

BORN

Stay Composed
with Composable

Abstract

What can we expect in digital commerce over the next six months? What about in the next year, or ten? Generative AI, ChatGPT, the Metaverse, virtual reality, augmented reality, network effects, self-driving supply trucks, and delivery drones will all help to support and drive ecommerce revenue to new heights.

The biggest draw to ecommerce is that it allows people to shop, purchase, and receive anything they want anywhere in the world from the comfort of their homes with only a swipe or a click. Recent technological advances are not only driving more consumers to online commerce, but these technologies are also changing the boundaries of what's possible and increasing consumer demands and expectations in ecommerce experiences and services.

When creating ecommerce sites that deliver functionality, innovations, and stylization, Composable Commerce is rapidly becoming the go-to option for companies looking for long-term serviceability and flexibility in their tech stack. Because Composable Commerce solutions are not reliant on any one tech system, they're unmatched in their capabilities to service current needs and trends while quickly adapting to unforeseen future updates with little to no disruption to a website's uptime.

This report will provide visionary ecommerce leaders with the insights to fly higher and more nimbly than those weighed down by indecision and legacy systems. We will examine why Composable Commerce is the best tech solution to future-proof ecommerce sites. We will explore some of the more significant problems Composable Commerce can solve and address common concerns of stakeholders. We will show you why BORN XDS is ideally positioned to partner in implementing your Composable Commerce solutions while providing perspective on what to expect when migrating systems.

The Problem at Large

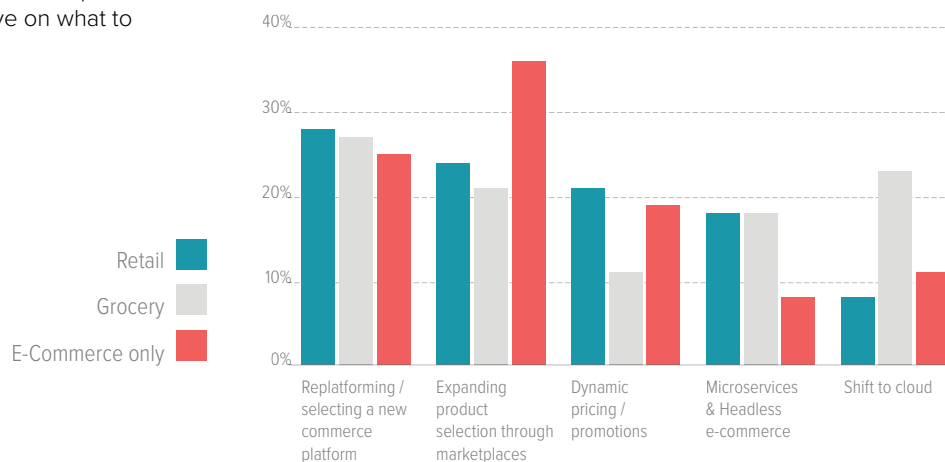
Consider this chart of short-term challenges in omni-channel commerce and worldwide ecommerce companies in 2022 by company type¹.

Expanding product selection is the number one problem by a large margin.

This problem exists regardless of the devices your customers own or interact with: phones, desktops, tablets, smart TVs, smart appliances, in-store kiosks, or even something yet to be imagined. In the context of an omni-channel experience, consider how your customers might see an advertisement for your goods on their smart TV. Then, they can 'save' those goods from their TV with a single click, another click adds those items to the shopping cart on their phone. Lastly, they can ask Alexa or Siri to make the final purchase and check out—this is omni-channel at its core.

