



Roadmaps to customer excellence

E-commerce innovation with Microsoft Dynamics
365 Commerce

mazars



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Roadmaps to customer excellence

Making sense of the e-commerce revolution

Business leaders are accustomed to hearing about the essential role that e-commerce plays for modern enterprises, large and small. But e-commerce can easily be a buzzword, rather than a well-thought-out strategy. Microsoft Dynamics 365 Commerce offers well-structured plans and technical support that can deliver e-commerce success.



e-commerce market is poised to reach

\$4.5

trillion in

2022

according to the latest data from Gartner.

In the US, 2022 will mark the first year where e-commerce sales reach over \$1 trillion. E-commerce is both an opportunity and an ultimatum for businesses - adapt quickly and prosper, or watch opportunities disappear.

In retail segments that were once dominated by brick-and-mortar stores, today businesses are developing more compelling e-commerce strategies. Whereas books, movies, and electronics have a comparatively long history of online sales, clothing,

shoes, cosmetics, pharmacy items, food, furniture, and even garden supplies have witnessed surging online sales. E-commerce is not just about B2C. By 2025, 80 percent of B2B sales will also take place through an e-commerce model. As hybrid work becomes a fixture of the landscape, even services will increasingly be delivered through e-commerce.

The pace of change in e-commerce can overwhelm veterans and newcomers alike. Data security laws in California, the European Union, and beyond have eliminated the ability to use many types of third-party cookies. Simultaneously, marketing continues to adapt to changes in the social media landscape. For both established brick-and-mortar brands and digitally native brands, current business opportunities span digital and physical retail scenarios that place a premium on delivering omnichannel shopping experiences. Meanwhile, the continued supply chain uncertainties brought on by international trade tensions and the Covid-19 pandemic require companies to be more adaptive to fulfill customer expectations.

Faced with such rapid change and uncertainty, the potential challenges and opportunities of e-commerce investment can seem daunting. Companies starting on an e-commerce journey need to be able to support customer insights, a real-time AI orchestrated journey, intelligent search, and discovery, connected e-commerce, and omni channel options.



The good news is that Microsoft offers a great customer experience platform, with offerings like Dynamics 365 Commerce. Even after a purchase, Dynamics 365 Commerce supports loyalty programs, real-time order tracking, advanced warehouse management, and real-time inventory tracking and replenishment. Yet despite the amazing capabilities, many companies are poorly prepared to leverage this technical capacity to the fullest capacity.

Why? Many companies want everything—a full suite of integrated retail capabilities—but are unable to adapt because of scattered digital systems that have been adopted at different times with different priorities. For instance, in a common scenario, a company may have multiple business systems including point-of-sale (POS), order management and fulfillment, loyalty and customer preference databases, and disjointed ERP and financial management deployments.





“In my experience, many organizations have disconnected systems that have evolved in isolation with some only loosely connected - such as separate POS, finance, and warehousing systems. A customer buys an order online and goes to pick it up in-store, but the store may have different order numbers than the e-commerce system, forcing Store associates to stumble as they attempt to serve the customer. This erodes customer satisfaction levels and increases the customer churn propensity.”

– Ivan Cole, Managing Director, Mazars

By its very nature, retail operations need to be lean and adaptive. But these qualities come with consequences for the application implementation life cycle. A “just-in-time” approach to software implementation in the old on-premises world meant scrambling to catch up and hastily implementing systems without a well-thought-out plan. And the very nature of the system upgrade was too costly and disruptive to the business.

In an ideal scenario, a company engaged in e-commerce would deploy its systems strategically, starting with finance and proceeding to procurement, sales, and e-commerce in a logical order. Because needs vary, a company might need to adopt a POS system before adding new finance capabilities. With the right plan, based on careful analysis of priorities and envisioning of success, a company does not need to gut its previous systems to achieve its current and future goals. A partner with decades of technical and strategic knowledge can support the planning and implementation process.

Roadmaps to customer excellence

Defining the right customer journey



E-commerce customer journeys can vary by industry, type of customer, geography, and more. What will that journey look like for your B2B or B2C customers? Regardless of other factors, at the outset, it often begins with an internet search or a social media touchpoint. A well-placed ad or redirect can begin the customer engagement process, linking that person to an online store to start browsing. For B2B, a business Buyer needs to know quickly how to create new orders from their standard order template and more importantly how to recommend products that would complement each other and increase sales conversions to their end customers. The key is understanding the customer or business buyer, their preferences, history, and most importantly their level of satisfaction.

Increasingly, the customer journey may take place through an omnichannel model spanning multiple online and in-store interactions. For instance, after browsing an online store, a sports-enthusiast shopping for her favorite team’s apparel may decide that she wants to go into the store and see products in person. Beacons and location services can be used

to deploy contextual ads and mobile notifications when she arrives, serving up information—and promotions for products she placed in her favorites online. In this scenario, a carefully planned and integrated e-commerce system is critical:

Offering insights into her buying behavior. Using opt-in video a retailer can automatically detect a customer using facial recognition as well as determine key triggers such as sentiment and age. Collecting key data points also helps to ultimately deliver insights to the retail associate's POS. In-store integrations can also support omnichannel scenarios such as in-store kiosks, customer VIP profiles, coupons, as well as order online pickup notifications. Using Microsoft’s Audience and Engagement Insights retailers can enable advanced AI to deliver targeted analytics that will increase customer satisfaction levels and sales while reducing churn. At the same time empowering their associates to raise the bar on their ability to elevate the customer experience and engagement.

