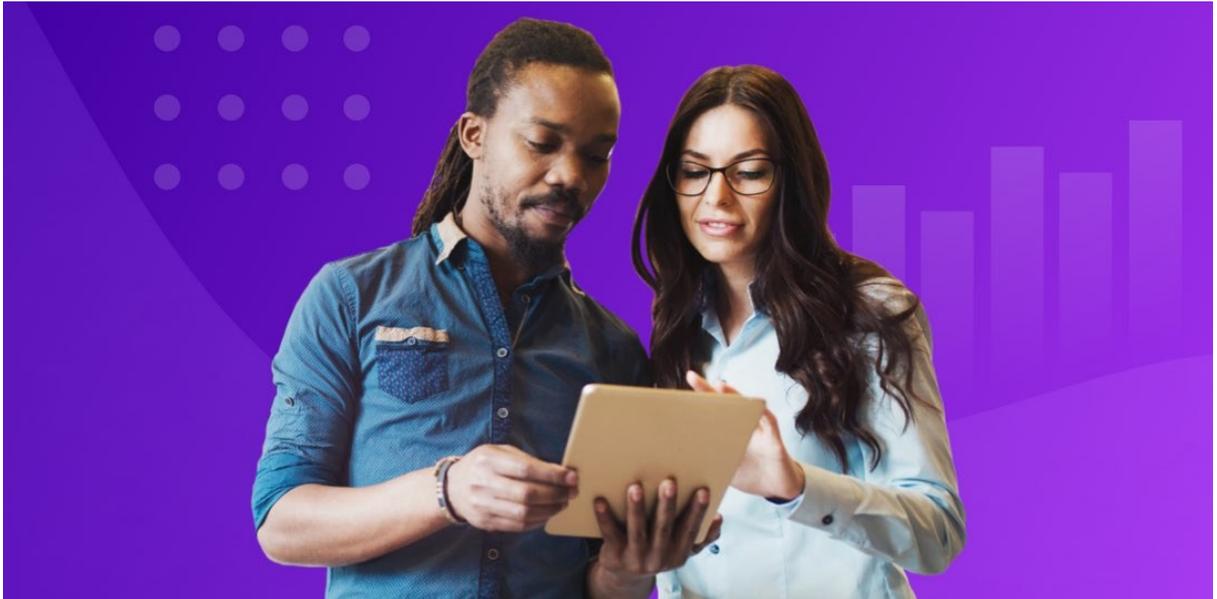


# 15 Ecommerce Trends That You Need to Know to Succeed in 2026



Ecommerce isn't slowing down. It's accelerating.

In 2026, [global retail sales will surpass \\$3.8 trillion](#), reflecting continued growth in online shopping, [mobile commerce](#), and [omnichannel](#) experiences.

Looking ahead, that number is expected to climb even higher, exceeding [\\$4.9 trillion by 2030](#). For brands, that means more opportunity, but also more competition.

What does this mean for you?

To stay competitive in 2026, brands need more than awareness. They need to act on the trends driving real ecommerce innovation.

In this guide, we'll explore 15 key ecommerce trends, from AI content and [headless commerce](#) to [blockchain](#) security and social shopping.

You'll also learn how to evaluate which ones fit your business, and how BigCommerce can help you put them into action.

## Top ecommerce trends leading the way in 2026

If we know one thing about the ecommerce market, it's that it's always looking ahead.

From [augmented reality](#) and [artificial intelligence](#) to mobile shopping and [chatbots](#), the industry lives on the forefront of technology and innovation.

Let's explore the top ecommerce trends and see where the industry is headed.

### 1. AI helps solve customer pain points faster.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and [machine learning algorithms](#), at this point, are practically household names.

From streamlining support to personalizing the buyer journey, AI is helping brands solve real customer challenges at scale.

