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# 3 Ways Legacy DXPs Fail eCommerce Brands

...and What to Use Instead

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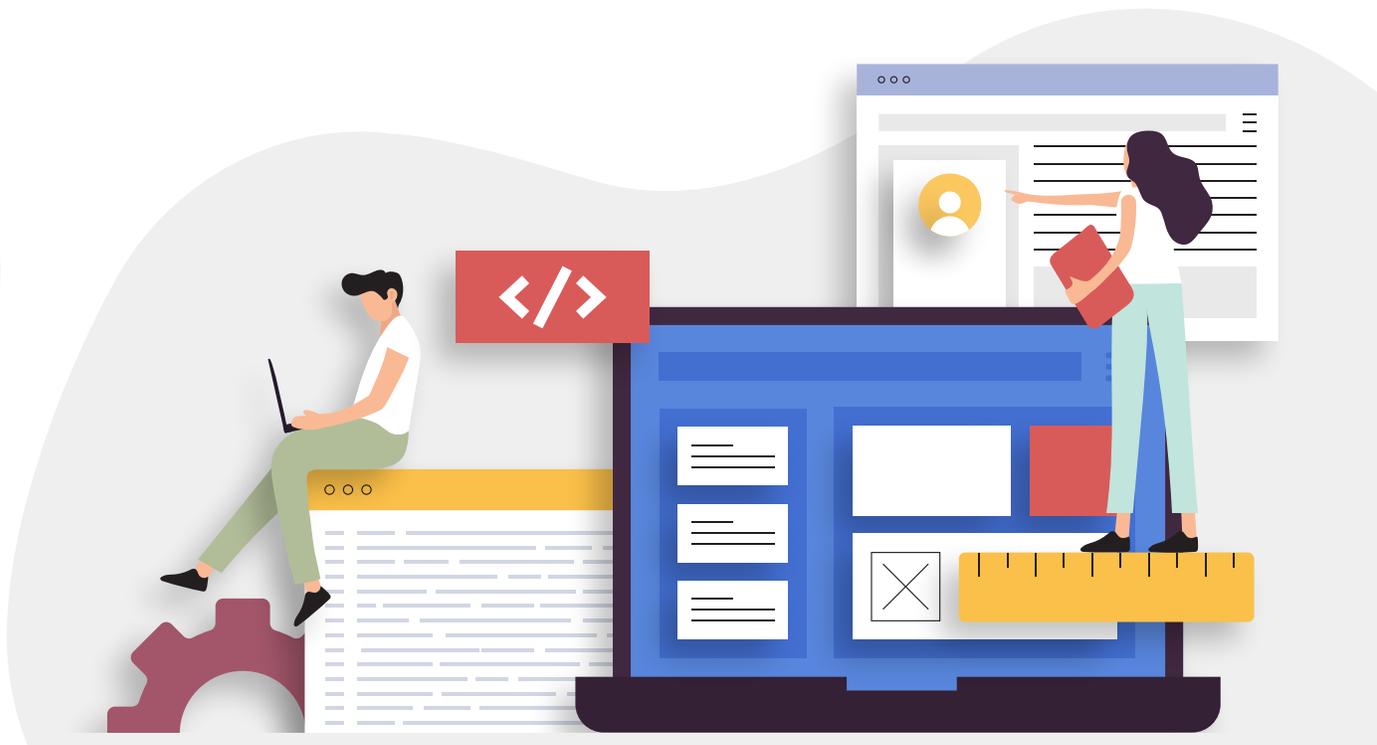
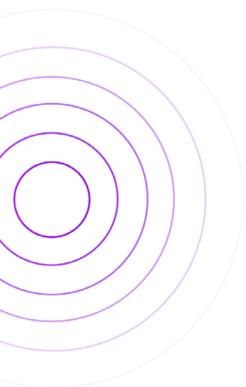
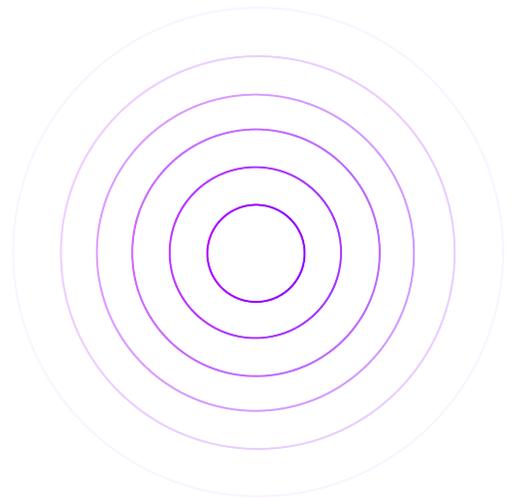
How the right digital experience platform can future-proof your tech stack

