Why Microservices for Digital Commerce are Gaining Analyst Recognition

June 11, 2018 / in Microservices, Thought Leadership / by Linda Bustos

Implementing Microservices as an alternative to a heavy, monolithic architecture is an exciting IT trend that's gaining momentum amongst Digital Commerce customers and vendors worldwide. At the Adobe Summit in March, Adobe's Senior Product Manager Martin Buergi shared that 36% of Adobe Marketing Cloud customers surveyed have at least "several [microservices] projects live," and 64% are getting started, or have microservices on their roadmaps. (Yes, that means no respondents had no interest in microservices!)

Microservices are also catching the attention of leading analyst firms, including Gartner. The Gartner Magic Quadrant is an annual report that thoroughly evaluates leading technology vendors within a given space. Gartner's Magic Quadrant reports have earned the respect and trust of business and IT leaders for their rigorous selection process, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and evaluation based on the context of current technology trends and forecasts.

We believe the 2018 Magic Quadrant for Digital Commercerecognizes the market's demand for a modern API-oriented, modular and flexible solutions from enterprise-grade digital commerce leaders.

We're excited to announce the recognition of Skava Commerce in the 2018 Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce, less than two years after announcing Skava Commerce during the Shop.orgAnnual Summit in September 2016 (and receiving an Honorable Mention in Gartner's 2017 MQ for DC report).

Magic Quadrant
Figure 1. Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce

Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce

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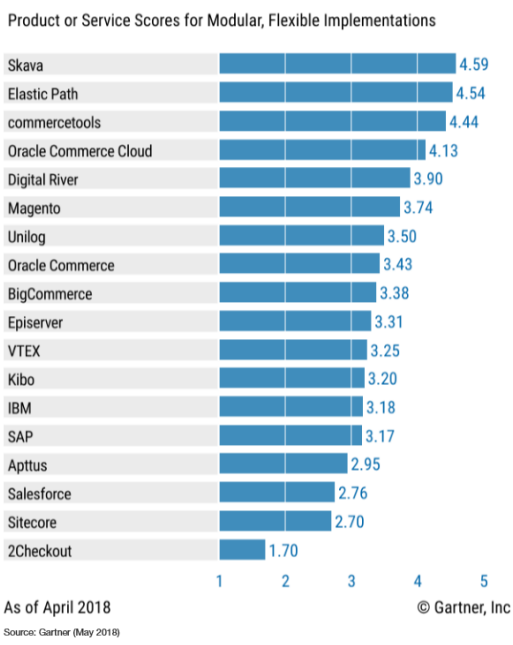
Critical Digital Commerce Capabilities

Gartner's supplementary report Critical Capabilities for Digital Commerce, 2018 states that There is increased interest from prospective clients and noticeable shifts from commerce platform vendors on API-based commerce platforms, reflecting the relevance of flexibility and modularity in commerce solutions. Gartner recommends that "application leaders must look for flexibility, modularity and agility as critical capabilities for leading digital commerce platforms" and notes that "new vendors have emerged with a sole focus on this approach, and several existing platforms have added comprehensive APIs for modular implementations."

Skava has received the highest score in the Modular, Flexible Implementations Use Case.



Gartner Critical Capabilities

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In addition to a fully modular, microservices architecture, Skava can be deployed as part of an API-oriented environment, or by companies wishing to apply the strangler patternto existing legacy application stacks.

What is API-oriented architecture?

According to Gartner, "APIs are the basis of every digital strategy."

API-oriented architecture leverages modular services to connect and extend commerce to new touchpoints. Unlike monolithic platforms, modular services like commerce, web content management, search, PIM, pricing, payments, account, and loyalty are *decoupled* from each other, rather than delivered together in one system. These services can be independently deployed, rolled back, scaled, modified and integrated with other systems, devices and experiences.

API-oriented architecture is not to be confused with "headless commerce" (or what Gartner calls "experience-led commerce"). Headless commerce platformsare essentially monolithic commerce platforms decoupled from their presentation layer (head) and exposed via an API to more robust tools like Web Content Management (WCM) or the Digital Experience Platform (DXP) to power the front-end. Services within the monolith are still tightly coupled, and difficult to modify and extend independently.

Monolithic headless commerce is a good example of what microservices (and API-oriented architecture) is not.

Modular and decoupled by nature, microservices are well-suited to API-oriented architecture. An enterprise can pick and choose the microservices that best fit the requirements and use cases that make the most sense for the business.

What is the "strangler pattern"?

Coined by Martin Fowler, the "strangler pattern" as applied to software architecture is based on the metaphor of strangler vines. Growing out of the tops of fig trees, strangler vines work their way down to take root in the soil and eventually choke out their host (and along the way, weave themselves into some remarkable shapes that are a sight to behold).

In a digital commerce context, the strangler pattern represents an alternative to the complex and risky endeavor of rewriting or ripping-and-replacing an aging and inflexible legacy system. Microservices provide the modularity that allows an enterprise to gradually build a new system around the edges of the old over time until the legacy platform is no longer needed.

Why microservices?

Both API-oriented architecture and the strangler pattern are viable options for digital businesses who struggle to keep pace with their industry, competitors, customer expectations and technological advancements on traditional monolithic platforms. Microservices are well-suited to both approaches, providing the flexibility and agility required to innovate fast and integrate with required systems.

Microservices are also a great option for companies wanting to BYOP (Build Your Own Platform). Rather than create a new monolith from scratch, an organization can take advantage of the modularity, flexibility, and efficiency of API-oriented, microservices-driven architecture.

Want to learn more? Get in touchwith Skava.

Click herefor your copy of the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce.

Gartner, "Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce," Penny Gillespie, Jason Daigler, et al., 5 June 2018.
Gartner, "Critical Capabilities for Digital Commerce," Jason Daigler, Yanna Dharmasthira, et al., 6 June 2018.