Here's where it's making the biggest impact:

- Improving engagement through personalized experiences
- Forecasting behavior to guide smarter business decisions
- Automating repetitive tasks to boost operational efficiency
- Recommending products and enabling instant checkout for shoppers

The result? Faster, more relevant interactions, and more satisfied customers.

Below, we'll explore three key ways brands are using AI to deliver these outcomes: hyper-personalization and predictive analytics.

### Agentic commerce accelerates the customer journey.

[Agentic commerce](#) refers to AI systems that act on behalf of the customer, anticipating needs, taking initiative, and completing actions aligned with shopper intent. In ecommerce, agentic experiences reduce friction by helping customers discover products, make decisions, and complete purchases with minimal effort.

In ecommerce, this looks like:

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- [AI-powered shopping agents](#) that browse products, compare prices, and place orders
- Autonomous carts that learn from user behavior and build recurring orders
- Personalized assistants that refine search, apply filters, and recommend bundles automatically
- Proactive support that flags delivery issues or recommends returns before the customer even asks

This next evolution of AI goes beyond automation. It is about giving customers intelligent agents that work for them, reducing friction, saving time, and delivering hyper-personalized service at scale.

Did you know? [86% of consumers want AI](#) to assist with product research.

[Agentic Commerce Suite](#) is one example of this next wave. This powerful new toolset helps merchants succeed in the new era of AI-driven shopping by making products discoverable and purchasable by AI Agents.

Through a single integration, BigCommerce businesses will be able to connect their existing product catalogs to their choice of available [AI agents](#), enabling them to power an agentic checkout experience, allowing merchants to scale while still maintaining control of their brand.

### **AI-generated content streamlines manual processes.**

From [product descriptions](#) to [email campaigns](#), AI-generated content is helping ecommerce brands scale creative production without sacrificing quality.

Natural language processing tools can now generate high-quality, on-brand content in seconds. In addition, solutions like Feedonomics specialize in generating complete, structured, and enriched product data to improve discoverability across channels.

Here's how [ecommerce teams](#) are using AI to accelerate content creation:

- **Product descriptions at scale:** Quickly write detailed, keyword-rich descriptions for hundreds of SKUs.
- **Personalized marketing copy:** Tailor messages based on customer behavior, preferences, or segments.
- **SEO-optimized content:** Generate blog posts and landing pages designed to rank for long-tail keywords.

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- **Multilingual support:** Easily translate content to reach global audiences without manual rewrites.
- **Real-time A/B testing:** Create content variants and test performance faster than ever.

While human oversight is still essential, especially for brand voice and accuracy, AI enables faster iteration, greater personalization, and reduced production costs.

### **AI automation allows teams to do more with less.**

Manual tasks slow down growth. [AI automation](#) speeds it up.

One great case study to learn from is Amazon. This online-bookstore-turned-marketplace transformed into the retail giant they are today, in large part by connecting AI systems across every part of its operation.

By building one intelligent network that enables everything to work better together, Amazon is able to learn from massive amounts of customer data and find patterns, relying on machine learning systems to distill this information. The end result is turned into personalized product recommendations (that actually convert).

These recommendations increase product sales by an estimated [11% of Amazon's total revenue](#).

[Ecommerce brands](#) are using AI to streamline operations across every department, saving time, reducing errors, and freeing up teams to focus on strategy.

Here's how AI automation is driving real impact:

- **Customer support:** AI chatbots and virtual assistants resolve common issues instantly, reducing support volume and improving response times.
- **Inventory management:** AI systems can forecast demand, automate restocking, and optimize warehouse operations.
- **Order fulfillment:** Smart automation helps route orders, manage returns, and update customers, without manual input.
- **Marketing automation:** AI tools trigger personalized campaigns, dynamic pricing, and real-time product recommendations.
- **Fraud prevention:** Machine learning algorithms monitor transactions and flag suspicious activity before it becomes a problem.

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The value of AI automation goes beyond efficiency. It creates a more responsive, consistent experience for customers, and helps brands scale without growing headcount.

