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Precision Engineered ERP Implementations

Do Manufacturers Really Need an Ecommerce Storefront?

Ecommerce Sales

You've worked hard to put together a great sales team for your enterprise. They are bringing in new business, and you are busy filling orders. Your customers know how to get what they want via phone, fax or email. Why in the world would you need an online storefront?

Let's start by taking a look at some statistics that help answer that question.

- About 90% of all purchases are expected to be via ecommerce by 2040. (NASDAQ)
- In 2021, over 2.14 billion people worldwide are expected to buy goods and services online. (Statista)
- 87% of B2B buyers are making business purchases on online marketplaces. (MIRAKL)
- 73% of business buyers are millennials. (AMAZON BUSINESS)
- More than 75% of B2B buyers and sellers say they prefer purchasing online. (MCKINSEY)
- U.S. B2B eCommerce is projected to reach $1.8 trillion and account for 17% of all B2B sales in the U.S. by 2023. (FORRESTER)
- 68% of online business buyers prefer to gather information online instead of interacting with a sales associate. (AMAZON BUSINESS)

E-commerce sales in the United States have been increasing between 9% and 15% every year on the retail side, such as, consumers going to Amazon, eBay or other sites of that nature. This is fairly common knowledge.

RETAIL e-Commerce Revenue in the US from 2017 to 2025

(in million U.S. dollars)
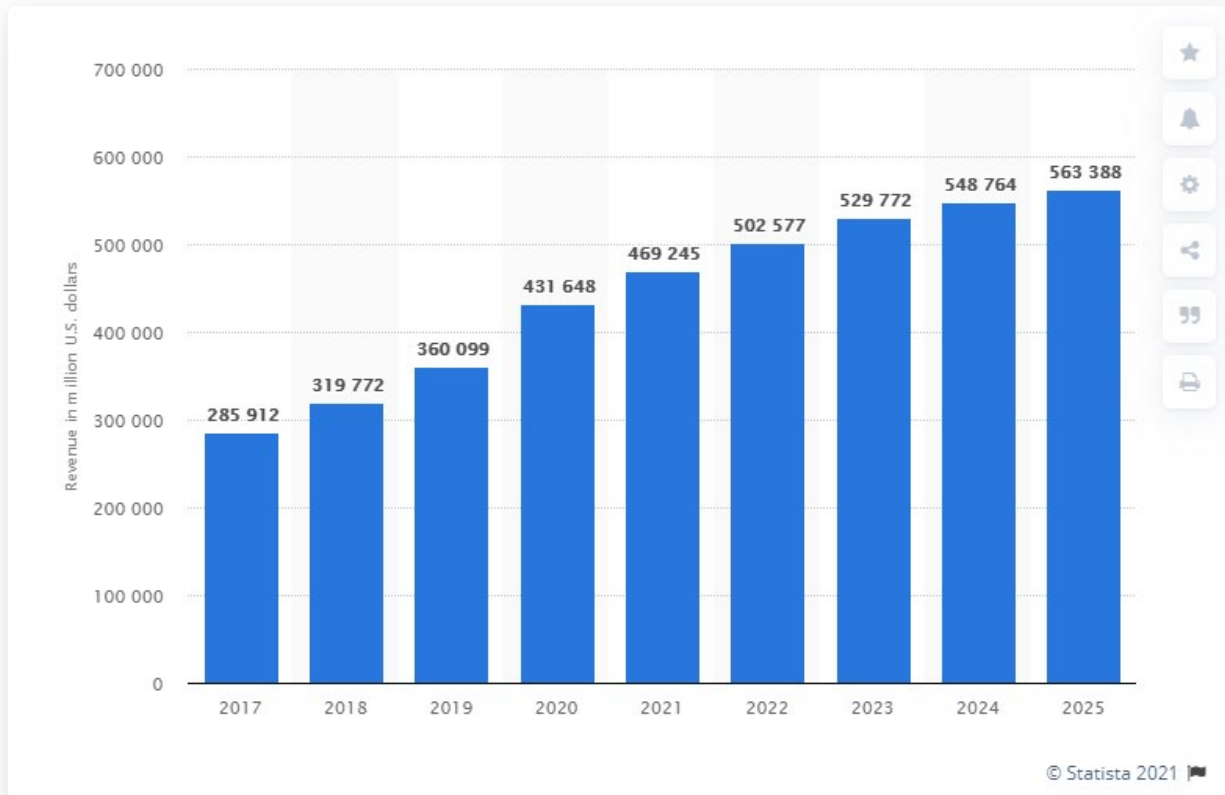
