. In short, you need the freedom to create a best-in-class customer experience for all of your buyer personas. But traditional systems do not allow for agility, deep personalization, or fluctuating customer preferences. The result? A competitive disadvantage. This is where headless commerce comes into play.

Bottom line?

Customers will continue to expect the brands and retailers they shop with to evolve—and quickly at that. Headless commerce provides you with the ability to give your customers a variety of shopping experiences how they want it and when they want it, thus making for better experiences, and ultimately loyal customers.



Top 3 benefits of headless commerce

What are the benefits? Two words: Digital Agility. You need the ability to both guide and influence your customers no matter where they shop—this is where an API-first approach comes in. Today, a single, headless commerce platform can serve up a shopping experience with any user interface. This includes web, mobile, kiosk, third party marketplaces, or social sites. Let's explore some benefits.



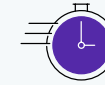
01. Flexibility

Your systems need to be flexible at every step of the way. Where are you selling? In which regions? On which platforms or channels? Do your customers in one region expect a different product or user experience than another? Fear not. Headless commerce gives you the control to make these changes and do so at an accelerated pace.



02. Personalized customer experiences

We know that the more personalized the experience, the more likely the customer is to shop with you and, hopefully, make a purchase. With a headless commerce approach, you can leverage your customer data to craft experiences that speak to your buyers. What can you do? Create special offers, unique promotions, optimize product recommendations, offer loyalty perks—the list goes on.



03. Internal adoption & speedy rollouts

A best-in-class user experience starts with your internal teams. Their support is essential—which means you need systems that are easy to adopt. They must be fast to deploy and to learn. When you can build unique experiences and get them out to customers quickly, you can keep up with consumer expectations. What's more, you'll avoid causing disorder to the internal teams that handle everything behind the scenes.

The role of an Order Management System

Your Order Management System (OMS) is a critical component when looking for success with a headless commerce approach. Why? Your OMS sits at the heart of your commerce operations. It connects systems, syncs inventory, and serves as your availability master. It tracks the stock you have Available to Promise (ATP) in every market, channel and region in near real-time.

A common misconception about Order Management Systems is that its main role takes place after an order is completed. While there are many critical functions that do happen at that time, a modern OMS is an integral piece of your tech stack both before and after the buy button.

In order for you to unleash the power of headless commerce, you must have real-time

Let's explore the role of an OMS:



