

An illustration of a laptop screen. On the screen, there is a dark grey credit card with a yellow chip and two dashed purple lines. A large, semi-transparent purple triangle is overlaid on the screen, pointing upwards. The background of the entire image is yellow with small grey triangles. The bottom half of the image is a solid purple color.

Transforming your ecommerce's digital presence



The ecommerce Landscape in 2021

Ecommerce sales have been on the rise. In the US alone, consumer online spend in 2020 was up an incredible 44.0% year over year, according to Digital Commerce 360 estimates. It was the highest annual U.S. ecommerce growth in at least two decades, and nearly triple the 15.1% jump in 2019.

Online merchants seek higher levels of flexibility and control, and speed is more important than ever - speed of delivering new experiences and speed of customer conversion.

Headless commerce is growing in popularity, and for brands of all sizes, it can provide more ecommerce platform options and enable them to decouple the front-end applications from backend data sources.

A dizzying array of backends power modern businesses — CRMs, CMSs, databases, 1st and 3rd party APIs and services, inventory and product management systems, recommendation engines — to name a few. And backend data sources only grow in number and complexity as more businesses up their digital experience game.





Top Strategies for Your Modern Ecommerce

Top Strategies for Modern Your Ecommerce Solution

1. Be niche-focused

The first step to creating a personalized eCommerce platform is choosing a niche that you'll specialize in.

This makes it easier for the targeted audience to view you as an industry thought leader.

At the same time, the brand will be catering to a specific target audience, and the margin of error when personalizing the platform will be dramatically reduced.

Above the personalization benefit, having one niche can allow exponential growth because all the resources you have can be invested in one business model only.

Experts on assignment help suggest that this increases growth potential because you can tap into other niches you're interested in as time goes by when your first eCommerce platform has succeeded.

There are many benefits to being niche-focused instead of trying to reach for all the apples in the tree.

2. Use Headless CMS

Picking the right software that helps you manage your eCommerce site is also essential. That's because it helps fine-tune the entire customer experience.

One of the best ways to do that is by using a Headless CMS for your eCommerce website. That's because it allows you to pull content from various sources and push it to any frontend. Moreover, this software should be able to support all functions and be easy to use for you and the rest of your team.

There are many reasons to shift from WordPress to Jamstack and Headless CMS and improved eCommerce is one of them.



[Learn More About Headless CMS>](#)

Advanced Strategies to Improve Your ECommerce Site

3. Using area-specific payment systems

Many customers who have been regular buyers online have mentioned that the payment systems are a big-ticket item they look out for. If the payment systems are not convenient, customers might exit the site and not make a final purchase. Therefore, it is important to study the region you will be trading in and understand what their preferences are on this matter.

You might find that solutions like PayPal, Moneyweb, Skrill, and Bank Transfer work just fine and are the preferred payment method. Whereas, in other countries where payment systems are not very advanced or just because of the way customers think, cash on delivery or debit card payment could be the only widely used option.

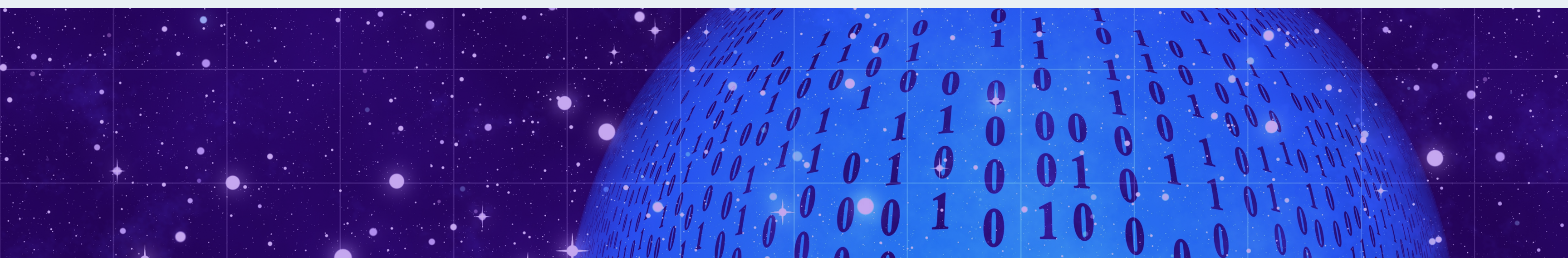
Also, try to understand your target audience a little bit more in terms of using cryptocurrency to pay and make the necessary arrangements to accommodate their needs.