## 2. No-code, low-code, and AI-assisted building take pressure off developer queues

No-code and AI-assisted building are changing who can ship in ecommerce. In 2026, the fastest brands aren't waiting on long development cycles to launch campaigns, refresh merchandising, or fix customer friction.

Modern commerce stacks now let marketers, merchandisers, and ops teams create high-impact storefront experiences, keep product data accurate across channels, and build lightweight workflows — often without writing code.

### Visual builders make storefront iteration straightforward.

No-code page and component builders like [Makeswift](#) enable teams to ship landing pages, refresh templates, and test new layouts quickly — without clogging developer backlogs. Paired with a [flexible commerce backend](#), brands can iterate on creative while keeping core systems stable.

### Catalog management is more scalable.

[Product feed creation and optimization](#) is no longer a one-off “technical project” that stalls growth. In 2026, teams are using structured enrichment and automated mapping to standardize attributes, fix inconsistencies, and syndicate optimized data to [all their sales channels](#) from a single source of truth. This includes creating content from scratch with generative AI built to scale, so catalog gaps are filled in without putting strain on marketing teams.

### AI-assisted coding is expanding who can build — and what gets built.

In 2026, AI coding tools (like GitHub Copilot, Cursor, Claude, and more) are lowering the barrier to writing and modifying software for non-engineers. Often described as “vibe coding,” this approach is already being used successfully by operations, marketing, analytics, and product-adjacent teams to solve practical problems without full engineering involvement. Common, proven use cases include:

- Generating **simple scripts and formulas** (JavaScript, Python, SQL, spreadsheet logic) for one-off tasks
- Writing and modifying **API requests** (REST/GraphQL) using natural language prompts
- Creating **data transformations and cleanup routines** that replace manual spreadsheet work

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- Drafting **configuration files and rulesets** (JSON, YAML, environment configs) with guardrails
- Prototyping **internal tools or utilities** before handing them off to engineering
- Automating **repeatable operational tasks** where failure impact is low and outputs are reviewable.

These workflows succeed because the scope is intentionally constrained, outputs are inspectable, and AI accelerates execution rather than replacing accountability.

## **At the same time, engineers are increasingly trusting AI with real development work.**

For experienced developers, AI coding tools have moved well beyond autocomplete. In production environments, engineers are reliably using AI to:

- **Scaffold new projects and components**, including boilerplate and framework setup
- **Refactor and modernize existing code**, especially repetitive or legacy patterns
- **Write and maintain tests** (unit, integration, and regression) more consistently
- **Generate documentation** directly from code and system behavior
- **Debug unfamiliar codebases** by explaining logic paths and side effects
- **Maintain small internal tools and utilities** that previously struggled for prioritization

Engineers retain ownership of architecture, security, and performance decisions — but offloading these time-intensive tasks to AI has proven to reduce cycle times without sacrificing quality when paired with review and standards.

### **The advantage: speed with governance.**

The winners won't be brands that "avoid developers," but brands that reserve engineering for high-leverage work while empowering the broader team to ship safely. The best stacks combine guardrails (roles, approvals, QA checks, versioning) with self-serve building so you can move fast without breaking the storefront or the data foundation.

### **3. Creating security and transparency with blockchain.**

As online shopping continues to grow, so do concerns about [data security](#), [fraud](#), and trust between buyers and sellers.

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This is where blockchain technology comes in.

According to [Statista](#), the global blockchain market will grow from \$17 billion in 2023 to over \$1,000 billion by 2032, signaling widespread adoption across industries, including ecommerce.

Here's how blockchain is transforming online commerce:

- **Enhances transaction security:** Decentralized ledgers help prevent fraud and protect payment data.
- **Increases transparency:** Every transaction is recorded and verifiable, reducing the risk of manipulation.
- **Enables smart contracts:** Automates processes like order verification, payments, and returns — without third parties.
- **Supports secure supply chain tracking:** Brands and shoppers can trace products from origin to doorstep.
- **Protects personal data:** Shoppers can verify product authenticity and safeguard their information.

