

DJUST.

The truth about B2B eCommerce in the construction industry

What role does B2B eCommerce play in the construction industry? And how can you use it to build better buying experiences for your customers?



The challenge with construction

**Don't build eCommerce quickly.
Build it better.**

The B2B construction industry has long had a reputation for being slow to adopt digital transformation. But, with the arrival of COVID-19 and a new generation of digital-first buyers entering the mix, more companies have realized the benefits that selling their goods and services online can bring.

However, in racing to adapt, construction eCommerce has grown too quickly, with many new sites leaving buyers frustrated instead of overjoyed. Just like you wouldn't start building a house without all the right foundations in place first, you shouldn't build a B2B eCommerce platform without an effective blueprint in front of you.



Did you know?

Only 5% of buyers find their experience on a construction eCommerce site to be problem-free.

Source: Digital Commerce 360

The 4 flaws of B2B construction

And how eCommerce can fix them

Data maintenance

Data can make or break your B2B eCommerce platform. Unfortunately, due to the sheer amount of information required for each product (for things like safety, quality and unique specifications), the construction industry is prone to poor data management. To ensure that your eCommerce platform has all the product, pricing, and client data it needs to operate efficiently, we recommend integrating it with your ERP system. This will act as a single source of truth, and help your buyers find what they need quicker.

Materials shortages

The B2B construction industry is more susceptible than most to product and labor shortages. But while there's little you can do to stop certain materials from running out, there are many ways to minimize the impact it has on your buyers. Integrating an all-seeing B2B eCommerce platform with your back-end inventory will help you keep a close eye on your stock levels, and ensure no one surprises you with an order that you suddenly can't fulfill.

Cultural resistance

One of the biggest barriers to a successful B2B eCommerce site is an internal fear of digital transformation, something which is more prevalent in traditional industries like construction. Unless you have complete buy-in from your entire team, they're not going to use it effectively. An easy solution to this issue is to plan ongoing training sessions for your team, which will go a long way in overcoming any fears and ensuring that your team welcomes your new eCommerce platform with open arms.

Payments and delivery

Slow payment processes and even slower delivery plague the construction industry. B2B eCommerce can solve both. First, it will enable your business to accept digital requests, making your buyers' lives easier but also ensuring you get paid on time. Second, it will improve the traceability of all your products and orders, allowing for quicker delivery types and better visibility for your clients.

Don't just build the perfect platform

Build an even better relationship











When it comes to developing a B2B eCommerce platform for your construction business, the challenge isn't to make it the biggest, the cheapest, or the fastest. It's to build a platform which reflects how your buyers actually purchase construction materials.

In today's modern world, your buyers don't have to wait until they're at their desks to make an order. They can research and purchase the materials they need on-site, simply by using their phones. That means one thing: having a B2B eCommerce platform which is responsive on both mobiles and tablets is a must.

Another issue to bear in mind is that most construction managers aren't just buying products for one job. Usually, they're working on multiple projects at once, and need to keep their orders separate. Offering the functionality of multiple shopping lists is just one way you can help your buyers navigate your eCommerce site, keeping orders, quotes and payments nice and organized.

On that note, why not make the purchasing process even easier by offering your buyers self-service tools? Trust us, when 85% of B2B buyers prefer using self-service tools over talking to a sales rep, it really is essential. You can even experiment with tiered and personalized pricing, with product discounts for your more loyal customers, as well as priority for materials which are in short supply.

10 ingredients to a great B2B eCommerce strategy

-  The ability to integrate with data points and other important systems across your business (especially an ERP)
-  Multi-channel support, and being able to go DTC
-  Personalized pricing and customized pricing structures
-  Scalability, so that your platform grows as you grow
-  A visually appealing platform which has good UX and is enjoyable to use
-  Self-serve, making it quicker and easier for customers to make orders and reorders
-  Using advertising, PPC and SEO to attract new customers
-  Repeat customer rewards to encourage loyalty
-  Strong product descriptions which are accurate to the letter
-  Multilingual and multicurrency capabilities, if you have international ambitions



Did you know?

84% of companies in the construction industry predict they will sell **100%** of their products online in the future.

Source: Digital Commerce 360

The power of ERP

Why an ERP integration should be the **first brick** in your B2B eCommerce

It's no secret that the construction industry is overly complicated by design. Most B2B companies have thousands of different products in their catalog, each with hundreds of variations in terms of size, material, weight and compatibility. The sheer amount of data to keep track of can be overwhelming, not only for your customers, but for your own team.

That's where an ERP system comes in. ERP (short for Enterprise Resource Planning) is a software that gives you full visibility and control of each component within your business, including everything from your supply chain to your accounts, orders and procurement.

The right ERP - integrated with a flexible, open-architecture eCommerce platform - can automate manual activities, streamline sales, and synchronize data sharing.

