

5 B2B ECOMMERCE MISTAKES YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE

At Handshake, we've been fortunate to have learned from thousands of B2B eCommerce implementations. Some of our best learnings come from conversations with companies who come to us after their first attempt at implementing B2B eCommerce with a different vendor didn't go well.



Here are the 5 most common mistakes we hear from companies who have previously rolled out B2B eCommerce but wish they had done things differently.

MISTAKE #1 DEPLOYING A B2B WEBSITE THAT BUYERS DON'T END UP USING.

Poor buyer adoption is by far the most common problem we see in initial B2B eCommerce implementations, and it is almost always because the experience is nonintuitive, inferior on a mobile device, and generally does not meet buyer standards in 2018. A bad user experience is straightforward to diagnose, because if you suffer from this problem, you just don't see your buyers placing orders online.

THE FIX

Make sure your B2B eCommerce vendor provides a experience that your customers can not only figure out, but also enjoy using. Modern B2B eCommerce solutions must be intuitive, focused on B2B selling workflows, and highly functional on mobile.

MISTAKE #2 DEPLOYING A B2B WEBSITE AND MOBILE APP THAT DON'T TALK TO EACH OTHER.

Modern manufacturers and distributors know it's important to give the B2B buyer a choice when they're placing orders, and that means options on both web and mobile. But if your website and mobile app aren't integrated, your buyers can't start an order on one device and finish on the other, which is what they expect in a cross-platform world. What's more, pricing and promo data may not match up in both systems, which confuses your buyers and creates more work for your customer service team.

THE FIX

Ensure that your B2B website and B2B mobile app are completely integrated, or better yet, part of the same platform. This way, product and pricing data will match up, and all the order data will be aggregated into a common backend.

MISTAKE #3

DEPLOYING A B2B WEBSITE THAT DOESN'T SUPPORT THE COMPLEXITIES OF YOUR BUSINESS.

B2B businesses can have complex selling rules, including customer-specific pricing, order minimums, promotions, and more. Many companies choose a vendor for their B2B eCommerce needs only to find out later that these complexities can't be supported. This far down the road, their only options are to forgo their selling rules and opt for a more simple approach, or manually edit orders after they have been placed, which defeats the purpose of an automated and efficient online ordering system.

THE FIX

Take the time to spec out any complex selling rules before you invest in a B2B eCommerce vendor to ensure your vendor can accommodate your needs. Top B2B eCommerce vendors will be able to handle complex selling scenarios, so you shouldn't have to settle.

MISTAKE #4

ROLLING OUT B2B ECOMMERCE WITHOUT SALES REP BUY-IN.

If you try to launch your B2B eCommerce software without the support of your sales reps, a successful implementation will be difficult. Sales reps that feel threatened by B2B eCommerce often ask their customers to continue placing orders from them, making it impossible to determine whether your new software is working and preventing your business from realizing any value from B2B eCommerce.

THE FIX

Ensure your sales reps are advocates of your B2B eCommerce software by commissioning your reps on all B2B orders, even those placed online. Make sure they can train your customers to use your B2B portal, and even incentivize them to get more of your buyers placing orders online.

MISTAKE #5

ATTEMPTING TO BUILD A CUSTOM B2B ECOMMERCE SITE.

Companies that have contracted their "website guy" or a third-party agency to build a custom B2B eCommerce site almost always end up disappointed. Often, these projects do not actually launch because the complexities of selling B2B necessitate much more than a simple, transactional website. And, for projects that do finally launch, it ends up being dramatically more expensive and cumbersome to update than originally expected.

THE FIX

You can get a powerful B2B eCommerce site off-the-shelf, and top vendors will allow for tweaks and customizations to meet your business requirements. Finding a solution with this ideal mix will get you up and running quickly, and is much more affordable long term.

Handshake helps manufacturers and distributors get B2B eCommerce right the first time (or, the second time, if you already have something in place). If you'd like our help getting up and running with B2B eCommerce, [request a 10-minute call with one of our specialists today.](#)