As data privacy and transparency become key customer expectations, blockchain will continue to shape a safer, more reliable ecommerce experience.

#### 4. Livestream shopping is taking off.

Livestream commerce blends entertainment with ecommerce, and it's quickly going mainstream.

Once seen as a niche trend, livestream shopping is now a core sales channel on platforms like TikTok Live, Whatnot, and eBay Live.

According to [Statista](#), US [livestreaming ecommerce](#) sales hit \$50 billion in 2023 and will grow to \$68 billion by 2026. As social media and online shopping continue to converge, livestreaming gives brands a new way to connect and convert.

And this type of connection converts. Livestream events often see conversion rates of up to [30%](#), compared to just 2-3% for traditional ecommerce.

Here's how retailers are using livestream shopping to drive results:

- **Showcasing products in action:** Live demos build trust and reduce purchase hesitation.
- **Driving urgency and exclusivity:** Limited drops and timed offers encourage immediate purchases.

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- **Featuring influencer hosts:** Trusted creators guide the experience and boost engagement.
- **Enabling real-time interaction:** Viewers ask questions and get instant answers during the stream.
- **Streamlining the purchase flow:** Shoppers can browse and buy without leaving the video.

With consumers craving more immersive, authentic shopping experiences, livestream commerce is a major revenue driver in 2026.

## 5. AR brings the in-store experience online.

One of the biggest challenges in ecommerce? Shoppers can't touch or try the product before they buy.

[Augmented reality](#) (AR) is solving that.

AR bridges the gap between physical and digital, helping customers better understand what they're buying, and making online shopping feel more like in-store browsing.

According to recent projections, the [global AR in ecommerce market](#) was valued at \$5.8 billion in 2024 and will reach \$38.5 billion by 2030, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 35.8% from 2025 onward.

[Retailers like UPLIFT Desk are already using AR](#) to improve both experience and performance. Here's how AR is being used by businesses today:

- **Virtual try-ons:** Let customers see how apparel, accessories, or makeup will look on them in real time.
- **3D product visualizations:** Allow shoppers to rotate, zoom, and inspect products from every angle.
- **Real-world placement tools:** Help customers preview how furniture, decor, or appliances will look in their home.
- **Interactive experiences:** Turn shopping into something fun, immersive, and shareable on social media.

By helping customers visualize products in context, AR boosts confidence, shortens the decision cycle, and reduces returns.

## 6. Turning up the volume with voice search.

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Voice search is no longer a novelty. It's becoming a standard way consumers interact with technology.

As of 2025, [35%](#) of the US population aged 12 and up now owns a smart speaker, making voice-enabled shopping more accessible than ever.

Voice assistants like Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant are reshaping the path to purchase. With a simple voice command, shoppers can search for products, compare prices, check availability, and even place orders, all without lifting a finger.

To meet this demand, ecommerce brands are optimizing their sites for voice search by:

- **Structuring content for quick answers:** Using concise, conversational language to match how people speak.
- **Improving page speed and mobile experience:** Two key factors for voice ranking.
- **Adding voice-friendly metadata:** Helping search engines surface product details in voice results.
- **Leveraging long-tail keywords:** Reflecting natural speech patterns and common customer questions.

[Voice commerce](#) is becoming a standard expectation as consumers look for faster, more convenient ways to shop. For brands, it's an opportunity to remove friction and meet customers where they are — in their kitchens, living rooms, or even their cars.

## 7. Harnessing customer data for personalized shopping experiences.

Personalization isn't just about adding a customer's first name to an email.

Today's shoppers expect brands to understand their preferences, and tailor every interaction accordingly. That means showing the right product, on the right channel, at the right time.

