Commerce Platform

inventory segmentation

safety stock buffers

real-time stock availability

promising

soft reservations

sourcing & allocation

preorders & backorders

complex fulfillment logic

in-store pick and pack

omnichannel returns

ERP

So you think your ERP and Commerce platforms do order management?

If you want to increase conversions and offer a better customer experience...there's a better way.

fluentcommerce
order management. accelerated.

Has managing online orders become complicated?

Do you have a single unified view of all your inventory? One that you can segment and optimize? Or is it siloed in different systems? In a global survey of retailers and direct to consumer brands, 80% indicated that improving inventory availability data on the Product Details Page (PDP), Product Listing Page (PLP), category pages, and search results, is important. Are you able to show smart availability (based on margin, splits, or attributes) on your product details page? Or just a basic 'in stock' or 'out of stock'?

Do you ship from multiple locations and need a better way to manage sourcing logic? Or split shipments? As businesses grow and become more complex, so do your management challenges.

Many businesses start out using their ERP or commerce platform to manage order orchestrations. These platforms may support some basic configuration rules. Split a shipment here and there. Source by proximity to the customer. Which works…. for a while. Until it doesn't.

Your commerce platform and ERP can't keep up

Now, those basic rules are no longer cutting it. It's not enough to just split an order—you need control over when it's split, and how it's routed. Maybe you want to promise against inbound inventory to save a sale. Or:

- Enable different fulfillment logic for different sales channels or regions to support unique market needs

- Use different carriers in different regions

- Use product attributes (e.g., bulky, hazmat, etc.) or location attributes (e.g., last carrier pickup time, capacity, etc.) in your sourcing logic

- Automate exception handling and order re-routing

ERP
SYSTEM

ORDER
MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM

COMMERCE
PLATFORM

- Offer customers different fulfillment offerings based on their loyalty status

- Offer both delivery *and* pickup for different line items in a single order

- Test new fulfillment offerings in a few locations before a full roll out

The list goes on. And ultimately, these gaps affect every step of the customer journey. But time and time again, organizations choose to extend their systems beyond their intended use. What does that mean?

A stack of bandages
Logic gets pushed into places it doesn't belong. And over time becomes difficult to manage - the dreaded 'ball of bandages' that everyone is afraid to touch. Why is this such an issue? Ultimately, it hinders your ability to adapt and change. A quick fix or small change is fine, but as these changes accumulate it become much hard to make them without the risk of breaking something.

As your business grows, the need for a more sophisticated order management system (OMS) becomes clear. You need to support your unique use cases. Be flexible. Ensure your customers have a positive experience. And, you need to better optimize fulfillment and margin on each order.

Decisions at scale
And while commerce platforms and ERPs are great at what they were designed to do, they simply cannot make the sort of decisions—at scale, in near-real time—that your business needs to thrive. A unified view of inventory is **hard** when you have inventory data sitting in multiple back end systems. So what's the solution?

How to tell if your Commerce and ERP aren't meeting your needs

So you already have a commerce Platform. And an ERP. When do you need an OMS? Here are some telltale signs:

1. **Your business has become much more complex.** Complexity is high and current systems can't handle it—or don't handle it well.

2. **Your current systems can't move fast enough.** They are simply not agile or flexible enough to scale up to where you need to be.

3. **You're an international business.** Maybe you've expanded. Or have always been selling from multiple countries. The more regions, the more complicated it is.

4. **You sell from multiple channels, locations or regions.** As a multi-channel business you need to sell effectively and prioritize inventory across channels, layering in inventory aging, loyalty status, and more.

5. **You're losing profits.** Chances are, you're seeing a hit to your bottom line. Overselling and underselling is costing your business.

A Distributed Order Management system

A dedicated distributed order management system does several things really well that commerce platforms and ERPs struggle with at scale.

Unified view of inventory data and what's Available to Promise (ATP)

One is managing inventory data at scale. An order management system (OMS), like Fluent Order Management, is designed to consume inventory data from all your back-end systems, and optimize the processing of that inventory data. It also gives you a single view of all your inventory across all your systems and locations. And lets you segment it and apply safety stock buffers to each segment, so you can control what you make ATP in each digital channel.

Intelligent promising to drive conversions

An OMS also enables you to make better promises 'before the buy button'. What if you could show customers how quickly they could get an item earlier in the buying journey? Based on actual sourcing logic. And not just on the product details page, but even on search results pages? How would that impact your conversion rate? And your canceled order rate? And ensure you only made promises that were profitable and that you could keep?

