



Why Does Your B2B eCommerce Platform Struggle with Customer- Specific Pricing and Complex Orders?

Understanding why B2B eCommerce platforms struggle with customer-specific pricing and complex orders requires looking beyond the storefront. These challenges are typically rooted in how business rules, operational data, and enterprise systems work together.

Customer-specific pricing and complex ordering are fundamental characteristics of B2B commerce. Supporting them requires business rules, operational data, and reliable integration across multiple enterprise systems. Depending on the organization's architecture, that information may be managed across an ERP, commerce platform, CRM, PIM, warehouse system, or other operational applications.

Problems can occur when the commerce platform lacks the capabilities required to support the organization's business processes, when business rules are not clearly defined, or when pricing, inventory, customer, product, and order data are not synchronized reliably between systems.

In SAP Business One, for example, organizations can maintain price lists, special prices for individual business partners, quantity-based prices, and period or volume discounts. A connected B2B commerce platform must either retrieve, synchronize, or correctly apply the relevant pricing rules for the authenticated customer.

The commerce platform may also manage digital-commerce functions such as customer-specific catalogs, account roles, approval workflows, quotes, budgets, and ordering permissions. SAP Commerce and Znode both document support for several of these B2B capabilities.

The central issue therefore is not simply whether the website is connected to an ERP. It is whether the organization has identified the authoritative source for each type of data, assigned each business rule to the appropriate system, and established reliable exchanges between those systems.

How Customer-Specific Pricing Works in B2B Commerce

Unlike B2C commerce, where pricing is generally the same for every customer, B2B organizations often negotiate pricing, payment terms, and purchasing agreements for individual customers. Those agreements become part of the company's operational and financial processes, which is why the supporting data is frequently managed across multiple enterprise systems.

In many B2B organizations, the ERP serves as the system of record for customer pricing and other operational data because this information directly affects sales, finance, fulfillment, and reporting.

Depending on an organization's business processes and system architecture, the ERP may manage or provide information such as:

- Customer-specific price lists
- Contract pricing
- Quantity- and volume-based discounts
- Payment terms
- Customer credit information
- Inventory availability
- Tax-related information
- Currency and regional pricing

Depending on the platform's capabilities and the organization's architecture, the eCommerce platform may also manage commerce-specific functions such as promotions, customer-specific catalogs, approval workflows, quotations, and digital merchandising.

The important consideration is not whether pricing exists in more than one system. It is whether the organization has clearly defined which system is authoritative for each type of data and established reliable processes for keeping information synchronized between systems.

When pricing or customer data is maintained independently in multiple systems without reliable synchronization or clear data ownership, businesses may experience:

- Outdated customer or contract pricing

- Pricing discrepancies across sales channels
- Additional manual maintenance
- Increased time spent investigating and correcting pricing exceptions

Well-designed integrations and clear data-governance practices help reduce these risks by ensuring that pricing and customer information remain accurate and consistent across systems.

Complex Orders Reflect Complex Business Processes

Unlike consumer transactions, B2B purchasing frequently includes business rules that vary by customer.

Examples include:

- Customer-specific catalogs
- Purchase approval workflows
- Minimum order quantities
- Multiple shipping locations
- Blanket purchase agreements
- Contract pricing
- Quote-to-order processes
- Account hierarchies with multiple buyers

These are operational processes, not simply website features.

If an eCommerce platform cannot support these business rules or access them from the ERP in real time, buyers may be unable to complete some transactions entirely through self-service channels, requiring sales or customer-service intervention.

Product Information Must Remain Consistent Across Channels

Pricing is only one part of the purchasing experience.

Customers also expect accurate:

- **Product specifications**
- **Technical documents**
- **Images**
- **Inventory availability**
- **Product relationships**
- **Configurable options**

When product information is maintained across multiple disconnected systems, inconsistencies become more likely.

Many B2B organizations address this by using a Product Information Management (PIM) system to centralize product content while synchronizing data with ERP and eCommerce platforms.

System Integration Supports Accurate Customer Experiences

A B2B eCommerce platform does not operate independently.

Its effectiveness depends on the quality of integration between:

- **ERP**
- **CRM**
- **Product Information Management (PIM)**
- **Warehouse Management Systems (WMS)**
- **Shipping providers**
- **Payment systems**

When these systems exchange information at the frequency required by the business process, whether in real time or through scheduled synchronization, customers can receive more current pricing, inventory, product, and order information, and faster processing times.

Without reliable integration, businesses often compensate through manual processes, duplicate data entry, and exception handling.

The Objective Is Not Simply Selling Online

Modern B2B eCommerce extends existing business operations into a digital experience.

An effective platform should accurately reflect how the business already operates by exposing ERP data, applying established business rules, and supporting customer-specific purchasing requirements.

Rather than replacing operational systems, the platform should provide customers with secure, real-time access to the information they need to do business efficiently.

The Bottom Line

Customer-specific pricing and complex ordering are not standard-alone eCommerce challenges.

They are business process challenges that depend on accurate ERP data, well-defined business rules, consistent product information, and reliable system integration.

Organizations that treat their ERP as the operational system of record—and their eCommerce platform as a digital extension of those processes—are better positioned to deliver the accurate, efficient purchasing experience that B2B customers expect.

Resources:

SAP Business One pricing documentation

SAP Commerce B2B feature documentation

SAP Learning (ERP and Commerce concepts)

Znode B2B Commerce documentation

Znode PIM documentation