Here's how ecommerce brands are using customer data to create seamless, personalized experiences:

- **Omnichannel consistency:** Customers want a unified experience across web, mobile, marketplaces, and social.
- **Optimized product feeds:** Tools like [Feedonomics](#) help sync and optimize product listings across channels.

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- **Smart recommendations:** AI-powered engines suggest products based on real-time behavior and purchase history.
- **Retargeting and dynamic ads:** Personalized ad campaigns help re-engage shoppers with relevant offers.
- **Push notifications and emails:** Triggered by browsing or cart behavior to keep customers moving toward purchase.
- **Dynamic pricing:** Adjust pricing based on customer segments, behavior, or inventory levels.

At the same time, trust and transparency matter more than ever.

Many brands now ask customers to opt in to personalization, giving them control over how their data is used. This not only builds trust, but also ensures compliance with regulations like GDPR and CCPA.

The future of personalization is not just tailored. It's also transparent.

### **Hyper-personalization helps you serve better suggestions.**

Hyper-personalization uses real-time data, behavioral insights, and AI to deliver shopping experiences that feel truly individualized. Instead of offering recommendations based on broad segments, brands can [respond to each shopper's intent](#) in the moment.

Bargain hunting retailer and BigCommerce customer, [UntilGone](#), is a great example to learn from. After incorporating AI product recommendations into transactional emails sent to their customers, their team saw a **200% increase** in revenue by the end of 2023.

Examples of hyper-personalization in action:

- **Behavior-based product suggestions:** Tailored based on clicks, scrolls, and time spent on product pages.
- **Custom landing pages:** Built dynamically based on source, search history, or previous purchases.
- **Smart content blocks:** Show or hide homepage elements depending on user data.
- **1:1 marketing automation:** Emails, ads, and SMS that reflect each customer's unique preferences or timing.

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By treating every shopper like a segment of one, brands can increase relevance, loyalty, and lifetime value.

### **Predictive analytics can help you spot new trends.**

What if you could anticipate customer needs, before they even ask?

[Predictive analytics](#) makes that possible by analyzing patterns in customer behavior, purchase history, and browsing data to forecast what they'll want next.

Brands are using predictive tools to:

- **Identify high-value customer segments:** Focus retention efforts where they'll have the biggest impact.
- **Forecast demand:** Adjust inventory and supply chains based on predicted trends.
- **Personalize recommendations:** Suggest products likely to convert based on past and peer behavior.
- **Prevent churn:** Spot warning signs (like slowed engagement) and trigger win-back campaigns.
- **Optimize timing:** Deliver messages when each customer is most likely to act.

Predictive analytics turns raw data into smart strategy, helping brands stay ahead of shopper expectations and market shifts.

## **8. Semantic search is becoming foundational to modern storefront discovery.**

Semantic search improves storefront discovery by understanding shopper intent rather than relying on exact keyword matches. For ecommerce brands, this means more relevant results, fewer zero-result searches, and stronger conversion rates as customers use natural language to find products.

[58% of shoppers](#) admit generative AI improves their shopping experience.

When search engines rely solely on strict keyword matching, highly relevant products are missed, zero-result searches increase, and revenue is lost. Semantic search addresses this gap by understanding *meaning and intent*, not just words, dramatically improving relevancy while unlocking the next generation of AI-powered discovery experiences.

### **Why semantic search matters now:**

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- **Shoppers search in natural language**, using complex phrases like “flowy summer dress for a beach wedding” or “unique gift for Father’s Day,” which keyword-only engines routinely fail to interpret
- **Low relevancy directly impacts revenue**, as customers abandon searches when results don’t match their intent
- **Strict keyword matching hides strong products** if titles or descriptions aren’t perfectly optimized or “keyword-stuffed”
- **Poor zero-results handling** creates dead ends instead of guiding shoppers toward viable alternatives
- **Lack of NLP prevents conversational and AI-driven experiences**, limiting the ability to power features like conversational search or agent-based discovery
- **Developers and partners are blocked by weak search foundations**, since irrelevant results make it impossible to build reliable AI tools on top of storefront data (“garbage in, garbage out”)

These technologies make it easier for shoppers to find relevant answers and products, helping them move through the funnel faster than with traditional keyword-based search.

