



Headless Solutions for the Retail Industry

Background

The retail industry was among the industries significantly impacted by Covid-19. **Beyond its effect on consumer behavior and demand, the pandemic presented additional limitations such as reduced physical contact.** For retailers who often rely on in-person contact during the purchase or fulfillment stages of the buyer's journey, this meant finding new ways of doing business.

The fact that retailers could no longer rely solely on in-store visits made the use of digital channels mandatory. These days, retailers need to utilize multiple online channels to prevent potential buyers from getting lost at any point during the customer journey. **This era has proven that brands need unified and personalized digital experiences to get their activities in the face of new and existing customers.** However, achieving this can be difficult

for businesses that are yet to embrace digital transformation.

For businesses that have begun their digital journey with traditional commerce platforms, creating an omnichannel experience for customers can be equally as challenging. The reason is that monolithic platforms prevent online retailers from easily customizing content across multiple front-ends.

Customers can be found in numerous digital spaces; they are neither bound by device or channel. B2B retailers must begin to optimize their business processes with this in mind.

By adopting a **headless approach**, retailers can address some of the current challenges that affect the retail industry.



What Exactly is a Headless Solution?

As consumers evolve, brands must remain cognizant of new channels and technological tools to reach their audience.

Implementing a headless solution makes it easy for businesses to support new technology and meet their customers where they are. The idea behind a headless approach stems from the broader concept of headless commerce.

Headless commerce refers to an e-commerce solution where the front-end of an e-commerce system is separated from the back-end. With headless commerce, the customer-facing layer or storefront is decoupled from the back-end, where product information and functionalities such as order management are set up.

By decoupling the back-end functionalities from the front-end, it is easier to connect multiple channels such as mobile, social, wearables, voice assistants, and other IoT devices. This is done through an application programming interface or API. APIs interact with back-end systems such as content management systems (CMS), customer relationship management (CRM) solutions, and inventory management systems.

Several B2B companies are implementing headless commerce solutions to help them stay competitive, adapt to present changes, and prepare for future challenges.



What Does a Headless Commerce Solution Mean for the Retail Industry?



Omnichannel Experience: With retailers constantly expanding their product offerings to meet endless customer demands, presenting a more seamless and unified customer experience has become a necessity. **Headless commerce allows for the integration of multiple channels.** Whether a customer is in-store or on their mobile phone, they can enjoy a connected experience and receive customized content on each channel. **With headless commerce, a customer can search for a product on a retailer's website, add items to their cart using a mobile device and then complete the checkout or payment process via a voice device.** Additionally, buyers who abandon their cart can get push notifications, text messages, and emails reminding them to complete their shopping. It becomes almost impossible to miss a sales opportunity when you adopt a headless omnichannel approach.



Payment and Pricing Flexibility: Flexible payment methods can help (B2B) retailers make more sales and retain existing customers. **One of the benefits of going headless is being able to seamlessly integrate several payment solutions into an e-commerce system.** By doing this, customers will have the liberty to choose their preferred payment method. Payment safety concerns are also alleviated when the payment process is made quick and easy.

In the world of B2B retail, quantities ordered between businesses can sometimes change based on demand from the end consumers. In instances where customers make frequent purchases and need to be incentivized with discounts and other offers, a headless architecture makes it possible to implement customer-specific pricing. Unique prices, discounts, and other promotions could be seen when a customer logs into their company account.



Order Management: Although (B2B) retailers manage significantly lower inventory levels than wholesalers, keeping tabs on outgoing stock can be equally as challenging without the right order management system in place. **Retailers can adequately track stock levels and control what they sell on various channels or in different regions with a headless solution.** For example, if a custom order reference number is generated for a specific order, a retailer can track the order status from the back-end using any device possible. All orders will be automatically aggregated on the back-end of their e-commerce system irrespective of what channel the order comes from.



