

Building an Ecommerce Website

Both SMB and enterprise organizations benefit from Headless CMS and Ecommerce. Moving away from traditional, monolithic website design brings speed, agility, and better customer experience. Modern development and content tools come together with ecommerce platforms to help drive sales performance. Ecommerce tools on their own aren't enough to maximize your online revenue. Use Agility CMS to promote your products with personalized experiences that you can continue to test and optimize over time. Interested in learning how? Let's get started!

A Better Ecommerce Website Architecture: Headless Commerce

Headless commerce architecture is similar to headless CMS architecture in the sense that a headless commerce solution can store, manage, publish, and pull content from other applications headlessly. In other words, you can pull in content from anywhere, and push it out to any front-end.

With commerce in the equation, retailers and wholesalers can benefit by extending their experiences and products to new channels. Whereas a legacy CMS couldn't display products and complete checkouts on a digital sign or smartwatch, a headless commerce solution can.

Why should you use Headless Commerce? Benefits of the Jamstack approach.

We recommend using headless CMS and headless ecommerce to build a modern Jamstack website.

The CMS and ecommerce APIs will be consumed at build-time to create pages for displaying and promoting your products. These pages will be statically generated and served through a CDN, so they'll always be fast, even during peak periods like Black Friday.

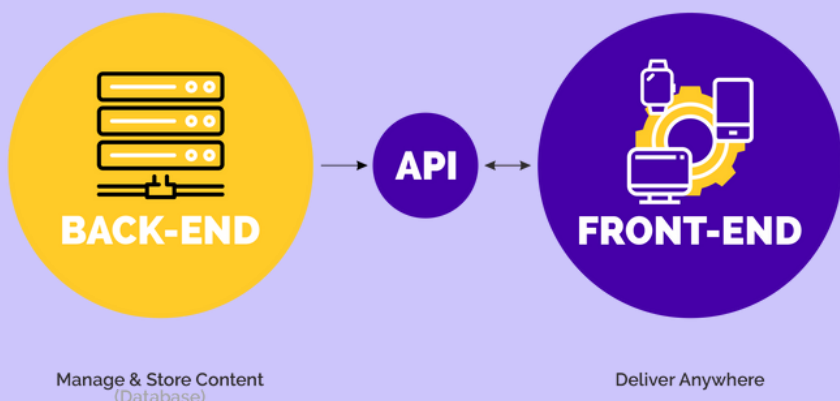
By decoupling the website from the ecommerce and CMS data, we remove the bottlenecks associated with monolithic architectures. It's important to note that we won't statically serve any user-specific data - we need to render that dynamically at runtime.

We recommend using serverless functions to implement the user-specific data routines that an ecommerce website requires, including:

- Login & User Registration
- Add to Cart & Cart management
- Checkout
- Order Lookup & Management

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HEADLESS CMS



Serverless functions allow you to provide all the functionality offered by your headless ecommerce platform of choice, such as Shopify, BigCommerce, Stripe, and others.

The URLs of these functions will still be rooted in your website's domain, and any API keys will not be exposed publicly.

With a headless eCommerce platform you can:

Deliver 1:1 Personalized Experiences

A headless solution simplifies personalization for companies in multiple ways. For instance, retailers can integrate region-specific payment methods and offer additional regional payment gateways without re-platforming.

Also, since your backend stores the information multiple channels use, you can distribute personalized offers across devices based on actions your customers have taken on other platforms.

Integrate With Third-Party Software

Traditional commerce platforms tend to be monolith solutions where if you want to add a new feature you have to use a plugin that slows down your eCommerce store in the long run.

For eCommerce retailers, a slow site means fewer customers. Luckily, the headless architecture enables integration with best-of-breed software tools for improved performance.



Scale To New Markets and Segments

A traditional commerce platform doesn't give customers the option of changing language much less enable content localization in their websites, which represents a barrier for users whose language isn't English or aren't located in an English-speaking country.

A headless eCommerce solution gives marketers the ability to offer automatic translation for users to give them a seamless storefront experience.

Cut Down IT Costs

Most headless commerce solutions use a SaaS business model that's based on cloud infrastructure.

Commerce cloud platforms like AWS and Azure reduce maintenance costs and increase uptime without increasing your IT costs, especially when compared with traditional, monolith platforms hosted on-premise.



Centralize Assets and Content

Ecommerce platforms are known for being hubs where you can centralize and store your data, but with the headless approach, and its flexible backend, things get taken to the next level as it simplifies and streamlines content delivery to different platforms. About content assets, Oulette says that Agility CMS' content models have been helpful when it comes to building shopping carts and product pages. He says

"A model is basically a component that you create in the CMS and that is then linked to a React component. The cool thing about content models is that when you design your pages, you can come to this page, for example, your own page and you can drag and drop models as you want."