## 9. Mobile shopping is still on the move.

Smartphones are more than communication tools. They’re shopping hubs.

As mobile commerce continues to grow, it’s becoming the preferred way for customers to browse, compare, and buy.

To meet mobile shoppers where they are, ecommerce sites must:

- **Ensure responsive design:** Pages should load quickly and display flawlessly on any screen size
- **Streamline navigation:** Simple menus and intuitive layouts help users find what they need, fast
- **Enable one-click checkout:** Mobile buyers expect frictionless, tap-to-buy experiences
- **Use mobile-first content:** Shorter copy, thumb-friendly buttons, and vertical imagery perform best

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- **Support mobile wallets:** Payment options like Apple Pay and Google Pay reduce cart abandonment

[Mobile shopping](#) is not a side channel. It is central to the customer journey. A good example of a brand that utilized this fact is UK sports and outdoor wear retailer [SportsShoes](#).

Moving from a legacy tech stack to composable architecture, the brand began by identifying the tools it wanted to use and then, after considerable market research, found that BigCommerce offered the best balance of a flexible API infrastructure and affordable total cost of ownership (TCO).

This newfound flexibility allowed them to scale up their business, and launch a mobile application for the first time.

“We’ve launched an app which has been incredibly successful. We would not have been able to do that with our old legacy website. It wasn't API driven, it wasn't composable, but BigCommerce has allowed us to open that door and open up those new channels. Our checkout conversion is broadly double what it used to be before.”

— Jon Cleaver, Chief Technology Officer, SportsShoes

Brands that optimize for mobile will [convert more visitors](#), improve retention, and stay competitive in an increasingly on-the-go marketplace.

## 10. Closing the sale with flexible payment options.

[Checkout](#) is a make-or-break moment in the customer journey.

Even a small snag, like limited payment choices, can lead to abandoned carts and lost revenue. In fact, [10%](#) of shoppers will leave a purchase behind if they don't see a payment method that works for them.

That's why offering flexible payment options isn't just nice to have. It's essential.

[Modern ecommerce](#) brands are expanding their payment ecosystems to meet evolving customer expectations. This includes:

- Buy now, pay later (BNPL)
- Traditional credit and debit cards
- Digital wallets and mobile payments
- One-click checkout experiences

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- Accelerated guest checkout

Offering choice at checkout helps remove friction, boosts buyer confidence, and increases conversion rates. It also builds trust by showing customers that you understand their needs and are ready to meet them.

### **Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL).**

Shoppers want flexibility, especially when it comes to how and when they pay.

[Buy now, pay later](#) (BNPL) options let customers split their purchases into interest-free installments. For many, it's a way to manage budgets without relying on credit cards.

Ecommerce brands are integrating BNPL at checkout to:

- **Reduce cart abandonment:** Removing upfront cost makes big purchases feel more accessible.
- **Increase average order value:** Customers are more likely to add that extra item when they can pay over time.
- **Attract younger shoppers:** Gen Z and millennials are more likely to use BNPL over traditional financing.
- **Offer interest-free financing:** Through partners like Affirm, Sezzle, and Klarna, retailers can provide flexible terms without added fees.

BNPL not only drives sales, it strengthens customer loyalty by offering real financial flexibility.

### **Digital wallets and mobile payments continue to add functionality.**

Today's customers expect checkout to be fast, secure, and effortless, especially on mobile.

