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# The truth about B2B eCommerce in the fashion industry

What role does B2B eCommerce play in the fashion industry? And how can you use it to give your brand a makeover?



# The challenge with Fashion

## It's time for a new look

Just like trends, the B2B fashion industry never stops evolving. After an extremely profitable decade, the global fashion industry saw a sharp downturn during the Covid-19 pandemic, with the absence of many of the usual incentives to purchase.

But after two years of upheaval, the sector is gradually bouncing back, and must now adapt to the new world. Digital commerce is more vital than ever, current events continue to wreak havoc on supply chains, and customer priorities have altered – but the behavior of B2B buyers has too. Investing in eCommerce gives wholesale fashion brands the agility they need to tackle these changing parameters.



## Did you know?

In 2021, the global retail apparel market was valued at approximately **1.55 trillion US dollars**, and is expected to reach almost **\$2 trillion by 2026**.

**Source:** Statista

# The 4 wrinkles in the B2B fashion industry

## And how eCommerce can iron them out

### Supply chain disruption

The global supply chain has faced unending issues over the last few years, from lockdowns to climate disasters and the war in Ukraine. An advanced eCommerce system means you're better equipped to mitigate the consequences of these disruptions. With a purpose-built eCommerce platform, you'll have better visibility of your inventory, a more efficient procurement process, and the ability to offer real-time stock updates for B2B buyers.

### Sustainability expectations

Sustainability has become a more prominent concern across the B2B and wholesale fashion industry. Many buyers are pledging to move away from fast fashion, while the demand for individual brands and manufacturers to supply green credentials is on the rise. An eCommerce platform facilitates transparency about the lifecycle of production, with capacity to showcase garment passports and approval from certification organizations like B Lab or Solidaridad.

### Competitive vendor pricing

Another challenge for fashion wholesalers is ensuring consistent pricing across their own websites and third-party vendors. Whether you're selling via digitally-native franchises like Amazon and ASOS, or vendors with physical stores, being undercut on price is bad for business. Integrating your eCommerce platform with an ERP gives you access to tools which can provide individual pricing structures, fed by live industry data, so you can quickly price match your vendors.

### Death of brand loyalty

Thanks to an oversaturated market and the ease of comparison, brand loyalty is declining. Your eCommerce platform can be a central part of your strategy to counter this. With customer segmentation, you can offer a personalized buying experience and implement exclusive perks or discounts to reward returning customers. Meanwhile, smart reporting features will give you vital insights on how to improve metrics like average order value, bounce rate and cart abandonment.

# Surviving supply chain chaos

## Global disruption is back in fashion, so how can B2B brands adapt?

If wholesale fashion brands are going to survive the consistent chaos of the global supply chain, a sophisticated eCommerce platform will be vital.

The last decade has seen a myriad of threats to supply chain stability, with the pandemic, Brexit and the war in Ukraine to name a few. But what exactly can an eCommerce platform do to help B2B fashion firms cope with this uncertainty?

Choosing a modern eCommerce platform can equip you to foresee supply chain issues, manage shortages and avoid selling goods you can't source. You'll have clear visibility of your inventory levels, including both raw materials and manufactured garments. An advanced system will also provide up-to-date records of order entry and distribution, with accurate data available to all users, so you can keep a close eye on supply and demand.

So while an eCommerce platform can't prevent the disasters that disrupt supplies, it can give B2B fashion brands the foresight to anticipate a problem, and the time to develop a Plan B. After all, your response to supply chain issues will likely impact metrics like brand loyalty and buyer satisfaction.



# 10 ingredients to a great B2B eCommerce strategy

-  1 The ability to integrate with data points and other important systems across your business (especially an ERP)
-  2 Multi-channel support, and being able to go DTC
-  3 Personalized pricing and customized pricing structures
-  4 Scalability, so that your platform grows as you grow
-  5 A visually appealing platform which has good UX and is enjoyable to use
-  6 Self-serve, making it quicker and easier for customers to make orders and reorders
-  7 Using advertising, PPC and SEO to attract new customers
-  8 Repeat customer rewards to encourage loyalty
-  9 Strong product descriptions which bring your goods to life
-  10 Multilingual and multicurrency capabilities, if you have international ambitions

## Did you know?

China is the biggest exporter of textiles in the world, while Europe is the biggest importer, followed by the US.