01.
Real time inventory visibility



02.
Allows you to control what you sell, in each channel, marketplace or region



03.
Effortlessly share inventory and data with other systems

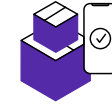


04.
Improve product availability



05.
Support phased rollouts to reduce change management and business risk

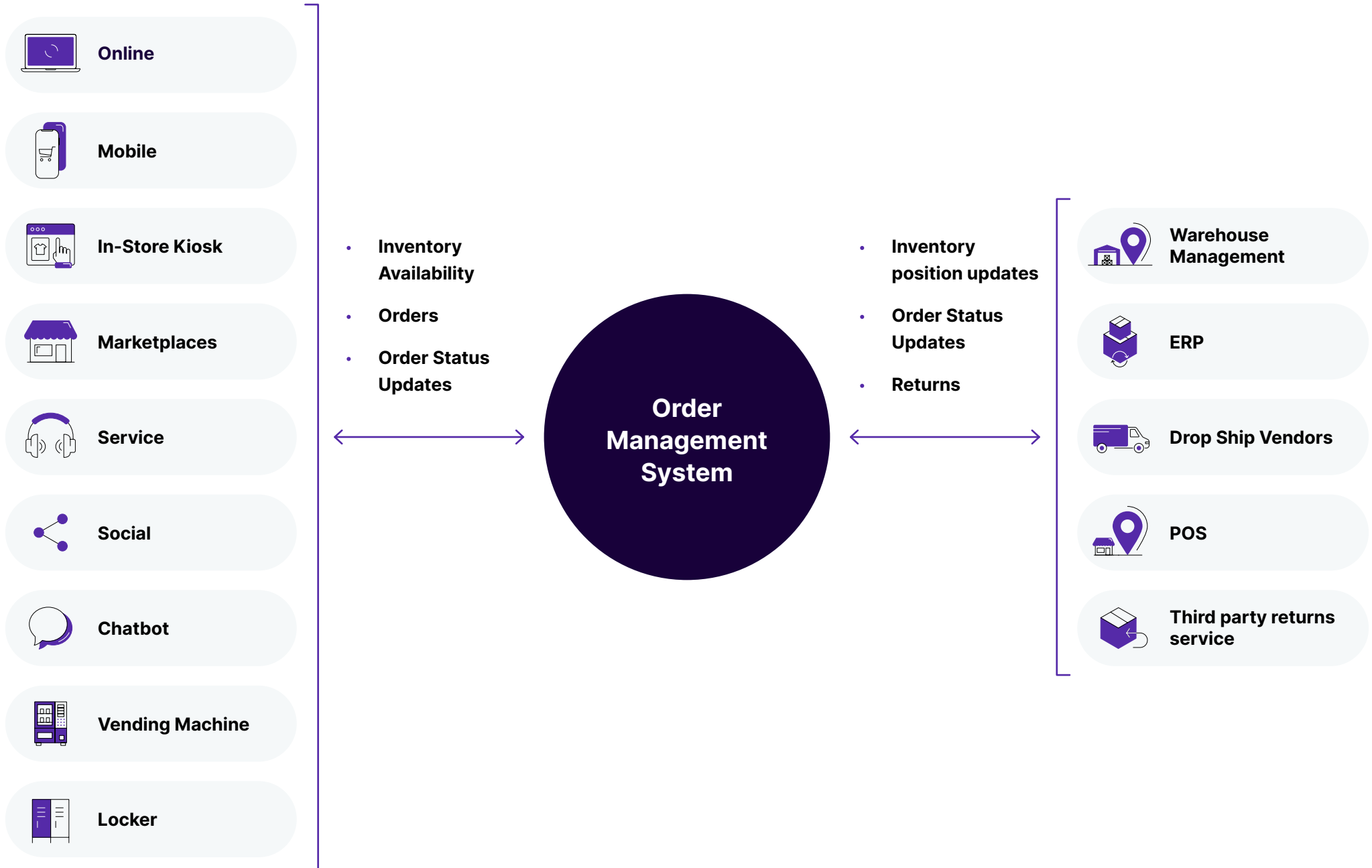
inventory information available. This is just one reason why a modern OMS is important in your headless commerce approach.



01. Real time inventory visibility

Legacy systems weren't built to scale to today's customers. Fulfillment options have grown and become more complex and now can include your warehouse management system, ERP, drop ship vendors (DSVs), lockers and more. There is much conversation around omnichannel selling on the frontend, but what about the backend? How are all your systems and environments working together? Especially when you have technology in varying states of maturity, managed by different teams in different countries?

This is where a flexible Order Management System (OMS) shines. Accurate inventory affects every part of the customer journey, so make sure you get it right. A modern OMS acts as your availability master, so what you present to the customer—online, via mobile, in-store kiosks, or on marketplaces—is correct.





02. Allows you to control what you sell, where

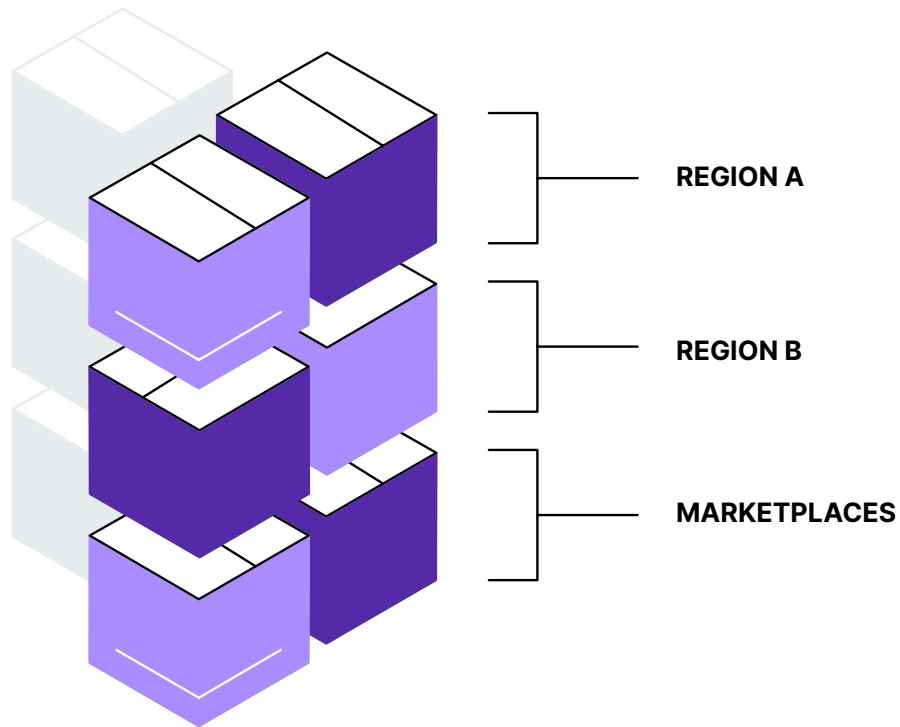
You need to be able to shape the customer experience, and this includes controlling what you sell and where you sell it. And not just by region—you need to be able to adjust what products or categories you sell across brands, marketplaces and more.