What many people don't know is that business-to-business E-commerce is even more robust. **Business-to-business E-Commerce revenue is over six times the revenue of consumer E-commerce.** This is a huge market, and it is a somewhat ignored market when it comes to storefronts and E-commerce websites.
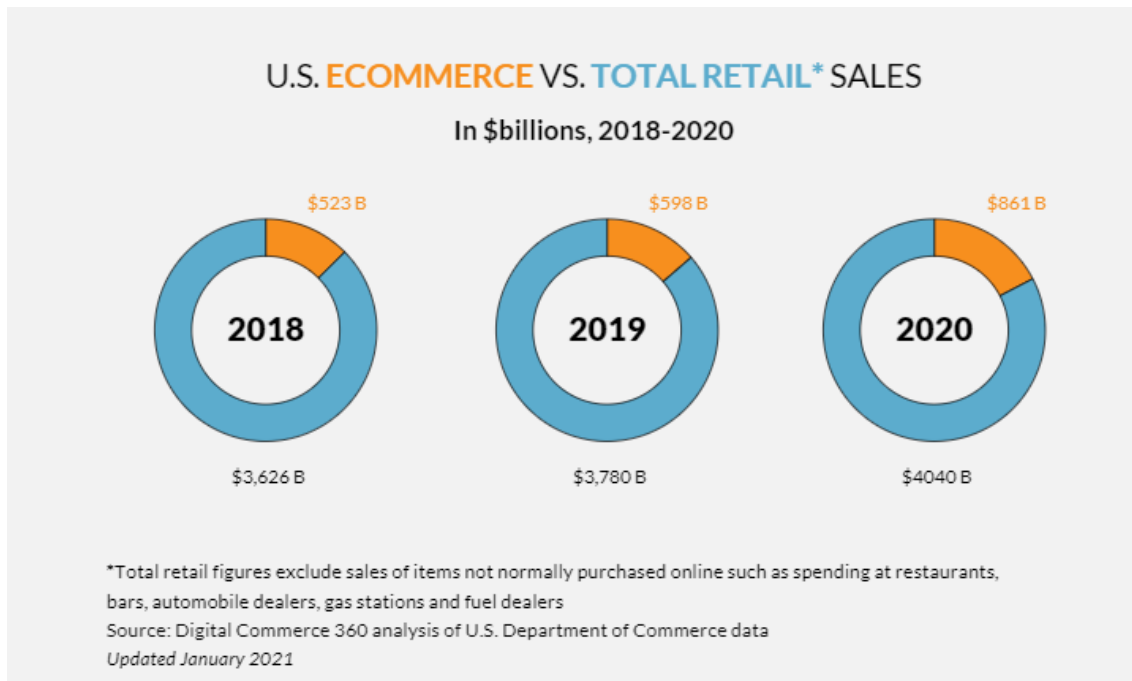
Why the big difference? Well, when a retail consumer comes to a storefront, they spend an average of $147 per visit. However, when a business comes to a business storefront their purchase is on average three times as much or $491 per visit. So, the effort to put a storefront up can give you a great return on your investment if you're doing B2B transactions.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search Engine Optimization or SEO is the process of improving the quality and quantity of website traffic to a website from search engines. This is an important item for bringing in potential new customers.

You're going to find that on average, a specific buyer will do 12 different searches before he lands on a particular product or brand. It is at this point the customer goes to that brand's site. So, while your current customer knows where to find you and may go directly to your site, a new customer relies on in the search engine. The potential customer has to be able to find **you** in order for them to find and decide upon **your product**.

For years marketing professionals have attempted to use paid ads to resolve the situation of their business not showing up in the Google searches. Many of us think that placing ads on Google is going to help with our visibility. However, 70% of the users out there ignore the paid ads. They look past the ads to the detail of what the search engine brings up on its own. SEO is everything here.