4. Choosing an eCommerce platform solution

Once you have chosen a niche, the next step is designing the platform and making it available to the public. One of the most crucial steps when doing this is determining the type of CMS you will use. For some platforms, especially JAMstack focused platforms like Snipcart, using a headless CMS is much better because they can use APIs on almost any type of platform. For example, they can connect those APIs to mobile apps and also websites, which creates a unified user experience.

Whereas, the less experienced individual might find it beneficial in choosing easy-to-use CMS solutions like WordPress. The latter can have e-commerce specific plugins implemented to create a better user experience and have greater control over the analytics. Therefore, choose wisely according to your skill level and familiarity with backend e-commerce.

[Talk To An Expert >](#)





Types of eCommerce Platforms

The Three Types of eCommerce Platforms

Traditional eCommerce (Or Monolithic):

Traditional eCommerce platforms were the first platforms in existence and linked both hardware and software as well as backend and frontend, making it impossible to customize websites after a certain point.

Commerce-led Platforms: This type of platform uses a commerce platform like Shopify Plus as a frontend that enables checkout functions, but leverages APIs and other tools like ERPs and CMSs to manage customer data and manage inventory.

Experience-led: Here is where most headless commerce solutions lie. This type of platform decouples the eCommerce platform from the presentation layer, enabling eCommerce stores to use a CMS like Agility CMS and use a progressive web app builder or another frontend solution to build better customer experiences.

Introducing the more modern solution: 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.

[Learn More About Headless Commerce >](#)



What Makes Headless Commerce Different from Traditional Commerce?

	Traditional Ecommerce	Headless Ecommerce
Front-end Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Front-end is tied to back-end	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use any front-end you want
Speed to Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slow, need to set a new site for each channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build once, publish everywhere
Customization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Little to none, pre-defined by the platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly customizable
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best-of-breed approach and infinite adaptability
Making Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketers and editors have to rely on developers to change code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easy to personalize
Omnichannel Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Omnichannel-ready
Integrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires a lot of plug-ins which slows down sites and impacts ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrations are done through APIs which won't impact site speed
Need for IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content editors can create pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most require an IT team, unless using Agility CMS
Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficult without plug-ins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Built-in personalization



**Why Is a Headless
Commerce Platform
Important For The Future?**

Why Is a Headless Commerce Platform Important Now & For The Future?

A headless commerce platform doesn't just allow you to sell on more channels and devices.