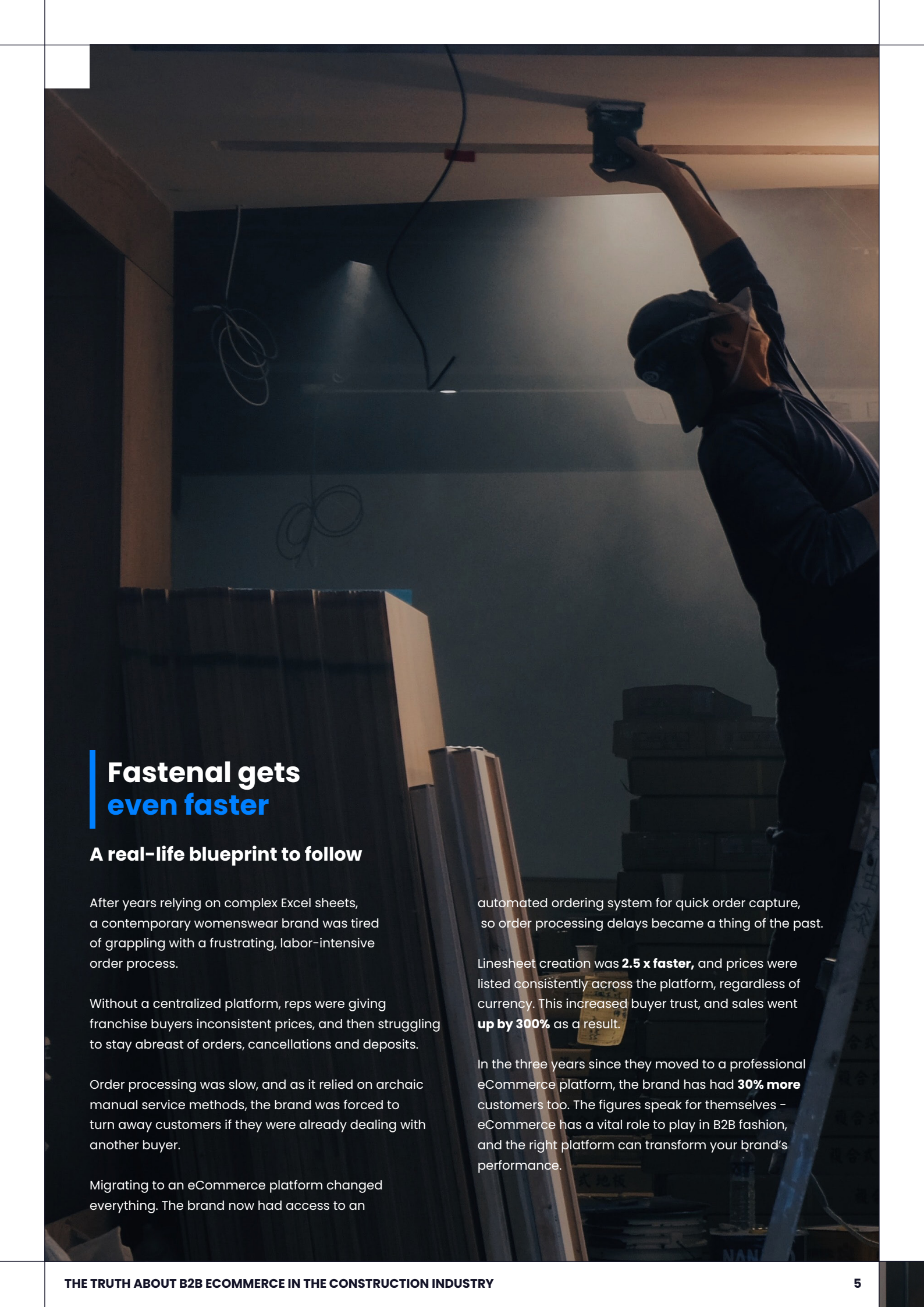
For B2B construction brands selling to buyers who value quality above all else, an ERP integration can enable seamless shipping and efficient, automated inventory management, giving you the capacity for personalized pricing structures. With ERP, you can even adopt a just-in-time supply chain that responds directly to orders from B2B buyers, minimizing surplus goods and unnecessary costs.



Did you know?

93% of organizations report their ERP projects as successful, while **49%** of companies said they improved all business processes after ERP implementation.

Source: Statista



Fastenal gets even faster

A real-life blueprint to follow

After years relying on complex Excel sheets, a contemporary womenswear brand was tired of grappling with a frustrating, labor-intensive order process.

Without a centralized platform, reps were giving franchise buyers inconsistent prices, and then struggling to stay abreast of orders, cancellations and deposits.

Order processing was slow, and as it relied on archaic manual service methods, the brand was forced to turn away customers if they were already dealing with another buyer.

Migrating to an eCommerce platform changed everything. The brand now had access to an

automated ordering system for quick order capture, so order processing delays became a thing of the past.

Linesheet creation was **2.5 x faster**, and prices were listed consistently across the platform, regardless of currency. This increased buyer trust, and sales went **up by 300%** as a result.

In the three years since they moved to a professional eCommerce platform, the brand has had **30% more** customers too. The figures speak for themselves - eCommerce has a vital role to play in B2B fashion, and the right platform can transform your brand's performance.

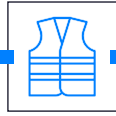
The final blueprint

In summary, **the main five benefits of using B2B eCommerce in the construction industry are...**



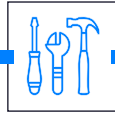
1

It gives you a better platform to win more clients and grow your business



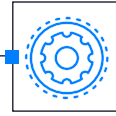
2

It provides a better experience for your customer, resulting in increased average order value and retention



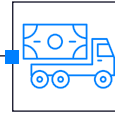
3

It streamlines the sales and supply chain processes so that you can get perishable goods from A to B quicker, for less



4

It future-proofs your business, scaling as you grow to ensure that you can always meet increased demand



5

It maximizes speed, efficiency and sales

Did you know?

Failed eCommerce projects can cost an average of **\$655,000**, yet **86%** of construction organizations overlook the importance of a good technology partner as an enabler of an effective digital transformation.

Source: Information Age

Ready to transform your fashion brand with B2B eCommerce?

DJUST get in touch.

Speak to us today,
contact@djust.io

DJUST.