**Source:** World Trade Statistical Review 2021

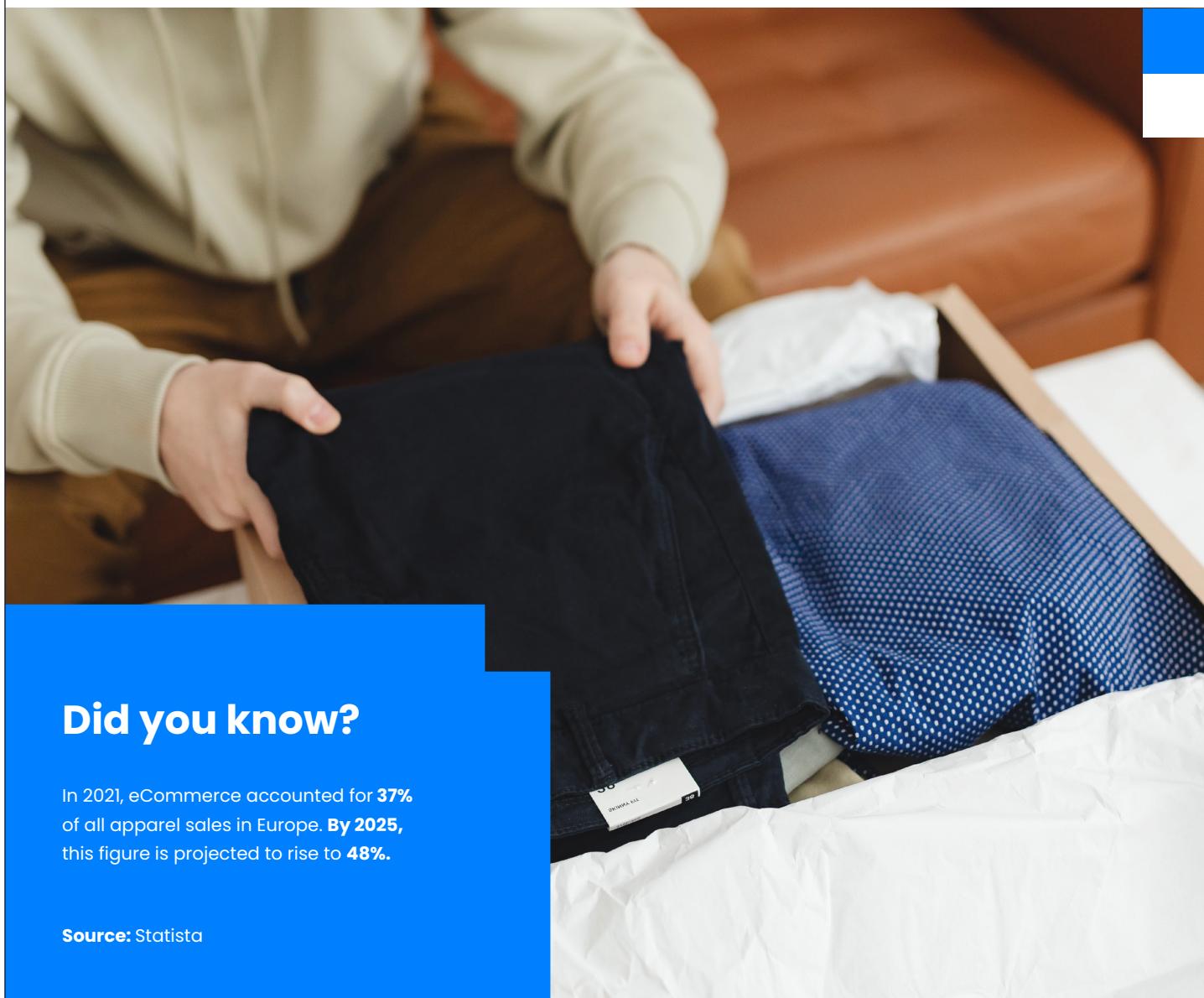
## The power of ERP

### For wholesale fashion firms, an ERP integration is a total game-changer

The B2B fashion world is composed of many different layers, from designers to fabric suppliers and garment manufacturers. Within these layers there are hundreds of internal processes which take place before the clothes even reach the eyes of a B2B buyer.

That's where an ERP system comes in. ERP (short for Enterprise Resource Planning) is a software that gives you full visibility and control of each component within your business, including everything from your supply chain to your accounts, orders and procurement. The right ERP – integrated with a flexible, open-architecture eCommerce platform – can automate manual activities, streamline sales, and synchronize data sharing.

For wholesale fashion brands selling to franchises, an ERP integration can enable seamless shipping and efficient, automated inventory management, and give you the capacity for personalized pricing structures. With ERP, you can even adopt a just-in-time supply chain that responds directly to orders from B2B buyers, minimizing surplus goods and unnecessary costs. In fact, there are a number of reasons why you may eCommerce presence in place will help you catch up.





## Womenswear brand increases sales by 300% with eCommerce platform

After years relying on complex Excel sheets, a contemporary womenswear brand was tired of grappling with a frustrating, labor-intensive order process.

Without a centralized platform, reps were giving franchise buyers inconsistent prices, and then struggling to stay abreast of orders, cancellations and deposits.

Order processing was slow, and as it relied on archaic manual service methods, the brand was forced to turn away customers if they were already dealing with another buyer.

Migrating to an eCommerce platform changed everything. The brand now had access to an

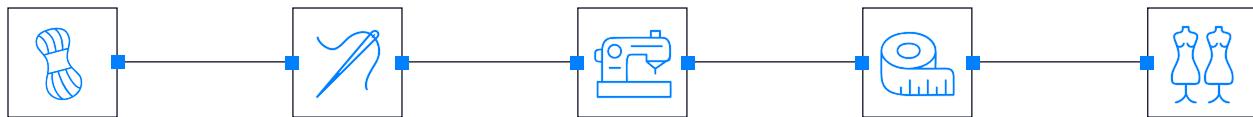
automated ordering system for quick order capture, so order processing delays became a thing of the past.

Linesheet creation was **2.5 x faster**, and prices were listed consistently across the platform, regardless of currency. This increased buyer trust, and sales went **up by 300%** as a result.

In the three years since they moved to a professional eCommerce platform, the brand has had **30% more** customers too. The figures speak for themselves – eCommerce has a vital role to play in B2B fashion, and the right platform can transform your brand's performance.

## Five key takeaways

In summary, the main five benefits of using B2B eCommerce in the fashion industry are...



1

It gives you a better platform to win more clients and grow your business

2

It provides a better experience for your customer, resulting in increased average order value and retention

3

It streamlines the sales and supply chain processes so that you can get perishable goods from A to B quicker, for less

4

It future-proofs your business, scaling as you grow to ensure that you can always meet increased demand

5

It maximizes speed, efficiency and sales



### Did you know?

In September 2022, the most visited fashion website in the world was shein.com, followed by shop.app and mercari.com.

**Source:** Semrush

# Ready to transform your fashion brand with B2B eCommerce?

DJUST get in touch.

**Speak to us today,**  
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