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Taking The Jump Into Modern B2B Commerce

Guide on how to evaluate if you should or not



Guide on how to evaluate if you should or not

As private consumers, we are used to having everything at our fingertips. One swipe and we have our food, products or services within hours. Sometimes even minutes. The speed of self-service and online services is evolving rapidly, especially in B2B Commerce. According to Statista (2022), the B2B ecommerce market is 5 times the size of the B2C ecommerce market.

Buyers – both as consumers and professionals – have no time to waste and their expectations of excellent online experiences put increased pressure on manufacturers, distributors and franchisors to meet the new B2B buyer with sky high expectations.

Many companies have invested heavily in legacy systems and infrastructure that may not be compatible with modern B2B ecommerce platforms today. Upgrading or integrating these systems can be complex, time-consuming, and costly, deterring companies from taking the jump into B2B Commerce initiatives.

In this guide on B2B Commerce, we will explore:

- The main **benefits of B2B Commerce** for your business
- If you should **build or buy** your B2B Commerce solution
- Key questions to consider when **jumping into B2B Commerce**



What is B2B Commerce?

B2B commerce, also known as business-to-business commerce, refers to the process of buying and selling goods or services between two or more businesses rather than directly with individual consumers. It involves transactions and interactions that occur between companies, such as manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers, as they exchange products, services, or information.

B2B commerce is different from B2C (business-to-consumer) commerce, where businesses sell directly to individual customers. In B2B, the focus is on meeting the needs of other businesses, often in larger quantities and at negotiated prices. It involves building relationships, providing personalized solutions, and catering to the specific requirements of business customers.

Overall, B2B commerce plays a vital role in the economy, enabling businesses to collaborate, source supplies, and reach new markets efficiently. It's like a behind-the-scenes network that helps businesses operate, grow, and thrive.

Challenges with taking the jump

Outdated legacy Systems and fear of failure

Legacy systems are often deeply integrated into a company's infrastructure and processes. Upgrading these systems can be complex and time-consuming, requiring significant resources and expertise. The fear of potential technical challenges, system downtime, and disruptions to critical business processes can make companies hesitant to undertake the upgrade. In addition, modernizing current systems involves not only the expense of purchasing new software or hardware but also the costs associated with system implementation, data migration and employee training. For many companies, the perceived cost of upgrading may outweigh the benefits, especially if the existing system is still "functioning adequately".

Lack of Digital Strategy

Some companies may not have a clear digital strategy or understanding of the benefits and potential of B2B ecommerce. Without a strategic vision and leadership commitment, companies may not prioritize B2B ecommerce initiatives or allocate the necessary resources to drive adoption.

Organizational Resistance to Change

Resistance to change is a common challenge in many organizations. Adopting B2B ecommerce requires a shift in mindset, processes, and sometimes even job roles. Employees may be resistant to change due to fear of job loss, unfamiliarity with new technologies, or a preference for traditional methods and legacy systems. Overcoming this resistance and fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability is crucial for successful B2B ecommerce adoption.





Limited Resources and Expertise

Implementing B2B ecommerce requires dedicated resources, including skilled IT professionals, marketing specialists, and project management expertise. Companies with limited resources or lacking in-house expertise may struggle to allocate the necessary resources and navigate the complexities of implementing B2B ecommerce effectively.