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Is your current digital experience platform (DXP) holding you back? Not sure if your eCommerce brand even needs a DXP? This guide explains what a DXP can do for you, challenges and shifts to be aware of in the DXP landscape, and what to look for in a solution.

Spoiler: **By choosing a lightweight, agile DXP, you'll be able to future-proof your martech stack, outpace competitors—and accelerate revenue growth.**

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Introduction:

# Why DXPs Matter

## What They Are

DXPs improve customer experience (CX) with **continuous personalized digital journeys at scale**, which results in higher (and faster) conversion and ROI from your marketing.

But what exactly *is* a DXP?

[Forrester](#) defines a DXP as a platform that “provides the architectural foundation and modular services for developers and practitioners to create, orchestrate, and optimize digital journeys at scale — to drive loyalty and new commerce outcomes across owned and third-party channels.”

If you ask [Gartner](#), it’s “an integrated set of technologies, based on a common platform, that provides a broad range of audiences with consistent, secure and personalized access to information and applications across many digital touchpoints.”

So basically, **they’re platforms that let you create and optimize omnichannel experiences in a scalable way.**

## Why You Need One

What does this look like in practice for enterprise eCommerce brands? DXPs make it easier than ever to seamlessly adapt to new consumer demands. Meaning new designs go live quickly, and your brand stays ahead of the competition. Modern DXPs also support a headless strategy (AKA incorporating best-of-breed technology) giving you full flexibility to quickly innovate with new martech from any vendor.

And DXPs are fast becoming industry standard. **If your enterprise eCommerce brand doesn’t have a DXP yet (or the right one), you’ll soon struggle to keep up with the competition, let alone scale.**

Next up, here’s what you need to know about the DXP landscape.



# DXP Market Overview

The DXP landscape is a highly innovative space, constantly evolving to meet rapidly changing consumer demands. But some of the biggest players are antiquated suite solutions that are struggling to adapt. Why's that good news for your brand?

**By using the right DXP, you'll be able to outpace your competitors and accelerate revenue growth—using a fraction of the resources.**

Here are the main DXP market trends to be aware of:

## The Suite v. Modular Divide

All-in-one suites bring an entire martech stack under one roof. Legacy vendors often build these by buying or merging with newer tech companies, and tying their innovative solutions onto a core legacy component, like a content management system (CMS). Modular, or composable, DXPs are a newer approach, giving you the flexibility to choose only what you need as your brand evolves. Their structure allows you to add and subtract solutions as needed, so you can keep a lean tech stack that's easy to use and maintain.

## The Rise of Headless Architecture

For solutions with a modular structure, the next distinction is whether all add-ons to your tech stack will need to come from the same vendor's suite. All-in-suite architecture tends to

create expensive tech stacks that lack agility. A headless architecture is becoming increasingly common and allows marketers to integrate their favorite, or best-in-class, 3rd-party solutions into the DXP ecosystem.

## The Reinvention of eCommerce

The COVID-19 pandemic forced massive shifts in online shopping behavior. Many brands weren't prepared for the rush to replace in-store shopping with eCommerce, or to provide an interactive shopping experience that would engage customers in similar ways. But, those with modern DXPs were able to meet demand, fuel continued growth and differentiate from the competition through unique shoppable experiences. They also could stay agile during unpredictable challenges with inventory availability, shipping restrictions and constant market changes.

That trend's not going away. According to [Gartner](#), "by 2023, organizations that have adopted an intelligent composable approach will outpace the competition by 80% in the speed of new feature implementation."