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

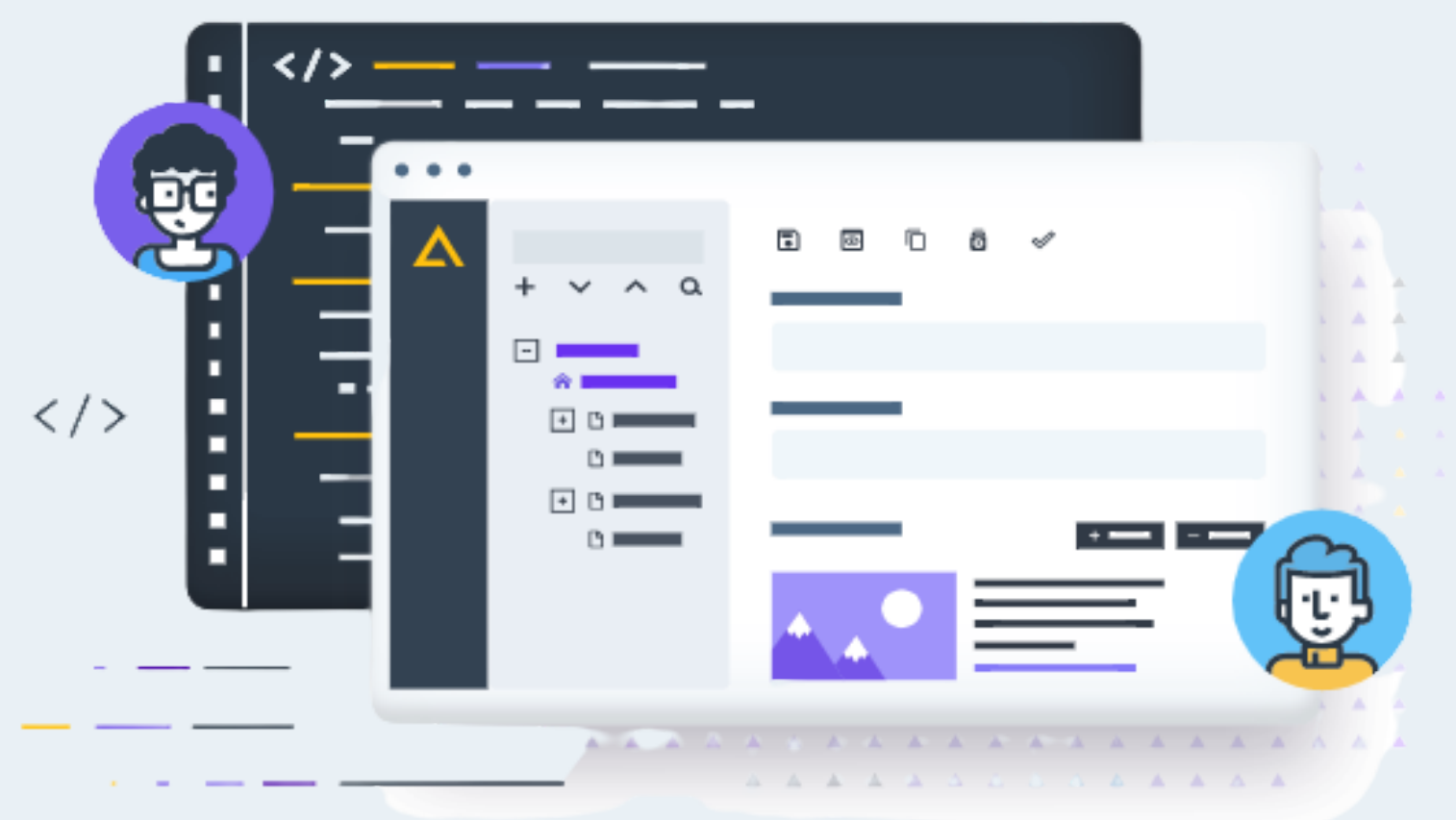
Traditional commerce platforms tend to be monolith solutions where if you want to add a new feature you have to use a plugin that slows down your eCommerce store in the long run. For eCommerce retailers, a slow site means fewer customers. Luckily, the headless architecture enables integration with best-of-breed 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.



A person is seen from the side, looking at a laptop screen. The screen displays a website with a large image of a person in a business suit holding a tablet. Below the image, the text "HOW IT WORKS" is visible. To the right of the image, there is a section titled "STRAT" with some text and a red button labeled "READ MORE".

Start Building Your Ecommerce Website

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.