Enable Content Display in Digital Signage and IoT Devices

Recent research by the Journal of Advertising Research shows that digital signage can boost incremental sales by as much as 25%, and when you consider how a digital sign can be used to engage a customer, that figure comes as no surprise.

Create Jamstack-based Digital Experiences

Creating a Jamstack-based eCommerce store will net you benefits you never thought possible to achieve with a traditional eCommerce platform. Even headless-ready platforms like Shopify Plus simply can't compete with the speed and ease of use Jamstack eCommerce frontends can give you. With a Jamstack CMS you can implement best-of-breed technologies using APIs to power your eCommerce content management and build a progressive web app.

Deploy Quickly

One of the main advantages of the headless commerce approach is that merchants can deploy commerce experiences to a mobile device, a PWA or any frontend to create engaging, native-like commerce experiences across different customer touchpoints.



[Get Ecommerce Resources >](#)

Your Next Steps: Build your Ecommerce Content Architecture

Agility CMS gives you the ability to control all of the content and pages in your website. You have complete control over the content model itself, such as what fields are available on a blog post and how different types of content relate to each other. Depending on which ecommerce platform you choose to work with, your most significant decision will be where to store your product data. Let's explore a few different options:

Option 1: Store Product Data in the Ecommerce Platform

- We recommend this approach if you are choosing Shopify or BigCommerce.
- You set up the products and variants in the ecommerce system and relate those products to content in Agility CMS based on the product identifier. You can also override product data in the CMS when needed.
- With this approach, you will be managing the ecommerce and CMS data separately.

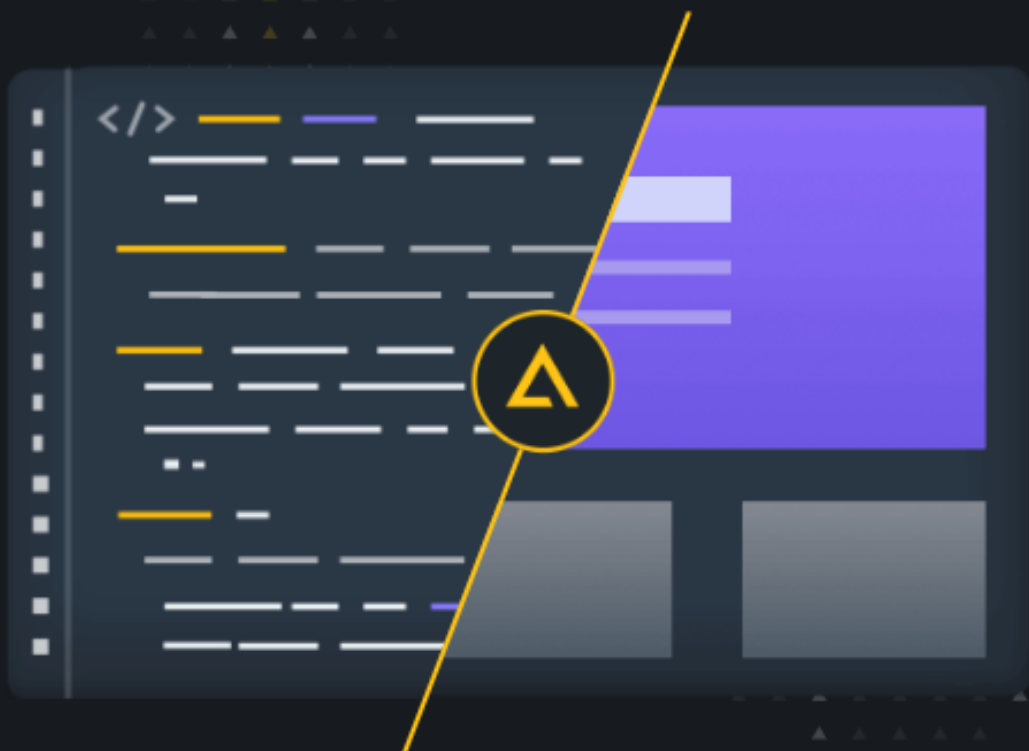


Option 2: Store Product Data in Agility CMS

This is the most flexible solution in terms of the actual structure of your product content. Create your specialized content model that represents your products exactly as you want to market them. We recommend this when using a direct Stripe integration with your website.