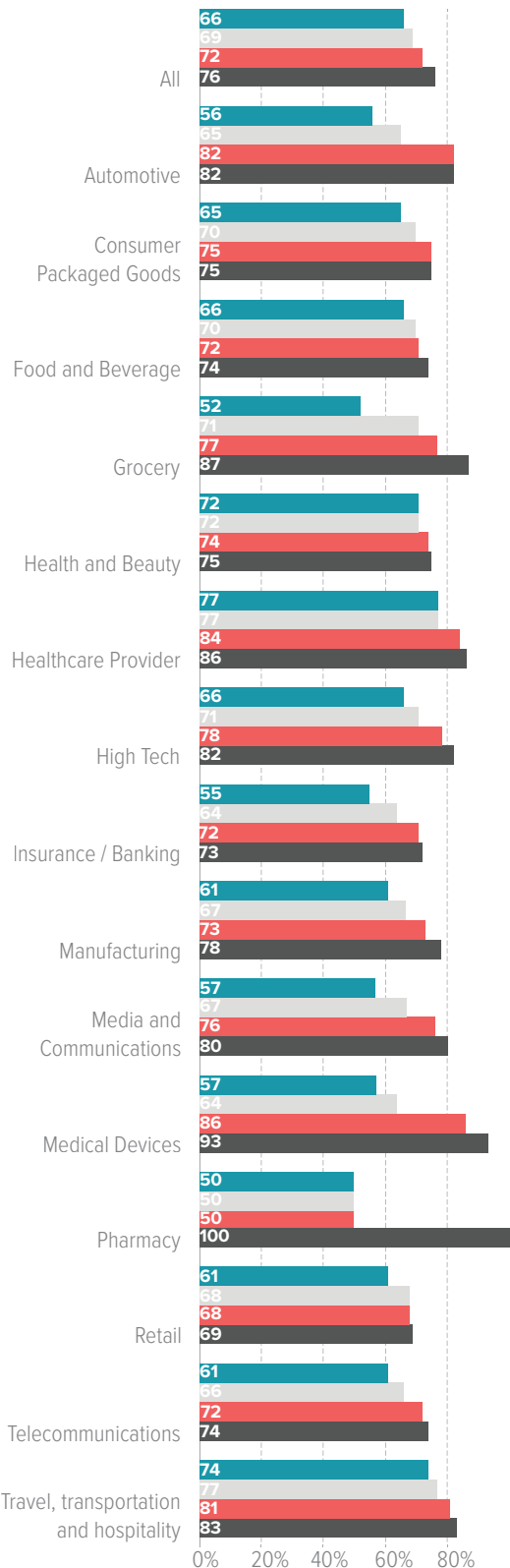
Composable Commerce makes this a seamless process for screens of all sizes and operating systems. At its heart, Composable Commerce is an API-first architectural model which means the front end is decoupled from the back. Plainly stated, an interface becomes "a skin" for interacting with your catalog or service offerings.

Because of this decoupling, a unified experience is not only easier to accomplish, but accelerates the process of being able to develop and deliver custom experiences.



1. Short-term challenges by company type

Consider the following chart and the rewards many companies are already reaping².



2. Rewards reaped by company type

Omni-Channel is Just the Beginning

If being able to serve your customer seamlessly across devices were the only thing to worry about, you might be able to hide from Composable Commerce in 2023. But as the tech innovations changing the world become ubiquitous, having a robust infrastructure for the omni-channel experience will serve as a springboard for leaping over your competition.

Savvy shoppers don't live in a vacuum. They will be the first ones to notice whether the omni-channel experience you provide is cobbled together or if you are offering the latest and greatest in UI/UX. A better ecommerce experience means more engaged customers, greater site interaction times, and more closed sales.

- Improved integration between systems
- Ability to add new sales channels (social, voice, AR/VR)
- Increased agility (making changes faster)
- More flexibility (able to customize digital experience)

Most common objections to composable commerce

My company doesn't need this now.

We often hear that 'all-in-one' headless solution upgrades cannot offer the flexibility and customization required to meet a company's unique ecommerce needs and that they are waiting for another or better headless/composable solution.

RESPONSE: Composable Commerce (aka, headless) is not just another upgrade but the 'upgrade to end all upgrades'. Once on a composable platform, you can swap out 3rd party integrations whenever you see fit. However, the best way to determine if you need this now is: whether or not you're already delivering the best-in-class omni-channel experience that customers expect now and how anxious you feel about integrating new technologies.

I'm waiting for a mature solution.

All these headless/composable solutions seem so new, is the technology ready for my company to embrace?

RESPONSE: AI will accelerate the speed and force of trends that can blow a company off course. Yes, it's essential to be cautious and not leap into things. Still, one of the beauties of building your business around a composable solution with component-based architecture is that your company will ensure its site is up-to-date with the latest developments in real time. Component-based architecture also makes upgrading, replacing, and refactoring your code base easier while creating minimal side effects.

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I'm ready, but change scares me.

Suppose your business is ready to migrate to a composable solution. Still, you're concerned about the complex challenges of data and site migration and the implementation of new integrations.

