



commercetools vs. Shopify

Enterprise commerce decision guide



Why are companies switching from Shopify to commercetools?



Shopify has long been a go-to name in commerce, especially for small and medium-sized businesses. With its quick setup, user-friendly interface and vast app ecosystem, it's helped thousands of merchants get online fast and efficiently.

But as businesses grow in size and complexity, Shopify's out-of-the-box strengths can become limitations.

For enterprise-level companies — those managing multiple brands, business models, regions and channels — the need for a more flexible and scalable commerce solution becomes critical. Enterprises require advanced customization, native B2B capabilities and the ability to orchestrate unique experiences across a variety of touchpoints.

Enter commercetools.

commercetools is a leading enterprise commerce platform built on a **composable architecture**, designed to adapt, scale and support complex digital commerce operations. It empowers organizations to tailor every aspect of their commerce stack, integrate best-of-breed tools and future-proof their digital experience strategies.

If your business is reevaluating its technology stack, here's why more brands are making the switch from Shopify to commercetools — and what that transition could mean for your growth.



Forward-thinking businesses that made the switch

purple

Purple began its eCommerce journey on Shopify for its out-of-the-box simplicity. However, as demand surged, Shopify couldn't scale with the company's rapid growth. Less than two years in, Purple moved to a composable commerce approach with commercetools, gaining the scalability and flexibility needed for long-term success.

“A few years ago, many of our strategic plans were controlled by the capabilities of the commerce platform. Today, our commercetools solution gives us flexibility, agility and scalability to initiate any vision we have. And the improved site performance has been nothing short of a game changer for us.”

James R. Drake

VP, eCommerce, Purple Innovation





Wild Fork Foods transitioned from Shopify to commercetools to address challenges in managing variable-weight products. By leveraging commercetools' composable architecture, they implemented dynamic pricing and integrated inventory systems, effectively minimizing revenue loss and operational inefficiencies. This move not only enhanced internal processes but also improved the customer experience, leading to a 58% increase in daily orders upon launching their Canadian site.

“Our model is fairly complex in ways that test the limits of Shopify. For example, the majority of the protein we sell has a variable weight. When you order picanha online, the final charge is determined by its weight at the time of fulfillment. This concept of variable weight is something that has presented challenges for most traditional retailers selling online.”

Raul Sukraj
CIO, Wild Fork Foods



3 key advantages commercetools has over Shopify

Discover why fast-growing brands and large-scale businesses often outgrow Shopify — and how commercetools delivers the versatility and innovation enterprises need to stay ahead.

1. Flexibility and agility



commercetools delivers true flexibility with an open, tech-agnostic architecture that supports extensive customization and integrations, ready to support complex use cases without vendor lock-in.

Shopify is built for small and medium-sized retail and D2C brands, but offers limited customization for enterprise and B2B needs — all within a closed, restrictive ecosystem.

2. Scalability



commercetools is built cloud-agnostic with a microservices architecture, delivering high availability, robust SLAs and seamless B2B/B2C integration — all on one platform.

Shopify struggles with scalability for enterprise businesses due to its legacy architecture. Limited cloud infrastructure and fragmented integrations hinder unified commerce solutions.

3. Business value













commercetools drives growth with a unified platform that ensures the best pay-off for your business. The result: Rapid innovation and lower total cost of ownership (TCO) at enterprise scale.

Shopify offers a fast start, but its rigid structure, limited scalability and high hidden costs can restrict innovation and stall enterprise growth over time.



Deep dive: Flexibility and agility











Use case breadth	 <p>commercetools excels in empowering highly customized experiences across innovative use cases.</p>	 <p>Shopify is best suited for retail and D2C brands. The company offers limited B2B and B2B2X functionality and a rigid approach to customization.</p>
Tech-agnostic	 <p>commercetools provides tech-agnostic developer tooling with flexible and extensible options to support complex use cases.</p>	 <p>Shopify relies on a proprietary scripting language (Liquid) and specialized developer skills (Ruby on Rails).</p>
Extensibility	 <p>commercetools has a better ability to continuously expand from out-of-the-box features to build on top of the platform and tailor functionalities. Being tech-agnostic and offering multiple types of extensibility (data model, APIs, events/subscriptions and Merchant Center), commercetools is exceptionally flexible.</p>	 <p>Shopify’s “closed box” approach and limited customization options, like Shopify Scripts, force businesses into predefined workflows, hindering those with unique needs or complex processes, especially beyond checkout and for advanced promotion management.</p>
No vendor lock-in	 <p>Through its MACH® (Microservices, API-first, Cloud-native, Headless) architecture, commercetools virtually eliminates vendor lock-in.</p>	 <p>Shopify’s ecosystem creates strong vendor lock-in, especially as tools like Shopify Payments and Shop Pay gain traction — limiting merchant control and penalizing those who opt out.</p>
AI capabilities	 <p>With AI Hub and Agent Gateway, commercetools delivers an AI-first, composable platform that enables smarter automation, personalization and agile commerce experiences.</p>	 <p>Shopify’s AI prioritizes quick merchant wins and easy setups, largely depending on third-party integrations for advanced, long-term AI capabilities.</p>