Option 3: Store Product Data in an External System

If you already utilize an external product database or management system, we recommend staying with that system. You can either pull those products into your website via an API or synchronize them with Agility CMS.



Headless CMS, Ecommerce, and Website Frameworks

Choose your Ecommerce Platform

You have lots of options to choose from when composing the parts of your system. Along with Agility CMS, you can use Shopify, BigCommerce, or any headless ecommerce platform that has a mature API.

You'll see later why we prefer Shopify and BigCommerce.

Choose your Website Framework

You can choose pretty much any modern website framework to build your solution with. Still, the most popular ones with the best examples are Next.js and Gatsby.js, both of which support Static Site Generation plus Dynamic Functions. They are the leading frameworks, but you can still choose Nuxt, Eleventy, or even Hugo - you just won't have such a broad foundation to start from.

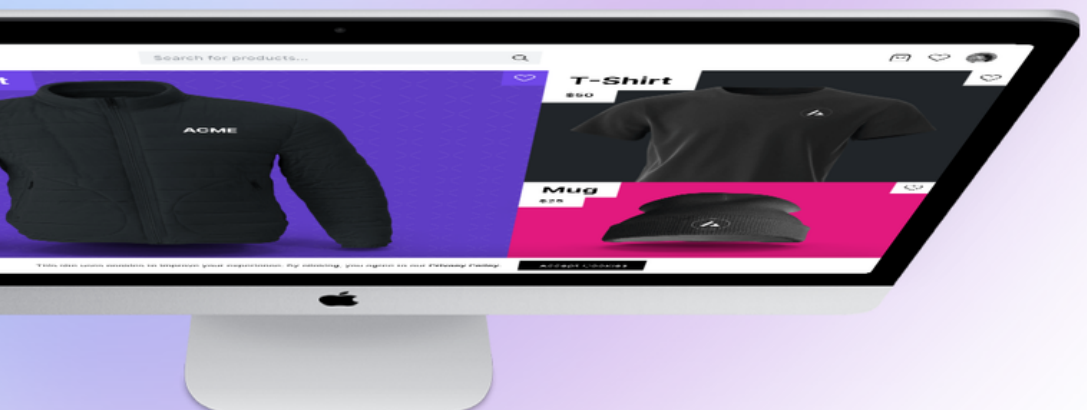
Next.js Commerce

The Vercel team has built a project that works with multiple headless ecommerce platforms, including BigCommerce and Shopify.

That project allows you to simply plugin the API credentials of your ecommerce platform, set a config variable, and you're off and running!

The code below shows the example env configuration - simply change the `COMMERCE_PROVIDER` to use a different platform.

NEXT.JS



Next.js Commerce with Agility

The team here at Agility has taken that idea to the next level and forked the work from the Vercel team. Our version of the project brings the same ecommerce functionality and adds CMS content from Agility into the mix! This brings you the ability to feature products on blog posts, as well as full page management. This code provides you with a rock-solid starting foundation for building your headless commerce website.

Featuring Products

Give your marketing team the ability to easily create compelling content that features the products in your catalogue. Here's an example of a blog post that's linked to a product:

PUBLISHED

21 hours ago

The lightweight Jacket is changing everything

Published by Joel Varty.

Save

Preview

Publish

Content

SEO

Scripts

Scheduling

Sharing

History

Settings

Product

Lightweight Jacket

Title

The lightweight Jacket is changing everything

slug

the-lightweight-jacket-is-changing-everything

Re-Generate URL

Date

06/21/2021

EDT

This is how it looks on the website, with a product image that overlays the blog post image and links directly to the product's detail page.

Search for products...

LIGHTWEIGHT JACKET

2021-06-21

The lightweight Jacket is changing everything

Add a little zing to your winter wardrobe with this vibrant Winter-breaker Jacket. With a

Start Your Headless Commerce Journey: Set An eCommerce Store With Agility CMS, Next.js, and Snipcart

Next.js Commerce with Agility

Creating an eCommerce store with Agility CMS is simple because, with Agility, you can deliver content to any front end using any coding language via RESTful APIs, regular APIs, and GraphQL, our open source SDKs, and Jamstack architecture.