Customer preferences adapt frequently, and then there is the need to balance supply and demand, business objectives and promotions. You need the ability to adapt your strategy in real-time to keep up with trends. And that's only the beginning. There are further optimizations you can make when you look at critical data points. What are customers buying, and when? How much are they spending? Where is it being

delivered? How does this compare to where you are sourcing and shipping your products from? No two baskets are the same, and you need to capture this data—and then use it to improve and automate your decision making moving forward. How can you accomplish this? With your Order Management System.

VIRTUAL INVENTORY SEGMENTATION

Control what is sold in each channel or region including channel or region specific buffers and exclusions.



Factor in other contextual data

Capture the data you need to recreate the environment in which the order was created



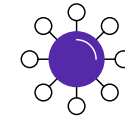
Dynamic Customer Factors
No two baskets are the same



Internal Business Factors
Every organization is different



Data Driven Optimisation
Use historical data to improve and automate decision making



03. Effortlessly share inventory and data

Remember, your Order Management System is your availability master. It should work seamlessly with all your other systems, vendors and channels, such as your ERP and POS, your Drop Ship Vendors, and marketplaces. This is a critical component for a headless approach, but what about the rest of your tech stack? It is not always feasible for a business to replace or update systems. A modern OMS can use the data from across an organization—no matter what legacy systems are in place. Let's look at an example of call centers.

Call centers are a vital part of your organization but one that can make or break the customer experience. When a customer calls in asking

about their order status, they expect a swift reply. Having the ability to pull up the order history quickly—and see a full, updated view of their order status—is extremely important to the customer. If you are unable to provide these details in a timely manner, you are not creating an optimal customer experience. Having a headless approach allows brands and retailers to quickly provide accurate information to their customers.

Your Order Management System **orchestrates inventory updates** across all sales and service channels and fulfilment locations





04. Improve product availability

A common goal across many organizations is the desire to extend range and availability across all channels while exceeding customers' expectations. How can you do this? Focus on the Product Detail Page (PDP). The PDP is often an untapped opportunity for many businesses. There are numerous ways to generate more sales before the buy button. By showing accurate in-stock positions, accepting backorders and

pre-orders, and showing local available inventory, you'll be able to capture more business and save more sales.

What else can a reimagined Product Detail Page do?



Reduce Overselling and Underselling



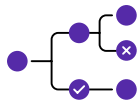
Reserve inventory that's in the cart



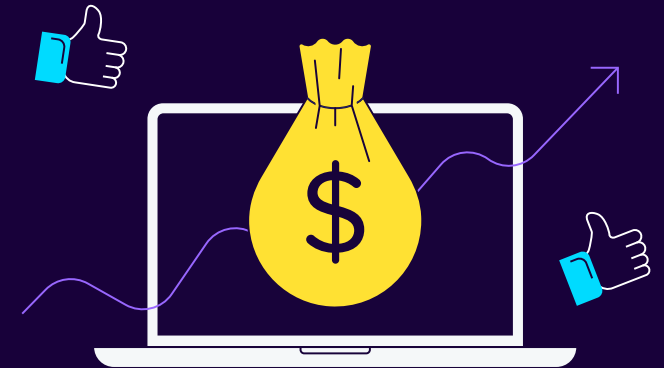
Optimize Recommendations



Offer loyalty perks



Optimize Sourcing



You may not have the full tech stack to support everything at one time, but you should make the improvements where you can to help capture more sales.