Complex Sales Processes and Relationships

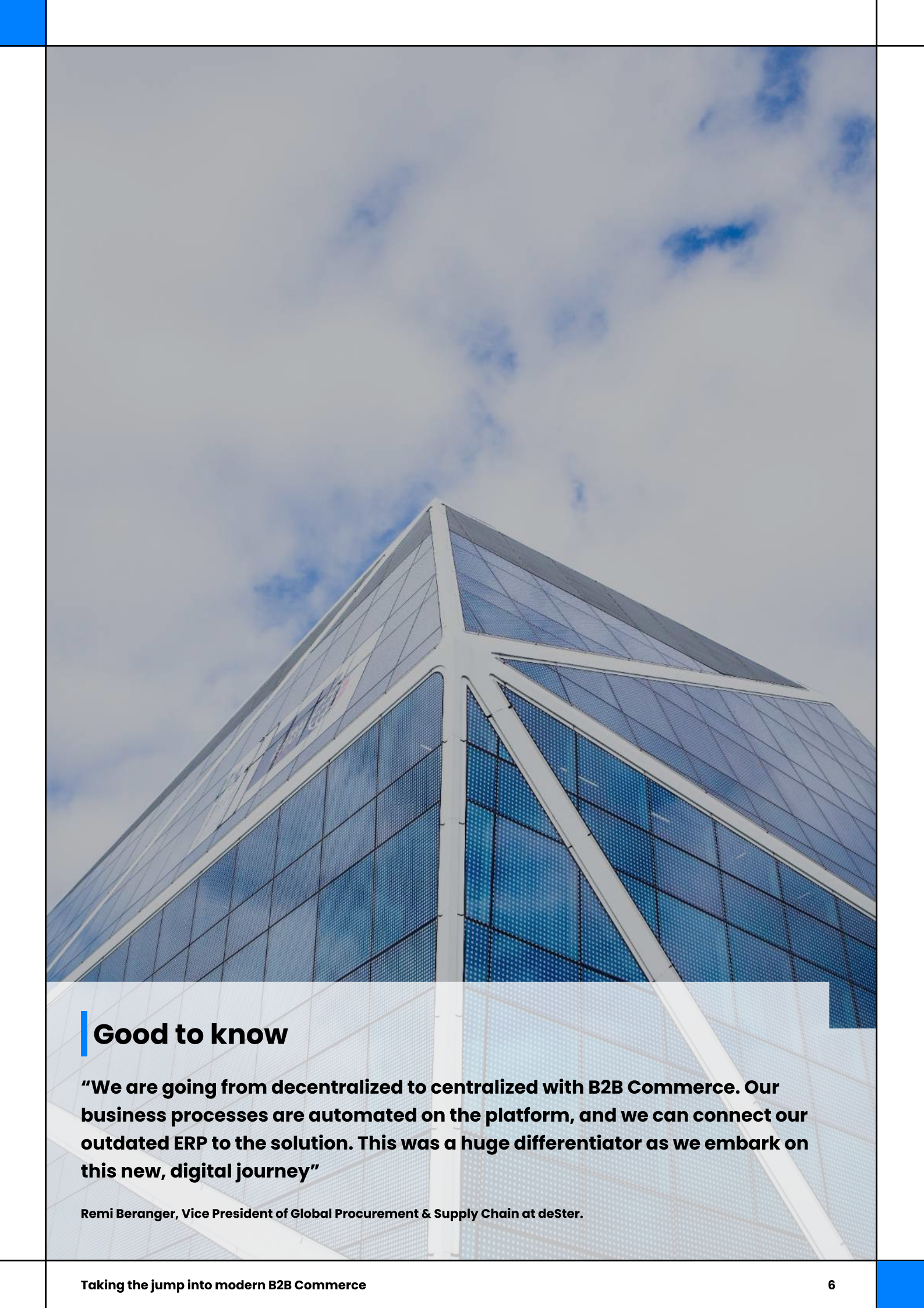
B2B transactions often involve complex sales processes, negotiations, and long-standing customer relationships. Companies may be hesitant to disrupt these established processes and relationships by shifting to an ecommerce model. Overcoming this challenge requires careful planning, effective communication, and demonstrating the value and convenience of B2B ecommerce to stakeholders.

Industry and Market Dynamics

The readiness and pace of B2B ecommerce adoption can vary across industries and markets. Some industries, such as manufacturing or healthcare, may have unique challenges or regulatory requirements that make B2B ecommerce adoption more complex. Market dynamics, including the competitive landscape and customer preferences, can also influence the urgency and pace of B2B ecommerce adoption.

Results

While there are challenges to B2B ecommerce adoption, companies that recognize the potential benefits, invest in the necessary resources and expertise, and develop a strategic approach to digital transformation can overcome these barriers and successfully adapt to modern B2B ecommerce.



Good to know

“We are going from decentralized to centralized with B2B Commerce. Our business processes are automated on the platform, and we can connect our outdated ERP to the solution. This was a huge differentiator as we embark on this new, digital journey”

Remi Beranger, Vice President of Global Procurement & Supply Chain at deSter.



Benefits with modern B2B Commerce

B2B commerce allows businesses to expand their customer base and reach a wider audience. By providing an online platform for customers to make purchases conveniently, you can attract new customers and increase sales. The accessibility and convenience of B2B ecommerce can lead to higher order volumes and revenue growth.

Improved customer experience

Buyers increasingly expect the same level of convenience and efficiency in their business transactions as they experience in their personal lives. Investing in B2B commerce allows you to provide a seamless and user-friendly purchasing experience, with features such as self-service portals, personalized catalogs, real-time inventory information, and easy reordering. This enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Enhanced efficiency and cost savings

Automating repetitive tasks like order processing, inventory management, and invoicing can significantly improve operational efficiency and reduce costs. Additionally, self-service capabilities empower customers to place orders at their convenience, reducing the need for extensive sales support.