RESPONSE: This is a genuine concern. Fortunately, it is a one-time problem, and it's the very problem that composable architecture is designed to overcome quickly. Moreover, once you have made the transition, plug-and-play solutions can be replaced easily and as needed.

Component-based architecture that is decoupled also makes documentation more manageable and reduces the likelihood that your developers will become overwhelmed with 'code debt.' Last but not least, working with an experienced system integrator that is well-versed on a multitude of platforms, and is a trusted partner of the platform you're moving to, will also help guarantee a frictionless move. The right partner can minimize risk thanks to their deep domain expertise and experience with other migrations and use cases.

I don't know how to convince key stakeholders

How would you summarize all the reasons to switch from a legacy system to a composable system in a straightforward, easy to understand way for someone that may not want to hear it? What is one or two sentences to sum it all up?

RESPONSE: Legacy systems prevent a company's ecommerce site from realizing its maximum potential. This is because traditional monolithic architecture imposes constraints on real-time decision-making and limits options, making it impossible for a company to provide the level of customization that modern customers anticipate from ecommerce sites.

Addressing C-Suite concerns: Harnessing Composable Commerce

“BHAG is a concept developed in the book Built to Last. A BHAG (pronounced “Bee Hag,” short for “Big Hairy Audacious Goal”) is a powerful way to stimulate progress. A BHAG is clear and compelling, needing little explanation; people get it right away. Think of the NASA moon mission of the 1960s. The best BHAGs require both building for the long term AND exuding a relentless sense of urgency: What do we need to do today, with monomaniacal focus, and tomorrow, and the next day, to defy the probabilities and ultimately achieve our BHAG?” – From the blog of Jim Collins, Author of Built to Last and Good to Great³.

We’ve discussed the compelling reasons to transition to a composable approach and addressed common objections associated with the switch. However, there are also inspiring motives to cross the threshold into composable architecture, which can help achieve your company’s own ‘BHAG’.

Addressing the complex concerns of the C-suite decision makers can be a significant obstacle in implementing any major project, let alone one that affects the very ‘heart’ of a business’s core sales tool. However, the genuine and long-term issues that Composable Commerce can solve should help set the stage for you to tackle this BHAG.

C-Suite Concern: Cybersecurity

Consider the Equifax data breach, where hackers lurked on Equifax systems for 76 days and accessed 51 databases. Millions of customers were affected, and trust was destroyed⁴. How might a similar event impact your relationship with customers if it happened to you?

With composable and headless architecture, API-based platform management makes it easier to manage your security system and tougher for a system to be hacked by those without extensive insider domain knowledge. Internal logging with composable systems also guards against the bad actors you would least expect⁵.

In terms of a BHAG: Composable Commerce is the foundation that can enable your company to pursue an omni-channel cybersecurity solution to make you the most trusted name in your industry.

C-Suite concern: The supply chain crisis

Global supply chains have been in crisis mode since the Covid outbreak, and the rebound has been uncertain, slow, and painful. From ships unable to dock and unload cargo, to massive train derailments, to truck driver shortages and rising fuel costs—every link in the global supply chain has been negatively impacted over the last four years. With so many vital business operations being out of the control of C-suite officers, it’s easy to feel that the fate of our businesses is at the mercy of the times. However, there are ways to limit the adverse effects of these uncontrollable factors.

Composable Commerce with omni-channel solutions makes it easier for companies to stay nimble and act fast when the fabric of society rips. Composable Commerce systems have several advantages over legacy systems when reacting to negative changes in the business landscape. With its component-based architecture, Composable Commerce can reduce the friction if (and when) a company is forced to change suppliers by integrating real-time data to minimize disruptions and add new features (or take some way) to scale in tandem with current business needs and demand.

Enhanced personalization and customized user experience capabilities made possible by Composable Commerce can help you maintain better personal interactions with your customers. Communicate with them directly on a more human level, not only to meet individual needs, but to remind them that you’re all in it together.

In terms of a BHAG: Composable Commerce sets the stage for you to not only survive but thrive in a crisis. Composable Commerce can make innovations in operational management possible that were once unheard of.

“However, there are also inspiring motives to cross the threshold into composable architecture....”