Do-It-Yourself DevOps

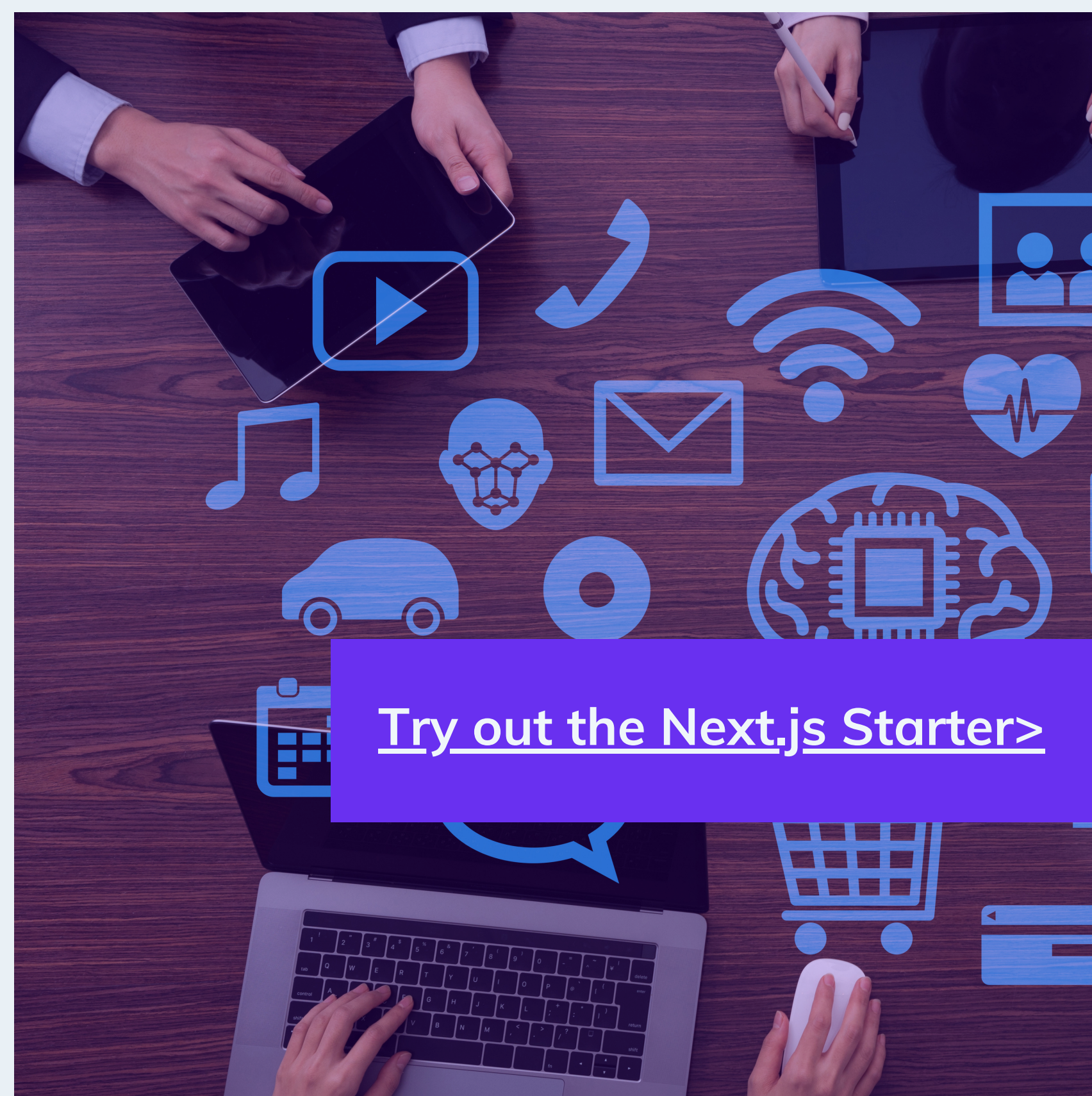
Everything starts with your code. Websites built using headless technologies take content and data from APIs, "build" it into HTML pages and output it using a CDN. If you are setting up the DevOps yourself, you'll need to write code that runs on a build server, pulls in content from Agility CMS, and ecommerce data from an API. That's actually pretty complicated to set up - and can involve several different steps. Luckily, there are hosting providers like Vercel and Netlify that have greatly simplified this process.

The Faster and Easier Option: Vercel

Connect Vercel to any git repo, and it will automatically build your code for you and do all the heavy lifting of pulling in the CMS content and ecommerce data. Then, whenever you make changes to your code, it will automatically redeploy your changes.

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.





**Set An eCommerce Store
With Agility CMS, Next.js,
and Snipcart**

Why Is a Headless Commerce Platform Important Now & For The Future?

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 as an example based on our recommended best practices.





Industry-leading E-commerce Software Solutions



Agility CMS – Overview

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.

