Business to Consumer E-Commerce Applications

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Cataloguing

- An ecommerce catalog is commonly defined as any online catalog that showcases the products or services of a company that operates online.

- Product catalogs for online stores include information such as color options, prices, sizes, country of origin, materials, and more, though different types of products require different details and information.

- Catalogs are interactive in nature containing images, graphics, animation, sound, text and data.

- Cataloguing or Catalog Management is the process of ensuring that your product database is organized, structured, and up-to-date across all online sales channels.

- It helps customers find what they're looking for and feel comfortable making a purchase based on the information provided.

- It helps merchants manage product catalogs for different audiences and track inventory across multiple channels.

- It is a vital component of building an online brand

Design principles of E-commerce cataloging

- **Tailor it to the brand audience.** Keep your customers in mind throughout the entire design process and let that guide your decisions: style, colors, imagery.
- **Place the most important products on the first pages, because those are the most important pages in e-catalogs.** This is one way in which e-catalogs are different from printed ones, where the front and the back covers are the most valuable. Readers interact with digital magazines differently.
- **Avoid clutter.** Don’t place too many products on one page. It’s not eye-pleasing and it’s not very efficient.
- **Avoid busy backgrounds.** You want the product the get all the attention, not the background. Use big images because they attract more attention than small ones.
- **Design in spreads, not individual pages**. That’s how readers will see the catalog after you publish it, so by taking that into consideration, you’ll be able to deliver a design that is visually easier to process.
- **Consider the eye flow when you design**. The eye movement generally starts on the top left and it moves diagonally across the double spreads. The copy needs to be just below the product image or to the left. It’s not just the standard practice, it’s also how people mentally associate the text / product.

Order Management Cycle (OMC)

- OMC is divided into 3 phases and has 8 steps:

Pre-Sale Interaction	1. Order planning and Order generation 2. Cost estimation and pricing
Production & Delivery Phase	3. Order receipt and entry 4. Order selection and prioritization 5. Order scheduling 6. Order fulfillment and delivery
Post-Sales Interaction	7. Order billing & Account/Payment Management 8. Post sales service

Step 1 - Order Planning & Order Generation

Order Planning

- The business process begins long before an actual order placed by the customer.
- The production planners develops the final forecast used to hire workers and built inventory.
- Order Planning leads to Order Generation.

Order Generation

- Orders are generated in a no. of ways in the e-commerce environment.
- The sales team employs various marketing strategies to draw customers.

Step 2 - Cost Estimation and Pricing

- Pricing is the bridge between customer needs and capabilities.
- Pricing at the individual order level depends on understanding the value of the order to the customer.
- Cost estimation and pricing is a difficult task as it also depends on other factors like cost, profit, market trends and competition.

Step 3 - Order Receipt and Entry

- This step is reached after price quote is accepted by customer.
- It is under the purview of departments related to order.
- Information regarding the order like quantity is provided by the customer.

Step 4 - Order Selection and Prioritization

- Decision is made to accept/decline order.
- Not all customer orders are created equal.
- Desirable orders are those that fit into the company’s capabilities and offer healthy profits.
- These orders fall into the “sweet spot” region.
- Companies tend to make more money by the way they handle orders on priority.

Step 5 - Order Scheduling

- In this phase, the prioritized orders get slotted into an actual production or operational sequence.
- Production people seek to minimize equipment changeovers and marketing and customer service people argue for special service for special people.
- Communication between various function units is most essential in this phase of OMC.
- This task is difficult because the different functional departments may have conflicting goals.

Step 6 - Order Fulfillment & Delivery

- Actual provision of the product or service is made.
- It involves multiple functions and locations.
- Different parts of an order can be created in different manufacturing facilities and merged at yet another site.
- Orders may be manufactured in one location, warehoused in second and installed in third.
- In some companies, fulfillment includes third-party vendor.
- The more complicated the task, the more coordination required across the organization.

Step 7 - Order Billing & Account/Payment Management

- Handled by finance department.
- Serves the interests and needs of the company not customer.
- Bill is usually generated in a way more convenient for the billing department than for customer.

Step 8 - Post-Sales Service

- Post Sales Services are the processes that ensure your customers are satisfied with the products and services that have been supplied.
- Plays an important role in all elements of a company’s profit equation i.e., customer value, price and cost.
- Depending on the specifics of the business it may include physical installation of product, repair and maintenance, customer training, equipment upgrading and disposal.
- Because of information conveyed and intimacy involved, post-sales service can affect customer satisfaction and company profitability for years.