Now let's dig deeper into the biggest problems plaguing DXPs right now.

# 3 Ways Legacy DXPs Fail eCommerce Brands

## What to Look Out for As You Build Your New DXP Shortlist

### 1. Requiring heavy IT support

Most full-feature DXPs weren't built from the ground up *as DXPs*. So while they often have a smooth user interface, underneath you may find a hodge-podge of fractured infrastructures that aren't fully integrated. In some cases, they rely on aging architecture and outdated codebases. And marketers are left dependent on IT support to make their DXP do its job.

### 2. Sluggish time to value

Leading DXP solutions are focused on a robust collection of capabilities, at the expense of usability. That means a steep learning curve, sometimes requiring expensive onboarding support. Plus, a fragmented stack complicates collaboration across departments, significantly slowing strategy, creation, and execution. It simply takes too long to design, publish, and optimize at scale, ultimately delaying revenue growth.

### 3. Lack of eCommerce functionality

Legacy DXPs are often little more than a CMS at heart, with other components like personalization, testing and optimization, and analytics added on as they're acquired. They lack any robust functionality that shortens the path to online sales, like directly shoppable content. That means it may be difficult to find a solution that meets all your eCommerce sales needs and enables innovation at enterprise scale, without breaking your marketing budget.

So, what's an eCommerce marketer to do? Read on.

# Future-Proof Your Tech Stack

Given the ongoing shifts in the digital marketing experience space, we recommend that eCommerce brands use a streamlined, lightweight DXP that's nimble and responsive—just like your marketing strategy needs to be.

That means a modular, headless structure, with best-in-breed flexibility to integrate the tools of your choice. You'll get all the full-featured benefits of bulkier solutions, but without costly replatforming, upgrade, and integration struggles at each stage in your brand's growth.

## Choosing a DXP for your eCommerce brand

When evaluating DXPs for your shortlist, first determine your deal-breaker and nice-to-have requirements, so you can quickly define the ideal fit for your needs.

### Questions to ask when evaluating DXPs:

1. Is this an all-in-suite or a modular DXP?
2. Can I add and subtract from my tech stack as we grow and innovate?
3. Will I be able to integrate solutions from third-party vendors?
4. How are component solutions integrated and managed?
5. What are the costs of maintaining and upgrading over time?
6. Will I be locked into a rigid package price, or is it customized to my needs?
7. What functionality is included to drive online sales (e.g. shoppable content)?
8. How long will it take to onboard and implement?
9. How long will it take to get from design, to testing and optimization, to sales?
10. How much IT support will I need for implementation and maintenance?
11. Does this DXP solution support my specific eCommerce goals?

### BONUS QUESTION:

12. What support and service partners can I expect in my region(s)?

Together, these answers will show whether a DXP can grow with your brand and fit your goals.

# Meet Creator by Zmags

## Get to Know the DXP Built for Marketers

[Creator by Zmags](#) is the only digital experience platform built exclusively for marketers. It's the fastest, most intuitive way to publish and optimize digital experiences across any channel, boosting shoppability and sales at a fraction of the cost of traditional tech suites.

Ready to turbocharge your eCommerce sales—with no coding, IT, development, or agency resources required? (Yes, really!) [Learn more about Creator by Zmags](#) or [schedule a meeting](#) with one of our digital experience experts.

“Not only does it allow the design and marketing team to create more engaging content for our customers, but it does so without the need for any in-depth knowledge of coding, or involvement from our development team. Features that might typically take a while to introduce on our site are now added with ease.”

**Content Manager**  
Ricki's

“The team behind Creator is world-class, available to help day or night if required, but the tool is very easy to use. It has given us the capability of publishing high-quality page experiences in hour versus weeks.”

**Director of eCommerce**  
Nobis

“Creator Design File Conversion cut the time my team spends creating content in Creator by over 90%. What used to take 4 hours now takes 15 minutes! We get content out faster, and when my team is strapped I can use any outsourced designer to create rich content for us without worrying if they know Creator. Design File Conversion saves time and gives me peace of mind that we will hit every deadline.”

**Brand Design Manager**  
Signature Hardware



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