3. Jim Collins Blog

4. Equifax Data Breach

5. Composable Cybersecurity Benefits

Migration from a legacy platform to composable

The migration process from one platform to another, even just an upgrade, can seem daunting. An important thing to remember is that no two companies or situations are identical. Having a reputable consultative partner capable of understanding and appreciating your vision and being able to draw from its vast repertoire of successes will help you hit your milestones faster and with greater impact.

The stages of migration

Vision Analysis

- A business determines where they are and where they want to be.
- Restate company goals more formally as OKRs.
- Analyze these OKRs to determine what is (or has been) holding you back. Note that it may be more than the platform you're on. BORN XDS can help you gain a greater perspective of your overall strategy.

Technical Analysis

- A gap analysis regarding converting from a legacy platform to Composable.
- A more specific drill down regarding existing features and functionality to migrate or create in the context of OKRs.
- API Readiness: what comes out of the box versus what will need to be customized. If you're doing this with Salesforce's Composable Storefront, you can discuss with Salesforce and your system integrator what out of the box options exist for your specific needs.
- If you're going for a more open API or switching platform providers entirely, consider data modeling in the context of extraction.
- Compatibility and Conflict Solutions
 - We definitively address what we know and acknowledge the "question marks," so we are well prepared to handle them when development and design work begins. This helps everyone stay on time and within budget.
 - Consider contingencies in the master plan.

Development

- A solution may be built in phases or portions, in parallel, to augment what is there or as an outright replacement, depending on the project's scope.
- Integrating with what is there involves a great deal of testing for a phased rollout. It can take longer than a brand-new site since there is the added consideration of making sure everything fits like a puzzle.
- A parallel or replacement site can be built to shadow the existing site and launched/deployed after testing ends.
- An augmented approach may be a viable option for certain types of projects. For example, you might build a new site for a specific business segment and release that while keeping your old site. You would then extend functionality and phase out the old site. You might think of this approach as a more extended version of what you've probably seen in Gmail or another provider, the "Try this New Interface" or "Keep the Legacy Version".
- Pre-Dev and Sprint Planning
 - Tickets are groomed and clarified to ensure developers and other team assets can spend time building instead of serving as ticket quality control.
- Front End, Back End, Integrations
 - Work is planned and assigned to avoid bottlenecks, ensuring that relevant foundational work is completed meaningfully, that resources are maximized, and never do work redundantly or blindly.

The final stage is Deployment and Launch Readiness. The general steps for this will vary based on what has rolled out before it.

"The migration process from one platform to another, even just an upgrade, can seem daunting."

Making it real with Salesforce

Switching or upgrading platforms is no small feat – a decision of this scope is best made without consideration of “quick wins” like short-term prices. A hasty decision can leave you with buyer’s remorse before the project ends and have coworkers and employees questioning your judgment. A decision for the long haul should be made with long-term thinking in mind, for if it’s done right, it will last indefinitely.

Solutions like Salesforce’s Composable Storefront are the kind you should be seeking.

(Disclosure) BORN XDS is:

- a Platinum Partner with Salesforce,
- a Magento Global Elite Solution Partner,
- a Gold Adobe Solution partner,
- one of the few Global Strategic Service Partners of SAP,
- and through Tech Mahindra/BORN XDS subsidiary, We Make Websites, the world’s first international Shopify Plus agency.

BORN XDS also works with other best-in-class solutions, including commercetools, VTEX, Mirakl, BigCommerce, ElasticPath, Bloomreach, Netsuite, Microsoft Dynamics, Fluent Commerce, and many more.

We highlight Salesforce because of its longstanding industry experience, global vision, an epic suite of solutions with Salesforce 360, and continuous ability to innovate.

Salesforce’s comprehensive and quick rollout of Composable Storefront is why we discuss them as a model solution. Thanks to their out-of-the-box component-based architecture, BORN XDS built its new Arctic Fox Composable Storefront Accelerator with a team of developers in a single quarter. This team accomplished global firsts such as their Salesforce Composable Storefront integration with Stripe, as well as tried-and-true integrations with Amplience, Avalara Tax, Yotpo, and the inclusion of GTM/GA4.

What’s more? The speed at which development can be accomplished has opened new doors. The second iteration of Arctic Fox is expected to feature partners like Syte AI and TikTok Shop through Influential.