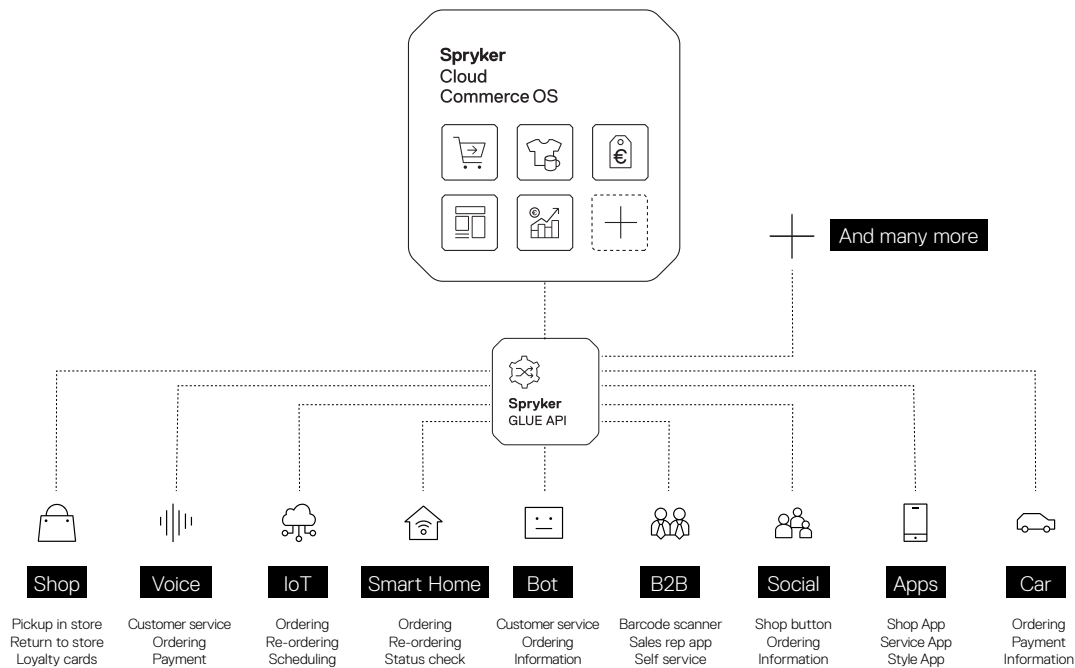
Effective Marketing: By adopting a headless approach, retailers will no longer be limited to a single channel. **With many different channels comes an opportunity to reach potential buyers with new content.** Being able to modify content across multiple front-ends makes without compromising the back-end system makes it easier to release new campaigns and create exciting customer experiences.



Personalized Digital Experience: The retail industry is known to be quite competitive and B2B retail is no different. **With many different retailers competing for noise in the market, leading retailers need to offer more personalized experiences to help them stand out. This is where the concept of headless comes in.** As customers make new demands, retailers can offer customized recommendations that can help customers make smart and quick decisions. Headless commerce also gives retailers a chance to follow the customer's journey, gain insight into what more can be done to ensure a sales opportunity is never missed.



What is Spryker's Role in All of This?



Spryker provides a headless and API-based solution that can help businesses within the wholesale industry to scale. Spryker's GLUE API enables connection to multiple touchpoints and aids in seamlessly integrating third-party systems such as a Content Management System. Spryker offers all of its customers access to the Spryker LINK Middleware for larger legacy integrations like ERP or PIM solutions.

The GLUE API has several features that can be deployed in a purely headless way. One of such features is the workflow and process management feature. With a smart device connected to the Spryker Cloud Commerce OS through the GLUE API, a warehouse operations manager can easily handle the approval of goods waiting to be distributed to the customer.

Additionally, specific prices could be set for each customer. The offer management feature also makes it possible to give unique discounts to

customers who purchase products regularly.

On the customer side, headless commerce makes it possible for checkouts to be carried out through any touchpoint. The GLUE API not only allows for effective integration with payment service providers (PSPs) but also enables cart items to be distributed to multiple addresses in multiple shipments.

Spryker's GLUE API shopping list feature enables customers to create, view, or add products to their shopping list for future purchases. This can be done through a mobile app, a voice device, or any other IoT device.

The GLUE API provides several other features that make headless commerce possible. **With a reliable e-commerce solution such as the Spryker Cloud Commerce OS, B2B retailers can effectively manage orders and deliver more personalized digital experiences.**

Lekkerland – Tech Focus and Digital Mindset in Convenience Retail

A platform for maximum convenience

Lekkerland is a specialist for on-the-go consumption in Europe. On-the-go consumption is one of the areas with the greatest growth prospects in the food business. Growing mobility is also driving the demand for out-of-home food products that consumers can handle easily on their way from point A to B.

Lekkerland sees itself not only as a B2B retailer but also as a service provider that meets all the needs of its customers and partners with digital solutions.

Lekkerland by the numbers

12€bn

in sales

7

European Countries

5000

employees

91,000+

Points of Sale

The requirements for a new Commerce OS

Lekkerland's experience showed that another technical solution was needed. Lekkerland first looked at platform solutions that focus on the B2B world, i.e. that offer more functionality in areas only indirectly connected with the order. However, it became clear that a standard system, which always has a monolithic character, could only be used as a limited use solution.

Ultimately, the standard would have to be extended or changed here as well. The solution needed to be truly modular so Lekkerland could implement requirements on the platform, which were not yet known at the time the platform was developed while maintaining a strong cost-benefit ratio and minimal technical debt.

Another requirement was the new technology must support Lekkerland's component-by-component development approach on the new platform which was limited by the old technology. This would ensure that Lekkerland, for example, would not lose sight of its customer-centric approach, even with a supposed technical-architectural issue. Lekkerland calls this approach 'macro-partial substitution'.

Read Lekkerland's success story [here](#)