



commercetools vs. SAP

Enterprise commerce decision guide



Why are companies switching from SAP to commercetools?



SAP has long been considered a strong player in enterprise technology, thanks to its expansive portfolio of products — particularly its renowned ERP and CRM systems. For companies already invested in the SAP ecosystem, its commerce platform may appear to be the natural choice.

However, behind this broad offering lies a commerce solution that often struggles to keep up. SAP Commerce is known for being rigid, complex to maintain and slow to innovate due to its tightly integrated architecture. As SAP continues to focus on expanding its suite of tools, core commerce innovation — and future-focused capabilities like agentic AI — take a back seat.

Enter commercetools.

As the pioneer of composable commerce, commercetools offers a modern, flexible alternative built for constant change. With an API-first, cloud-native architecture, commercetools enables businesses to create highly customized digital experiences, integrate best-of-breed services and innovate at their own pace. It's a platform built to support scale, speed and the agility needed for growth.

If your organization is reconsidering its commerce technology, here's why more enterprises are making the move from SAP to commercetools — and what that transition could unlock for your business.



Forward-thinking businesses that made the switch



ARK Bokhandel, Norway's leading bookstore, faced major scalability issues with its legacy SAP Hybris platform, especially during peak traffic, when handling more than 3,000 users could crash the entire system. This tightly coupled, monolithic setup became a growth bottleneck.

After switching to commercetools, ARK scaled effortlessly, processing 17,000 orders in a single day post-launch and boosting conversions by over 15%. With a more agile setup, they now deploy over 800 updates per year.