Another interesting statistic is that 75% of the people who do a search never scroll past the first page. This being the case, you do need to show up on page one. If they don't see you there, they're not going to see you at all. This is where the rubber hits the road regarding ecommerce. An ecommerce storefront will greatly improve your SEO and chances of showing up on page one.

Will Any Old Storefront Suffice?

We don't think so, which is why we designed and built iShop, which is the only storefront that integrates directly with SyteLine. Let's explore some of the items we feel are critical to a manufacturing ecommerce storefront.

B2B Storefront Necessities & Benefits

In the B2B world, 70% percent of those buyers who land on your website actually have a group behind them from whom they must get approvals. There is a hidden committee making the decision about buying

your product. The person doing the initial research must be able to find the information, download PDFs, look at specifications about your product, get spec sheets, and from this put together the package they will take to the committee. The committee is not going to see your website, they're going to only see what that individual presents. Thus, iShop is designed to give all this information to your potential customers easily. This adds convenience for the potential customer and also frees up a good amount of your Sales Department's time.

Additionally, an Ecommerce Storefront is like having an additional Sales Rep who never sleeps, never takes a break and never has to go to lunch, much like the machines in your enterprise. In this way a customer who realizes he needs something at a time your regular CSRs are not available, can still find what he needs, place his order and pay for it.

The Importance of Integration

Forty percent of the business-to-business buyers out there want to know that the web store they're looking at is integrated with your back-end ERP system. The benefits of this are:
- Your customer can shop with confidence
- They can easily review the specifications of what you manufacture.
- They can instantly determine availability and lead time.
- They can ensure that your inventory levels are adequate to fulfill their order.
- They can get their specific contracted price as opposed to a generic price.
- They can review their account and examine open invoices and payments.
- They can look at their order statuses and see when their orders are arriving.

All of this is important data that helps them find what they need quickly without having to send an email or pick up a phone and talk to a sales rep. Your website can give them the information they need to order right then and there.

From your side of things, you also get significant benefits:
- Visibility real-time of people placing orders.
- Enables fulfillment of orders faster as you do not have to wait for your CSR to get on the phone and take that order.
- Frees up your CSR's time for generating new business.
- Allows your customers to place orders any time of the day from anywhere.
- Allows capture of real time data for marketing - who is coming to your site, where are they coming from, what product they are interested in, and so forth.
- Eliminates redundant data entry.
- Allows easier management of customer orders.

It's a win-win for you and your customer.

IShop ecommerce storefront is the only product out there that's fully integrated to SyteLine and only works with SyteLine. Here you can see just some of the integration points you get with iShop.
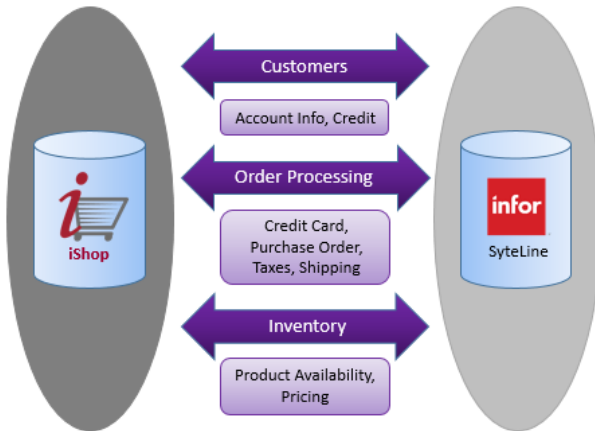
It took a good amount of time and expertise to develop these properly. Since we have had three decades of experience with SyteLine and its forerunners, we were able to take on this task successfully. Our experience and training in the manufacturing field enabled us to think like a manufacturer and put together the features we know that you and your customers need. The result is a full web storefront that you can brand and make look however you wish it to look with the functionality you need to increase sales and customer satisfaction.

Contact us today to find out more about iShop. sales@logicdata.com

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10800 E. Bethany Drive, Suite 400
Aurora, CO 80014
www.LogicData.com
(303) 694-4400