Agility CMS – Ecommerce Solution

Agility CMS + Best In Class Ecommerce helps you increase your sales
Build the best ecommerce experience for your customers and increase your sales by delivering relevant, localized, personalized content using Agility with the leading ecommerce platforms.

Works with ANY Ecommerce platform

Agility works with all of the leading ecommerce platforms: Shopify, BigCommerce, Snipcart, WooCommerce, Wix eCommerce, Magento and more.

Choose the best of breed tool

Agility is built to work with the best of the best. Pick the best ecommerce platform, the best marketing automation and so on. Mainly pick the best platforms for YOU.

Separate transactions from content

Use Agility to manage your content and products while your ecommerce platform manages the inventory, orders, and transactions.

Personalize your content

A personalized shopping experience is now 'expected' not a 'nice to have.'
Ensure your customers see the right content and products at the right time.

UI Extensions

Integrate your ecommerce platform directly into the Agility Interface using UI Extensions. Ensure your products and content are always in sync.

Product Data Storage Options

Depending on your architecture, store your products in Agility CMS, your ecommerce platform, or any other PIM system.

APIs and Webhooks

Take your ecommerce integration one step further using our APIs and Webhooks to continually communicate back and forth between your platforms.



Integration Overview

Shopify is a full-service commerce platform that provides the tools needed to run a successful e-commerce business. Now, you can seamlessly connect products from your Shopify backend straight into your Agility CMS-powered website.

What is Shopify?

Shopify is a powerful commerce platform that allows you to manage products, customers, discounts, and more with a smooth and secure hosted checkout. Easily manage products in Shopify and connect them with Content and Pages stored in Agility CMS.

Why use this integration?

- Secure and reliable checkout
- Use the secure Shopify checkout to accept orders and take payments online.
- Inventory Management
- Easily manage and maintain physical goods, digital downloads, services, and gift cards you sell online.
- Sales Channels
- Use Shopify to sell your products on different online sales channels, such as Facebook and Instagram.



Integration Overview

BigCommerce is a versatile solution for innovative e-commerce. Manage inventory in BigCommerce and start selling your products on your Agility CMS powered website.

What is BigCommerce?

BigCommerce allows you to create robust commerce solutions without compromising security and scalability. Easily manage and maintain products in BigCommerce and connect them with Content and Pages stored in Agility CMS.

Why use this integration?

- Flexible Commerce
- Headless Commerce allows you to create unique shopping experiences with a powerful commerce backend.
- Multi-Channel
- Pre-built integrations with Amazon, eBay, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Google Shopping allow you to sell everywhere it matters, from a single dashboard.
- Localized Solutions
- Reach new audiences with omnichannel commerce anywhere in the world.



E-Commerce Case Studies With Agility CMS



CAMPUS GROUP CANADA

Compass Group Canada is a global leader in contract foodservice and support services, managing tens of thousands of meal plans for educational institutions, professional and leisure organizations. Thanks to Agility CMS, now students and staff can easily order meals on any device. Content is easily managed by multiple stakeholders, with secure user accounts set up for 75 content editors.

Using the Agility CMS, Compass Group is a new responsive site that houses all schools, with an improved, easier-to-use portal and robust eCommerce capability. The new DineOnCampus.ca site dynamically updates the banner name and content offering based on the customer's province and school selection. The new site also provides a consistent layout across all individual school sites.



VISIT ORLANDO

Visit Orlando is the official tourism association for Orlando, the most-visited destination in the United States. They are a registered not-for-profit trade association that represents moreover 1,000 member companies making up Central Florida's tourism community.

Before headless eCommerce was implemented, the staff had to manually issue tickets because their former site couldn't handle a ton of traffic and would crash during their busy times. Tickets also had to be processed in batches (once a day), and because of this, the staff was burdened with the workload while customers were upset that they couldn't purchase last-minute tickets.

Rolling out Headless commerce with Agility CMS, online revenue went up by 20%. Most importantly, in December, the CIO and Director both remarked that they had taken a 4-day weekend for Thanksgiving for the first time in many years!