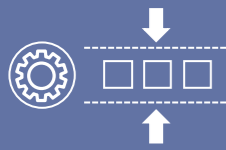
Roadmaps to customer excellence

Helping our client's on the journey



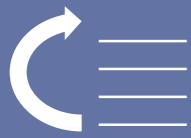
Experience

The Mazars Retail-Commerce team has deep experience implementing Dynamics 365 Retail-Commerce. Working with Microsoft from the very beginning, our team members brought the first US customer live when Retail applications were released in 2008.



Alignment

Monthly alignment with Microsoft Commerce R&D team with direct feedback loop.



Priority

Mazars has worked on a variety of deployment scenarios and are experts in helping our clients roadmap their implementation phases with the goal of focusing on our client's business priorities.



Risk

Mazars understands how to minimize the business risk while maximizing the user experience.



Efficiency

Our teams are mindful of the effects of every decision and the downstream impact to business team efficiencies.



Roadmaps to customer excellence

Supporting future customers

Rich customer data informs future customer data and retail planning. Most importantly, it advises on the next best action, informing the company about key metrics, like a customer's propensity to reorder, or their churn potential, by analyzing past purchase behavior or complaints. To engage with loyal customers or to prevent churn, companies can follow up with special promotions or customized marketing campaigns.

How Mazars supports e-commerce investment

Mazars engaged with Microsoft on Dynamics Commerce retail solutions early on in the technical evolution of the product line. We continually provide direct customer feedback that helps fuel the ongoing enhancements in Dynamics 365 Commerce.

Today, Mazars applies its extensive experience as a Microsoft partner and the best practices of the Microsoft Catalyst program to aid companies planning for their customers' e-commerce journeys.

The result is carefully crafted plans, documentation, tailored best practices, and a great e-commerce system.

To develop ideas with clients, Mazars applies design thinking techniques, aligning ideas across different business units and teams to articulate the e-commerce "end game" and how to achieve it. Commonly, investments include integrated systems and empowering a broader range of personnel as stakeholders in the e-commerce initiative.



In the context of Dynamics 365 Commerce, empowerment gets a lot easier thanks to a compelling architecture from Microsoft known as One Version. When a customer goes live with Dynamics 365 Commerce, Microsoft can push automatic updates each month after they have been tested and approved in a sandbox environment. The customer can opt to accept the version updates as they are ready. The One Version approach also allows rapid deployment of new features, functions, and modules that Microsoft customers can enable through a feature management console. This allows any retailer to plan for and implement continuous business process improvements that help grow sales and internal efficiencies. Continuous business process improvements without the need to impose expensive and disruptive major system upgrades. The ROI of this approach for any customer is significant as they evolve and mature their use of Dynamics 365 overtime and keep their systems up to date continuously.

Together with e-commerce planning, Mazars emphasizes the need for training, implementation support, consulting services, and managed client care services. Mazars teams support customer care needs around Dynamics 365, Office 365, Azure, and other Microsoft offerings. At the same time, a cybersecurity team helps to secure customers against cyber threats in coordination with Microsoft.

Strategic plans, best practices, support, and continual Dynamics 365 updates are the key ingredients of today's enterprise software journey—and the true definition of digital transformation.

Mazars is committed to helping our customers enable emerging technologies that will fuel the growth and efficiency of their organizations. Our teams continuously evolve by enabling end-to-end business scenarios in our Mazars US Innovation Center (Music) where we "orchestrate the music of integrated Microsoft cloud business applications." Visit our landing page where we will continuously update our solutions virtually as well as physically, helping our clients bridge the gap between the Metaverse and their physical spaces.

Website: mazars.us/MUSIC
Mazars in the US innovation center (MUSIC) - Mazars - United States

We invite you to explore your journey to the Dynamics cloud and let us show you the art of the possible.

"We can engage end-users in the implementation process so that they feel a sense of ownership. All too often, team end users can end up resistant to change if they are not empowered to become system advocates."

– Ivan Cole, Managing Director, Mazars

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About Mazars

Mazars is an internationally integrated partnership, specialising in audit, accountancy, advisory, tax and legal services*. Operating in over 90 countries and territories around the world, we draw on the expertise of more than 44,000 professionals – 28,000+ in Mazars' integrated partnership and 16,000+ via the Mazars North America Alliance – to assist clients of all sizes at every stage in their development.

*Where permitted under applicable country laws

Mazars USA LLP

Mazars USA LLP is an independent member firm of Mazars Group, an international audit, tax and advisory organization with operations in over 90 countries. With roots going back to 1921 in the US, the firm has significant national presence in strategic geographies, providing seamless access to 28,000+ professionals around the world. Our industry specialists deliver tailored services to a wide range of clients across sectors, including individuals, high-growth emerging companies, privately-owned businesses and large enterprises.

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