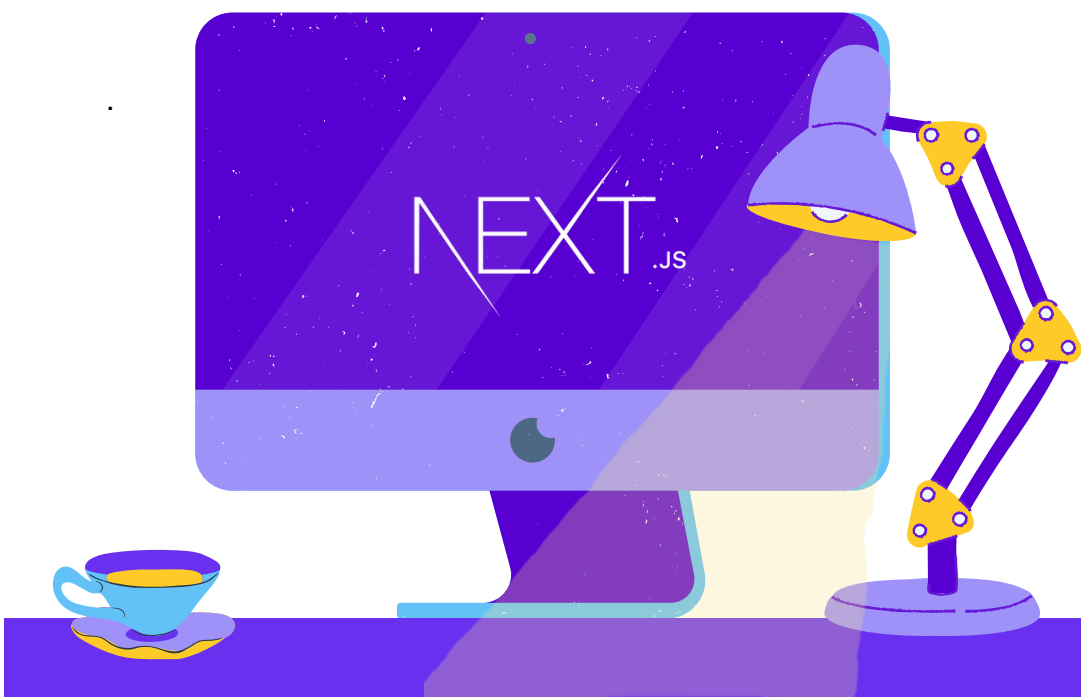
Agility CMS offers marketers built-in page management features, with which they can create, manage and organize pages using reusable blocks and sitemaps – all without having to rely on a developer.

Plus, Agility CMS enables you to integrate with the solution of your liking. In this case, we integrate with Next.js and Snipcart to create an eCommerce storefront. Next.js is a front-end framework that enables developers to export individual components of an app and build applications modularly, reducing load times and enabling every eCommerce retailer to build and deploy their eCommerce solution in minutes.

Snipcart is a Jamstack favorite tool to add a shopping cart to your website and start accepting international payments in minutes. Snipcart is an eCommerce solution that allows you to use a Headless CMS and the frontend frameworks you love. It also offers a full back office management dashboard where you can track and analyze your eCommerce data.

To start, sign up for a free Agility CMS Account, set up your profile, and select the Blog with Next.js Starter Template.

We'll be using this template as a starting point because it uses features such as Native Page-Management and gives you a basic structure for your Next.js website. Our Next.js and Agility starter serves an example based on our recommended best practices.



Headless CMS Use Cases:

Visit Orlando

Visit Orlando, the official tourism association for Orlando, Florida - home to Disney World and one of the most visited tourist destinations in the US - wanted to increase their engagement, conversion rate metrics, and ticket sales.

To achieve this goal they wanted to manage their content across various channels and personalize marketing campaigns for a targeted audience.

Visit Orlando was severely hampered by an inefficient ticket management system and process and needed to revamp its entire digital strategy and bring everything under one umbrella.

Through Agility's Headless CMS they now have a multi-site, multi-channel content management system and a new ticket sales and POS solution. Their team is now able to focus on adding new properties onto the platform, both as new website instances or as digital channels.

"In December, my team had taken a 4-day weekend for Thanksgiving for the first time in many years, thanks to Agility CMS!"

- Shawn Hart, Director of Web Development & Enterprise Applications Visit Orlando



VisitOrlando.

Visit Orlando: 20% increase in revenue with agile Headless Commerce

Agility helped Visit Orlando reduce manual processes and increase revenue by 20%.

10%

Conversion rate increased

20%

Online Revenue Increased

25%

Online engagement increased



Cineplex: Ultimate Performance, Scalability and Usability for Movie Theater Giant

"With Agility we can decouple content from code, allowing content editors to work on their updates while we focus on what really matters: making our platform better for our users." - Vinícius Philot, Frontend Web Developer

1.6M

Daily Page Views

90k

App Installs

+15%

Ad Revenue

Cineplex

Cineplex, a leading name in the Film Entertainment and Content, Amusement and Leisure, and Media sectors, accommodates over 70 million guests per year on its digital platforms.