Expanded market reach

B2B ecommerce enables businesses to overcome geographical limitations and expand their market reach. With an online presence, you can connect with customers globally, explore new markets, and serve clients across different time zones. This opens up opportunities for growth and diversification.

Data-driven insights

Valuable data and insights about customer behavior, preferences, and purchasing patterns can all be captured in a modern B2B Commerce solution. By leveraging analytics and data-driven decision-making, businesses can gain a deeper understanding of their customers, identify trends, optimize pricing and product offerings, and personalize marketing strategies. These insights can drive business growth and inform strategic decisions.

Competitive advantage

Many businesses are still transitioning to digital channels, and by investing in B2B ecommerce early on, you can establish a strong position and capture market share. Providing a superior online buying experience, personalized service, and efficient order fulfillment can differentiate your business from competitors.

Scalability and adaptability

Whether you're expanding your product range, entering new markets, or integrating with other business systems, a robust B2B ecommerce solution can provide the flexibility and scalability required to support your business objectives. It enables businesses to adapt to the changing landscape of B2B buying behaviors and expectations while unlocking new growth opportunities.

Quote

"With a modern B2B Commerce solution, we can increase productivity, customer satisfaction and gain more visibility by centralizing all procurement and reassortment operations. We can offer our franchisees a B2C-like experience"

Arthur Caron, Head of Supply Chain at Franprix
One of France's leading retailers

Should you build or buy a B2B Commerce solution?

The decision to build or buy a B2B commerce solution depends on various factors, including your business requirements, budget, timeline, technical expertise, and long-term strategic goals. Let's explore the pros and cons of each approach:

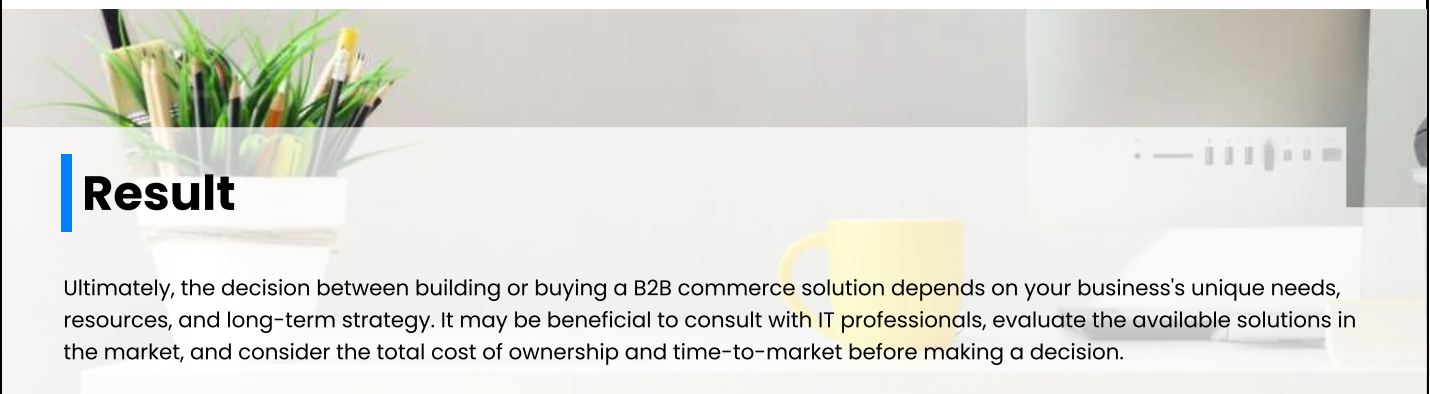
Building a B2B Commerce Solution:

Pros:

1. **Customization:** Building a solution from scratch allows you to tailor it precisely to your unique business needs and processes. You have full control over the features, user experience, and integration capabilities.
2. **Scalability:** By building your own solution, you can design it to scale according to your business growth. You can ensure it can handle increased traffic, product catalogs, and transaction volumes.
3. **Competitive Advantage:** A custom-built solution can give you a competitive edge by offering unique features and experiences that align with your business strategy.
4. **Complete Ownership:** Building your solution means you have full ownership and control over its maintenance, upgrades, and future enhancements.

Cons:

1. **Time and Resources:** Building a B2B commerce solution from scratch requires significant time, resources, and technical expertise. It involves hiring skilled developers, designers, and architects to create and maintain the system.
2. **Cost:** Developing a custom solution can be expensive, especially if you don't have an in-house development team. Costs include development, infrastructure, ongoing maintenance, and support.
3. **Time-to-Market:** Building a B2B commerce solution can take longer compared to buying an existing solution. It involves extensive development, testing, and fine-tuning to ensure it meets your requirements.