As for Salesforce, it has a synergistic array of cloud product and service offerings. The companies in its portfolio are designed to work as individual products or come together in a grand symphony with Salesforce 360. Salesforce has even written the Transformation Playbook⁶ on bringing it all together.



Sales



Success



Marketing



Partners



Industries



Slack



Commerce



Tableau



MuleSoft



Platform



Net Zero



Service

The above graphic illustrates the vast products and offerings you can tap into⁷.

When exploring a powerhouse partner like Salesforce, the scope of what they can do may feel overwhelming. You see their offerings (even if you are already working with them) and wonder: What does all of this do, do I need everything they offer? And more crucially: with offerings so vast, how would you even find the right solution to your specific problems?

BORN XDS fully understands how difficult it can be to not only navigate such a diverse body of offerings but to choose the correct tech solution and implement it. This is why our white-glove, bespoke approach to client service has been globally recognized and awarded.

6. Transformation Playbook

7. Salesforce Products

Crossing the Composable Chasm

Naysayers may see headless or composable systems as just another fad, like a new smartphone that you don't really need and don't really want to replace the one that already works. Some go as far as saying, "Composable is a solution in search of a problem". By now, you should be in the position to kindly disagree.

To conclude, let's look at the market development model known as "Crossing the Chasm", coined by Geoffrey Moore in his book of the same title⁸.

The theory describes the challenges that innovative products or technologies face when trying to gain widespread adoption in the market. According to the theory, there is a significant gap, or "chasm," between the early adopters of a product and the majority of mainstream customers. The market is separated into:

- 'Innovators' that make up less than 3% of the population,
- 'Early Adopters' between 12 and 14%
- The 'Early Majority' and 'Late Adopters' make upwards of 70% (each an equal half),
- And the 'Laggards' range from 15-17%.

You might consider Salesforce and a very select group of competitors, as well as agencies and system integrators in the context of the 'Innovators'. The companies building on top of these offerings are the 'Early Adopters' that pave the way and blaze the trail which others follow.

As more companies learn that legacy systems can no longer deliver the omni-channel experiences that customers need and demand, they will discover Composable Commerce as the solution. As the 'Early Majority' begins to cross the chasm, leading agencies like BORN XDS will soon become a stretched finite resource as more and more companies line up to retain their expertise and services in Composable Commerce solutions.

'Late Adopters' and 'Laggards' will find themselves having arrived too late, to discover the talent and expertise they desperately need to catch up will already be working with those who had the foresight, determination, and decisiveness to lead the pack. With high demand and a limited supply of agencies that can deliver these solutions, companies that are last to the party can likely expect a higher cost of implementation at a time when they can least afford it.

As a parting analogy for these uncertain times: imagine yourself on an Alpine road in a Ferrari going 217 mph when you hit a patch of ice. If you begin to skid, it's recommended to turn in the direction of the skid to regain control.

And so, in times of uncertainty and socio-economic inflection points on a global scale, it is natural to be afraid of things we have no control over and feel we may be skidding towards. But, when you think of that inevitable icy chasm to cross, the only question that remains is not whether you will cross it— but when and how.

Steer into the skid. Take charge of 2023. Find out how BORN XDS with Arctic Fox Composable Storefront, or another partner offering, can help you cross the chasm today.

"As more companies learn that legacy systems can no longer deliver the omni-channel experiences that customers need and demand, they will discover Composable Commerce as the solution."

8. "Crossing the Chasm" by Geoff Moore

BORN

About BORN XDS

Connecting creative, content, and commerce, BORN XDS is an award-winning, global agency that helps brands with digital transformation. BORN is a Tech Mahindra [www.techmahindra.com] company.

Between 2020 and 2022 BORN has won 50 design awards. The group operates in 90 countries employing 131,000 staff speaking 18 languages. The company produces unique brand experiences by connecting ten specialisms that serve as the foundation of the digital economy: creative design, content production, commerce enablement, conversions (visitors to customers), cloud technology, cognition (analytics), cohesion (integrating all the systems), consulting and completeness (connecting brand experiences) across all channels.

BORN XDS' current and past clients include; Fossil, Red Bull, Funimation, Textron, Maxim Semiconductor, Tag Heuer, DVF, Nestle, Hanes, Ferragamo, Bulgari, Razer, Sotheby's, Tetley Tea, Lorna Jane, Razer, Glanbia, Medifast, Harley Davidson among others.