The initial challenges Cineplex faced was a system that didn't allow freedom of design and was extremely limiting in terms of performance, scalability, usability, and multilingual capabilities.

They needed to improve the overall customer experience across various channels and improve conversation rates.

Agility's CMS has allowed Cineplex to increase the scalability of the site and to optimize its hosting resources.

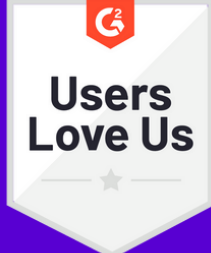
The latest iteration utilizes a new hosting environment across load-balanced servers for optimal site speed and performance.

The site is now handling more traffic with less CPU load than in previous years.



"The platform provides a consistent user experience for our content team to easily make updates to movie/theatre details, content and metadata, news, blogs, contests and more."

- Jeffrey Kent, Former Chief Technology Officer at Cineplex



Agility CMS is a Content Management System (CMS) with built-in Hybrid components for better Editor Experience.

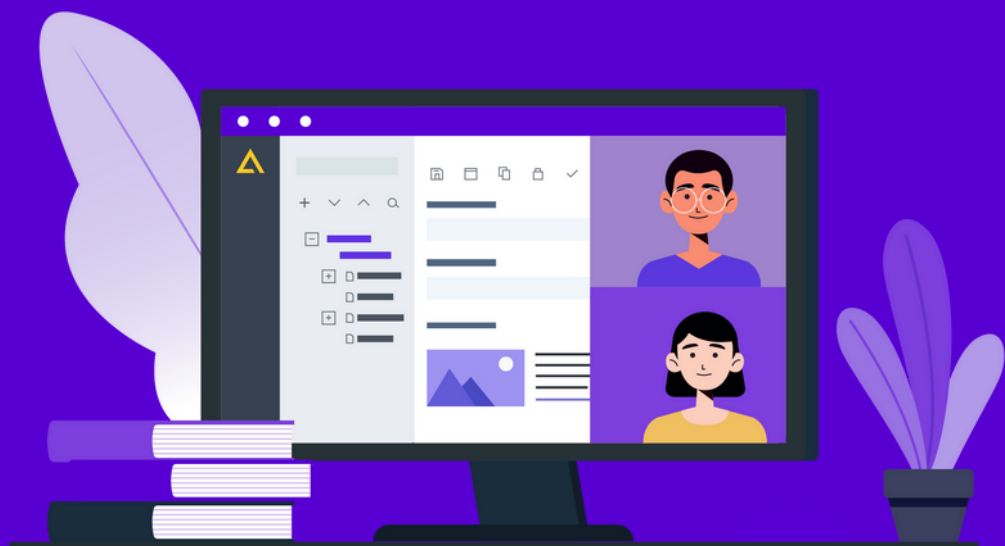
The platform adopts all the aspect of Headless CMS that makes an omnichannel approach easy, with the understanding that Page Management is of utmost importance in any website project.

Agility is proprietary CMS with full Support and Security that gives creative freedom to both Developers and Marketers and eliminates friction between the teams.

Developers have full freedom to use any coding language and any framework and code and define custom Page Templates and Module Definitions.

These pre-defined custom Modules and Page Templates are available to the Marketing Teams to effortlessly create a variety of pages to meet their fast-changing needs and market requirements. Agility CMS believes in Content First Approach and heavily invests in helping clients to build future-proof Content Architecture.

[Book a Demo >](#)



Agility CMS Differentiators

- It is a modern Enterprise-grade Composable DXP with flexible Headless approach in its heart.
- Unlike many other Headless CMS, Agility CMS also offers tools for Enterprise teams to effortlessly manage content delivery to websites and apps like Page Management, Sitemaps, Content Modelling.
- With Page Management built-in, developers don't have to build an entirely new way to manage pages and routing. At the same time, marketers can easily edit content across a variety of channels without any coding experience.
- Agility CMS provides enterprise-level security and support, it is SOC2 compliant.
- Agility CMS is Jamstack friendly and allows to start quickly with your favorite frameworks and deploy with a few clicks.

Details



License Model: Agility CMS is a multi-tenant SaaS platform, and hosted on Microsoft Azure Cloud



Price: Starts with FREE Developer Edition. Paid plans have extensive TRIAL. [Learn more.](#)



Key Components: Page Management, Content Relationships, Content Modelling, POS, Search, User Generated Content, Personalization, Digital Asset Management. Unlimited content models, Locales, API calls,



Upgrades: Automatic, monthly platform updates.