15%
conversion boost

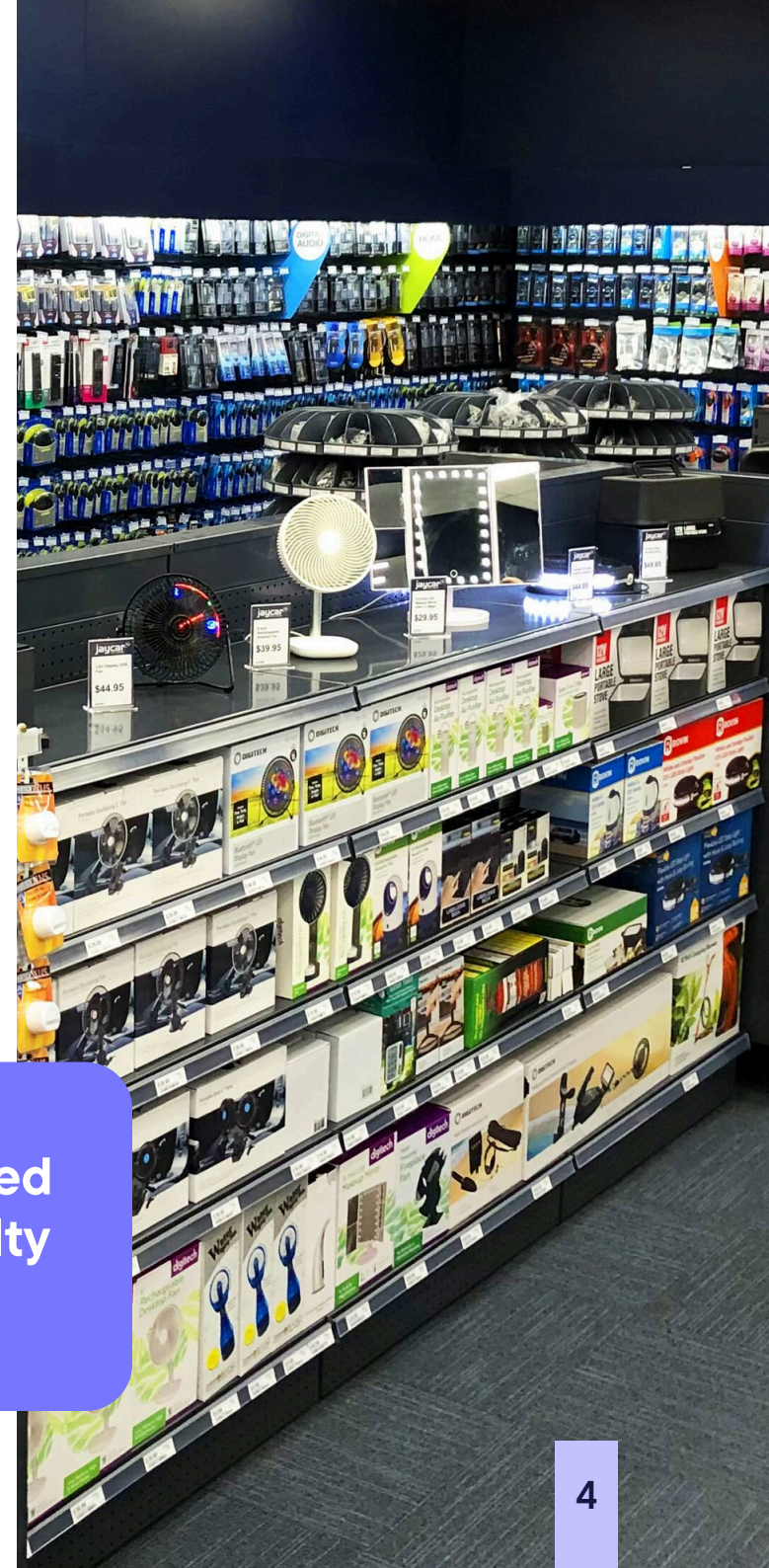




Jaycar, a mid-market Australian retailer specializing in electronic components, faced a huge disconnect between its online and offline shopping experiences. The company ran two separate, aging, slow, predominantly on-prem enterprise business systems that relied on SAP Hybris.

Taking a bold step, Jaycar eliminated the POS (point-of-sale) system altogether and embraced commercetools' unified commerce platform. Now, store associates have access to relevant data, product returns have been optimized and loyalty works cross-channel. The retailer implemented it in only seven weeks.

Unified commerce, optimized returns, cross-channel loyalty in just seven weeks.





Denmark's largest retailer, [Salling Group](#), faced issues with SAP Hybris to implement an omnichannel customer experience while paying high licensing and maintenance costs. By migrating to commercetools, the retailer delivered on mobile responsiveness, eCommerce speed and new touchpoints, such as click-and-collect.

The result: Salling Group increased conversion rate by 30% while reducing costs by 75%.

“Migrating to a composable architecture was absolutely the right move for Salling Group. Now we can respond to customer expectations and market changes a lot faster with such a flexible and scalable solution. We reduced operational costs massively by switching from SAP to commercetools, plus increased traffic, conversion rates and more. Composable really is the future of commerce for the Salling Group.”

Ismael Garcia

Ismael Garcia, Digital Technology Chief, Salling Group



3 key advantages commercetools has over SAP

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.

SAP offers an all-in-one platform that's only suitable for brands without customization needs. The inflexible, prescriptive core relies heavily on the SAP partner ecosystem — reinforcing vendor lock-in.

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.

SAP has evolved toward a cloud-native architecture despite retaining certain legacy elements, such as API versioning. Robust reliability and resilience are provided.

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.

SAP offers a fast time to market for standard implementations only. Moreover, costs are sky-high due to versioning upgrade fees, highly specialized developers and expensive customization options.