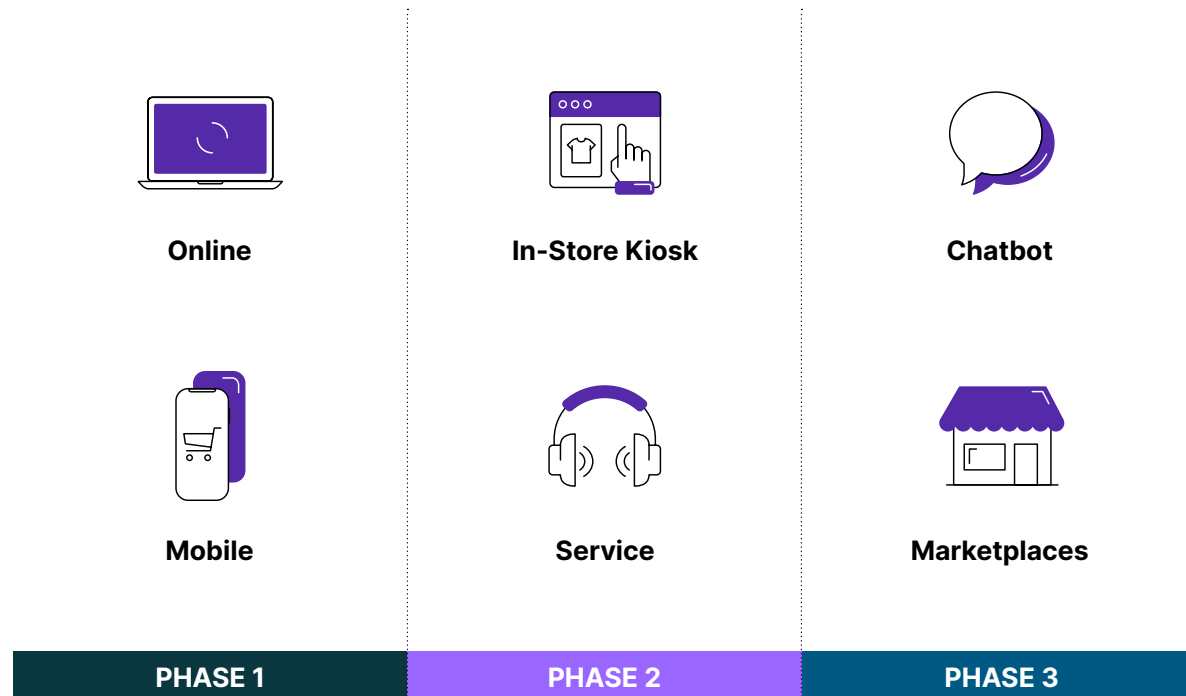


05. Support phased rollouts

A full implementation of an Order Management System (OMS) can take 12-18 months. But the rate of changing consumer behavior is happening much faster than that, and it is difficult to predict what the functional requirements of your OMS may need to be that far into the future. And many businesses need to rollout in only 4-6 months. This is where a phased approach comes in.

So where do you start? Where will you get the greatest ROI? What areas should you consider first? Start with resolving inventory visibility issues. This will shape your future needs. And what other areas should be top of mind? Order orchestrations and store fulfillment are two

areas to focus on next. Remember, it is difficult to make every change at one time. As you learn more about your customers, you can iterate and connect new channels over time.



Phased Rollout Examples

Where do you start? Where will you get the greatest ROI?



Inventory Visibility



Store Fulfillment



Multi-Brand / Multi-National



Order Orchestration

Are you ready to go headless?

Both businesses and consumers seek flexibility in today's shopping environment. But rigid, monolithic systems are expensive to maintain and can no longer keep up with today's shopper. Change happens fast, and you need to be ready to adapt. How quickly can you add new channels or device specific shopping experiences? Does your commerce platform support headless? Can you create disposable shopping experiences in your Content Management System? Do you have the product and inventory data you need to craft those experiences?

Fluent Order Management is designed to be fluid and adapt to both business and consumer demands. It provides the flexibility you need to satisfy the modern consumer. This means

offering fast, convenient fulfillment options, and making sure customers get their orders on time. There's no room for disappointment. With Fluent Order Management you can get control over your stock availability and fulfillment operations... quickly. And best of all, create great customer experiences. No promises broken.



Ready to learn more about why a flexible Order Management System is essential for headless commerce?

See it in Action!

To learn more about how Fluent Order Management can support your online shopping experience, schedule a demo today.

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