Support unique fulfillment logic

An OMS also gives you more control over your sourcing and fulfillment logic. Each market, region and sales channel is unique. Which means each of them might need a different set of fulfillment rules and logic. But that's easier said than done if you are just using your ERP or commerce platform. With an OMS, you can support all your fulfillment logic needs and beyond, such as:

- Ship from the location that's closest to your customer in a specific region
- Only ship from Distribution Centers for specific sales channels
- Set a limit on the number of split shipments in each order
- Offer customers different fulfillment offerings based on their loyalty status
- Provide both delivery and pickup options for different line items from a single order

Test new offerings before a full roll out

Looking to expand into a new region or market? The learnings of testing out a product before a full roll out is invaluable. But to do so, you need a distributed order management system that allows for the easy—and virtual—segmentation of inventory. So you can control what inventory is sold where.
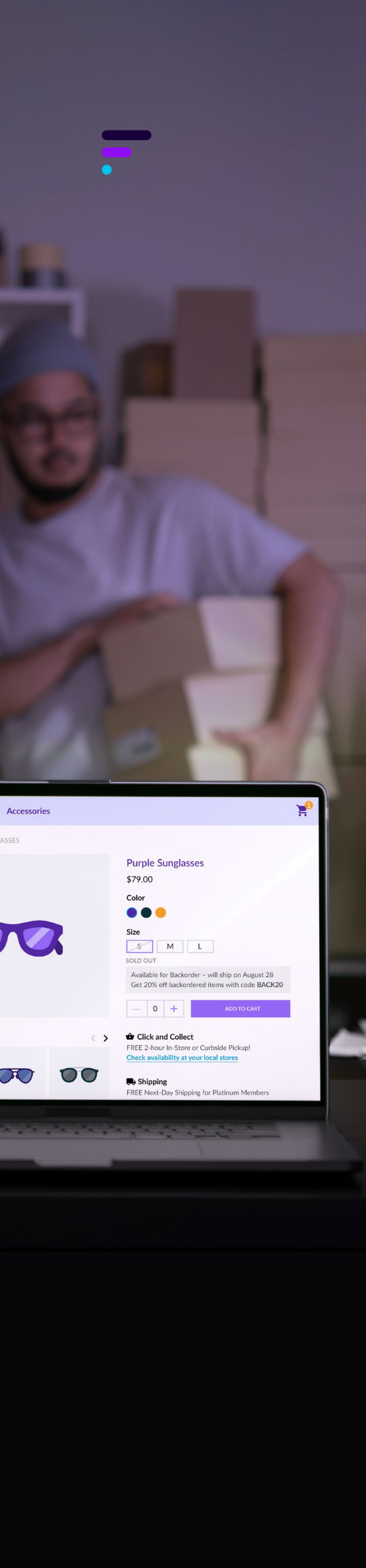
For example, you sell in Country A but want to expand to Country B. You choose to test a subset of your stock in Country B. With the right OMS, you can set up a 'Virtual Catalog' for the new region that only includes a few products, or a few categories.

Then, whether you test the market through your own regional online store, or regional marketplace, you can have that sales channel look only at the regional catalog.

Carrier of choice by region

Carriers vary by country, region and even season. So you want to ensure you can choose the carrier of choice as needed. And this is especially important if you are growing internationally and adding new banners or regions across the globe. The right OMS will allow you to configure the carrier of choice by brand or region to satisfy local market needs or customer preferences.

Advanced sourcing logic and rules

Sourcing rules can be a competitive differentiator. Luxury brands might prioritize their high-value customers. Hardware stores may want to ship from hub stores over regional stores. Your OMS should let you configure the business rules that best fit your business. Why? So you can maximize the margin on every order.

What kind of attributes can you work into your sourcing logic? Here are some examples:

Product Attributes:
- Bulky or fragile items
- Hazmat level
- Value added services
- Cost of item(s) / order
- Store reference number

Location Attributes:

- Store capacity
- Last carrier pickup time
- Curbside availability
- Ability to ship bulky or fragile items
- Store with highest markdowns, most inventory, oldest inventory

But what happens when the first choice of fulfillment path isn't available?

Exception handling automation

Maybe it's due to a spike in demand. A natural disaster. A damaged item. Or a disruption in supply. When things go wrong, an order management system can be configured to make real-time exception handling decisions. This means it can automatically reroute orders and trigger notifications. So it provides you with the flexibility you need to scale your business with confidence.

Summary

With the right OMS in place, such as **Fluent Order Management**, you can:

- Get a unified view of all your inventory and control what you sell in each digital channel
- Show accurate delivery and pickup promises based on real-time sourcing decisions to increase conversions
- Optimize sourcing so you can reduce delivery costs
- Craft a stellar CX
- Quickly adapt to changes in the market or new business requirements
- Automate exception handling so you can scale

In short, you can deliver more business value, faster. And ultimately drive more revenue and improved margins.
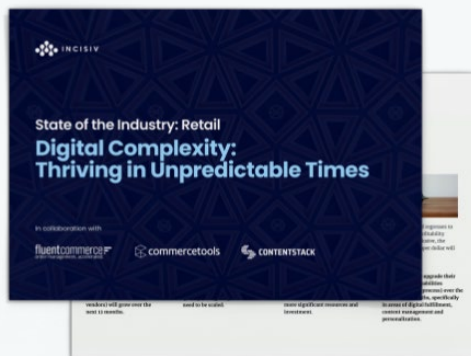
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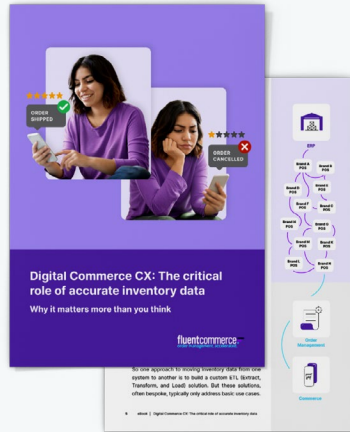
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