

Checklist

Is vendor lock-in limiting your growth?

Evaluate your current platform to determine if vendor lock-in is limiting your ability to innovate, scale, and grow your business.

1. Flexibility and customization

Can you customize platform features to fully meet your business requirements?

Are you able to integrate third-party tools without limitations such as compatibility issues, vendor approval, restricted APIs, or additional costs?

Does your vendor support custom pricing, unique product catalogs, and specialized customer engagement tools?

Can you make in-house modifications, or are customizations limited to vendor-approved solutions?

Does your platform offer source code access or customization options to support deeper personalization?

2. Scalability and long-term costs

Does your platform allow you to scale without significant, unreasonable increases in costs?

Are costs transparent, with no unexpected fees for advanced features, additional users, or integrations?

Is the pricing model predictable and aligned with your growth strategy?

Are there options for scaling infrastructure without relying solely on the vendor?

Do you have the flexibility to add or remove features as your needs evolve without incurring additional costs?

3. Data portability and control

Can you easily export all data, including customer and transaction data, in industry-standard formats?

Is data stored in accessible, non-proprietary formats that are straightforward to migrate?

Do you have full data ownership, or does the vendor control access to backups or historical data?

Are there any restrictions or fees associated with data export to another platform?

Does the vendor provide detailed, real-time access to your data without imposing extra costs?

4. Support and innovation access

Is vendor support responsive and aligned with your unique needs?

Are regular updates and innovations released that match your business's growth trajectory?

Do you have timely access to new features, or are you dependent on the vendor's release schedule?

Are there dedicated support channels for high-priority issues, or do you rely on general queues?

Can you count on a decentralized global community of developers and partners for additional support and innovation?

5. Integration and growth potential

Does the platform offer open APIs and an API-first approach for seamless integration with external tools?

Does vendor dependency limit your ability to adopt advanced tools like AI, automation, or real-time analytics?

Is the platform designed for modular integration, enabling you to quickly implement emerging technologies?

Are there any constraints on integrating with best-of-breed solutions for areas like CRM, ERP, or marketing?

6. Compliance and security

Does the platform comply with regulatory standards (e.g., GDPR, HIPAA) across all target markets?

Are security practices aligned with your organization's protocols, or are they limited by vendor policies?

Do you have control over security configurations to meet internal and external compliance standards?

Does the platform offer transparency regarding data protection and regular security audits?

Are you able to implement custom security measures, or are you restricted to vendor-defined options?

7. Infrastructure and hosting flexibility

Can you choose your hosting provider, or is the platform limited to a specific cloud (e.g., AWS, Azure)?

Is the platform cloud-agnostic or self-hostable, allowing you to avoid infrastructure dependencies?

Do you have the flexibility to migrate your infrastructure in the future without incurring unreasonable costs?

Is there support for hybrid environments (cloud/on-premises) to suit evolving infrastructure needs?

Does the platform's infrastructure support redundancy and disaster recovery independent of vendor control?

8. Dependency on vendor ecosystem

Does the vendor control key components of your tech stack, such as payment gateways or CRM?

Are you able to use alternative providers for essential services (e.g., payment, shipping) without restrictions?

Is access to your platform's capabilities limited to vendor-specific apps and extensions?

Does the platform rely on proprietary standards, creating dependencies for third-party solutions?

Can you readily switch to other vendors for high-priority functions without rebuilding your system?

Conclusion

We hope this checklist has provided you with greater clarity on whether, and to what extent, vendor lock-in might be affecting your business. The challenges and impact of vendor dependency vary greatly between organizations, shaped by their unique needs, objectives, and future ambitions. This underscores the importance of partnering with independent solution experts who can craft a tailored infrastructure to meet your current requirements while positioning your business for long-term success.

Stay tuned for part 2 of our content series next week: "Breaking free from vendor lock-in: Strategic steps for decision makers" and part 3: "No lock-ins, no limits: Best practices for seamless migration to Shopware."

Can't wait to learn more? Request a no-obligation product demo today and discover how Shopware can empower scalable, unrestricted growth.

Contact us