Deep dive: Flexibility and agility











Use case breadth	 <p>commercetools excels in empowering highly customized experiences across innovative use cases.</p>	 <p>SAP offers a more “out-of-the-box” suite that works well with more straightforward use cases.</p>
Tech-agnostic	 <p>commercetools provides modern developer tooling and tech-agnostic infrastructure for maximized flexibility and freedom of engineering.</p>	 <p>SAP’s underlying core retains elements of a more prescriptive architecture that still influences the choice of compatible technologies and integrations, regardless of customer needs.</p>
Extensibility	 <p>commercetools offers exceptional flexibility, allowing businesses to expand easily beyond out-of-the-box features. Its tech-agnostic, extensible architecture — spanning data models, APIs, events, and the Merchant Center — makes it ideal for tailored, scalable solutions.</p>	 <p>Built upon a monolithic foundation with a traditional API versioning approach, SAP is inherently less flexible and requires more effort to break its prescribed patterns.</p>
No vendor lock-in	 <p>Through its MACH® (Microservices, API-first, Cloud-native, Headless) architecture, commercetools virtually eliminates vendor lock-in.</p>	 <p>Vendor lock-in risk due to SAP’s traditional monolithic core, more prescriptive architecture and reliance on an extensive ecosystem of integrated SAP solutions.</p>
AI capabilities	 <p>With Commerce MCP and AI Hub, commercetools delivers an AI-first, composable platform that enables smarter automation, personalization and agile commerce experiences.</p>	 <p>SAP’s AI capabilities are constrained by a restrictive, monolithic legacy architecture that impedes agility and complicates the swift deployment of advanced AI trends like agentic systems.</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>While SAP has partly evolved towards a cloud-native architecture, the core platform still retains elements from its legacy architecture.</p>
Maintainability	 <p>commercetools APIs are modular and versionless, meaning they are designed to evolve without introducing breaking changes. This allows both REST and GraphQL APIs to coexist and remain compatible with the platform's core functionality.</p>	 <p>Due to its monolithic core, SAP still requires managing custom extensions and a more classic API versioning approach, which may necessitate more active oversight during upgrades and ongoing development.</p>
Reliability and resilience	 <p>commercetools' microservices architecture and cloud-native design prioritize reliability and resilience, ensuring high availability and performance backed by SLAs offering at least 99.9% uptime.</p>	 <p>SAP generally offers solid reliability and resilience, with high availability and disaster recovery capabilities.</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>Despite its setup complexity, SAP supports unified commerce by combining B2B and B2C capabilities within a single system, as well as handling multi-brand and multi-region reasonably well, including support for physical retail through its cloud-native Customer Checkout POS solution.</p>



Deep dive: Business value



Fast time to market/value



commercetools accelerates time-to-market by offering pre-composed, opinionated solutions for quick launches through Foundry for B2C Retail and B2B Manufacturing. These solutions provide the flexibility of composable commerce and streamlined frontend development.



SAP could offer faster initial time-to-value/time-to-market, but only for standard commerce implementations (owing to its out-of-the-box features and integrated ecosystem).

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.



The implementation cost and TCO of SAP can be extremely high: Multiple versions, high costs, plus upgrade costs and expensive (and time-consuming) customization options. Highly specialized (expensive) developers drive high TCO and lower ROI.



Industry recognition



2024 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for Digital Commerce



commercetools is recognized as a Leader for the fifth consecutive year, having progressed even further in the completeness of vision and ability to execute on it.



SAP is recognized as a Leader in Gartner's 2024 Magic Quadrant, although it performs lower than commercetools in both completeness of vision, as well as the ability to execute on it.



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 SAP'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.



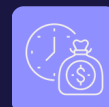
Agentic AI leadership

- 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

commercetools is the leading enterprise commerce platform built to power innovation and versatility for the world's leading brands. Our composable, cloud-native technology provides the flexibility to design tailored, scalable commerce experiences across any channel, at any scale, whether in stores, on social media, through connected devices, or in augmented reality. By removing the constraints of legacy systems, commercetools enables companies to innovate freely, personalize at scale, and Proly launch new channels to meet the evolving demands of their customers.

As trusted partners to brands like Audi, Danone, Eurail, NBCUniversal, and Sephora, commercetools helps its customers set the pace of innovation, deliver exceptional experiences, and achieve sustainable growth. With commercetools, businesses don't just adapt to change, they lead it.

More information at commercetools.com.