Result

Ultimately, the decision between building or buying a B2B commerce solution depends on your business's unique needs, resources, and long-term strategy. It may be beneficial to consult with IT professionals, evaluate the available solutions in the market, and consider the total cost of ownership and time-to-market before making a decision.

Key consideration to evaluate your future B2B Commerce solution

When evaluating an existing B2B commerce solution, it's important to ask the right questions to assess its performance, capabilities, and alignment with your business needs. Here are some key questions to consider:

Scalability and Performance

- How well does the platform perform under heavy traffic and during peak periods?
- Can it handle the expected growth in customer base and transaction volumes?
- Is the platform able to scale as your business expands or introduces new product lines?

Functionality and Features

- Does the platform support the core B2B commerce features you require, such as customer-specific pricing, bulk ordering, custom catalogs, and tiered pricing?
- Are there any missing features or functionalities that are critical for your business operations?
- Can the platform handle complex pricing and discount structures?
- Does it support integration with your existing systems, such as ERP, CRM, or inventory management?

Integration Capabilities

- Does the platform offer APIs or integration options to connect with other systems in your technology stack?
- Has it been successfully integrated with your existing systems or any third-party services?
- How easy is it to integrate the platform with other applications or services your business relies on?





Security and Compliance

- What security measures are in place to protect sensitive customer data and financial transactions?
- Does the platform comply with industry standards and regulations (e.g., PCI-DSS for payment security)?
- Has the platform undergone security audits or certifications?

Support and Upgrades

- What level of technical support is provided by the platform provider?
- Are there dedicated support channels, such as phone, email, or live chat?
- How frequently does the platform receive updates and upgrades, and what is the process for implementing them?

Customer Feedback and Reviews

- Have you gathered feedback from your customers regarding their experience with the platform?
- Are there any common complaints or areas for improvement highlighted by customers?
- Have you researched and evaluated reviews or ratings of the platform from industry experts or other businesses?

Reporting and Analytics

- Does the platform provide robust reporting and analytics capabilities to track sales, customer behavior, and other key metrics?
- Can you easily generate reports and export data for further analysis?
- Does it offer real-time insights and dashboards to monitor performance?

Total Cost of Ownership

- What are the ongoing costs associated with the platform, including licensing, hosting, maintenance, and support?
- Are there any hidden costs or additional fees?
- How does the cost of the platform compare to its value and the benefits it provides?

Result

By asking these questions and conducting a thorough evaluation, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of your existing B2B commerce solution and determine if it meets your business requirements or if alternative solutions may be necessary.



Good to know

"The DJUST B2B Commerce solution and project approach allow us to progressively transform digitally. By giving us the tools to sell and trade effectively, we can concentrate on making a better buying experience rather than on managing a technology,"

Nicolas Rigot, Procurement Director at Eiffage,
a leading European Construction company.

Next steps for your future B2B Commerce

- In this guide we explored the challenges and opportunities of B2B Commerce and what considerations and questions you should consider when launching your business online or replatforming your business. If these considerations resonate with you, and you would like to explore a modern way of doing B2B Commerce, more agile and more human, here's how you can get started:
- Get in touch with group B2B commerce experts and tell us what you're looking to achieve with your future B2B commerce. We will set up an informal meeting to help advise where you can find the most value for your business.
- Explore our customer stories to discover how small to large businesses create value from a new way of doing B2B Commerce, simple and efficient.

Get inspired with ebooks and articles on B2B Commerce across sectors. Find all Guides and Ebooks on www.djust.io



About DJUST

DJUST is a new way of doing B2B Commerce. The **powerful and modular B2B Commerce platform** unlocks smarter **sales to B2B customers and greater productivity** for any business as a whole. We enable leading **Distributors, Retailers and Manufacturers** to eliminate system silos, **digitize manual processes** and uncover new growth opportunities.

More than just a flexible order system, it's a **building block to future-proof any business** with continuous scalability, collaboration and innovation. Driven by a strong belief in excellent and human customer service, we go the extra mile for our clients to achieve success together.

The DJUST logo is displayed in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. A small blue square is positioned at the end of the word, following the period. The background of the lower half of the page features a close-up, low-angle shot of a curved surface covered in a dense, repeating pattern of dark, oval-shaped tiles or scales, creating a textured, scale-like appearance. The lighting is soft, highlighting the three-dimensional quality of the tiles.

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Ready To Take The Jump Into Modern B2B Commerce ?

Let's Start Together

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