Deep dive: Scalability



Cloud-agnostic infrastructure and multi-cloud	 <p>commercetools operates a cloud-native infrastructure powered by leading cloud providers like Google Cloud Platform and AWS. The result: Flexibility, scalability and enhanced security.</p>	 <p>Despite leveraging Google Cloud, Shopify's infrastructure remains rooted in its original monolithic design, limiting its cloud-native capabilities.</p>
Maintainability	 <p>commercetools APIs are modular and versionless, meaning they are designed to evolve. This allows both REST and GraphQL API types to coexist and remain compatible with the platform's core functionality.</p>	 <p>Shopify's versioned APIs, including recent REST API deprecations in favor of GraphQL, can cause significant integration challenges for customers due to occasional breaking changes.</p>
Reliability and resilience	 <p>commercetools' microservices architecture and cloud-native design prioritize reliability and resilience, ensuring high availability and performance. SLAs offer at least 99.9% uptime.</p>	 <p>Major issues with downtime.</p>
Unified commerce	 <p>commercetools' unified catalog and flexible store and channel management support seamless B2B and B2C operations from a single platform, enabling efficient multi-brand, multi-region, and omnichannel commerce. Real-time data exchange and a robust InStore solution ensure smooth execution of complex scenarios.</p>	 <p>While Shopify supports both B2B and B2C operations, its limited B2B functionality often requires separate stores. Its POS system struggles with data synchronization between online and physical locations, hindering unified commerce.</p>



Deep dive: Business value



Fast time to market/value



commercetools supports rapid onboarding and task automation through extensive public documentation, templated solutions, expert services and agentic workflows. Teams can quickly implement complex tasks without heavy technical support.



Projects can be created within weeks due to limited customization options and a predefined, linear deployment path. This is a poor experience for enterprises that are complex and require true customizability.

Lower TCO



commercetools delivers a lower total cost of ownership with flexible, modular pricing and faster implementations. Its tech-agnostic architecture eliminates the need for specialized proprietary expertise.



Shopify's enterprise pricing model, which includes a fixed subscription and revenue share, can lead to higher costs, especially for online orders. Complex customizations can further inflate the total cost of ownership.



Industry recognition



2025 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for Digital Commerce



commercetools is recognized as a Leader for the sixth consecutive year.



Shopify is also recognized as a Leader in Gartner's 2025 Magic Quadrant.



Paradigm B2B Combine 2025 Digital Commerce Solutions



commercetools is a top performer in the 2025 Paradigm B2B Combine Digital Commerce Solutions for B2B, with 23 medals across the evaluated 24 categories, including 16 gold medals. This highlights its leadership in both Enterprise and Midmarket B2B segments.



Due to **Shopify's** limited B2B capabilities, the vendor wasn't evaluated in this report.



commercetools: The clear choice for enterprises



Unlimited extensibility and customization

- Expand and tailor functionalities beyond out-of-the-box features, thanks to its API-first approach, flexible data model and B2B and B2C (and in-store) capabilities on a unified platform.



Unified commerce handles multiple channels, brands, business models and countries

- One platform that centralizes data across customers, products, inventory, and more, enabling true unified commerce.
- Retailers can replace their POS (point of sale) systems and eliminate data duplication and siloes.



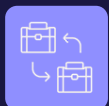
Limitless scalability

- Automatic scaling and enhanced security through leading cloud providers to manage customer surges without performance loss.
- Multi-store setups for easy internationalization and expansion.



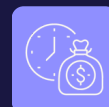
Agentic AI leadership

- Native, deep AI capabilities for intelligent automation and real-time personalization through Commerce MCP and AI Hub.



Native enterprise-level B2B capabilities

- Organizational modeling through granular permissions and roles, collaborative buying and buyer approval flows.
- Order and processing purpose-fit for enterprises with recurring orders, inventory management at scale, and more.



Implementation, costs and beyond

- Accelerated time-to-market and operational efficiency through pre-composed solutions, accelerators, etc.
- Open, tech-agnostic ecosystem with no vendor lock-in.
- Predictable pricing (no fixed subscriptions, revenue shares or hidden fees) and lower TCO (total cost of ownership).

Ready to get started?

Create your MVP or POC

Take advantage of our free 60-day trial and get a glimpse of how commercetools can work for you.

[Your free trial →](#)

Get in touch

Contact our team of commerce experts and tell us about your business goals, so we can advise you on next steps.

[Schedule a call →](#)

About commercetools

For global enterprises, commercetools provides the leading AI-first digital commerce platform, delivering unmatched revenue growth and performance. Our modular, scalable technology is the foundation for innovation — from agentic commerce to conversational experiences — giving businesses the flexibility to respond to changing business needs fast and with confidence.

By removing the constraints of legacy systems, commercetools enables enterprises to realize new opportunities faster, meet the evolving demands of their customers, and expand across offline and online channels, regions, brands and business models without compromise.

More information at commercetools.com.