[Digital wallets like Apple Pay and Google Pay](#) allow shoppers to check out in just a few taps. They also offer built-in security features that protect payment data and speed up the process. Digital wallets are continuing to grow, and expand access — such as Apple Pay becoming available on non-Safari browsers. Ecommerce platforms like BigCommerce are developing more feature support for digital wallets to help merchants grow, such as region expansion and multi-coupon support for Google Pay.

By enabling mobile wallet payments, brands can:

- **Shorten checkout time:** No need to manually enter card or shipping info.

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- **Reduce friction on mobile:** One-click checkout is ideal for on-the-go shoppers.
- **Increase trust and security:** Wallets use tokenization and biometric verification.
- **Reach more customers:** Wallets are popular across all regions and demographics, especially younger users.

As mobile shopping grows, so does the demand for mobile-first payment options. Digital wallets are no longer optional, they're expected.

### **Accelerated guest checkout.**

Now more than ever, online shoppers expect quick and easy checkout. One way to do this is by offering some form of expedited payment option.

Ergonomic office outfitter [UPLIFT Desk](#) found success when they implemented [Fastlane by PayPal](#). This checkout solution for card payments allows PayPal and Braintree users to leverage PayPal's network to recognize millions of shoppers and provide them with a fast, frictionless checkout using their securely saved credentials in as little as one click.

## **11. Composable commerce drives digital innovation.**

Today's ecommerce leaders need to move fast, and scale even faster.

[Composable commerce](#) gives brands the agility to respond to changing customer expectations and emerging tech trends by building their tech stack with modular components.

Instead of relying on one rigid, all-in-one platform, composable commerce allows businesses to:

- Choose best-in-breed solutions for specific needs
- Integrate tools seamlessly through APIs
- Swap out capabilities without replatforming
- Build custom storefronts tailored to their audiences and markets

### **Headless commerce adoption.**

In a [headless](#) setup, your frontend (the customer-facing storefront) is separated from your backend (the ecommerce engine). This uncoupled structure gives brands complete design and development freedom, without sacrificing performance.

More enterprise businesses are adopting headless commerce to:

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- **Unlock creative flexibility:** Build unique storefronts tailored to specific regions, audiences, or campaigns.
- **Experiment faster:** Test new features, layouts, or content without impacting backend logic.
- **Deliver omnichannel experiences:** Push consistent content and commerce across web, mobile, apps, kiosks, and more.
- **Improve site performance:** Use modern frameworks like Next.js or Remix to create lightning-fast storefronts.

At BigCommerce, [Catalyst](#) is our purpose-built framework for headless commerce. Designed for both developers and business users, Catalyst makes it easier to:

- Launch new storefronts faster using prebuilt components and best practices
- Customize experiences deeply with modern tools like Tailwind, React, and GraphQL
- Reduce technical debt by separating presentation from logic
- Collaborate cross-functionally with a setup that empowers both marketers and developers

Catalyst delivers the freedom of headless commerce, with fewer barriers to execution.

Veterinary medtech brand [Movora](#) is a great case study that scaled their business to the global level using headless architecture. The results speak for themselves: 100%+ year over year growth recorded two months after US launch, with 34% of orders now placed online, up from 27% in just months.

“We wanted more orders to come in via ecommerce because customers have the rich product information at their disposal. They can see when things are in stock and not in stock, which has been great. We couldn’t do that before.”

— Korrie Wilhelm, VP of Marketing, Ecommerce, and Brand, Movora

### **API-first architecture enables greater flexibility.**

APIs are the foundation of composable commerce, and they’re what make it so adaptable.

With an API-first architecture, brands can connect and customize every layer of the ecommerce experience, from [inventory](#) and checkout to [CMS](#) and [marketing automation](#).

Key advantages of API-first ecommerce:

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- **Faster time to market:** Launch updates and features without complex backend development
- **Custom workflows:** Tailor processes like fulfillment, shipping, or promotions to your business model
- **Third-party integrations:** Easily connect with best-in-class tools across your stack
- **Scalable infrastructure:** Grow and evolve without outgrowing your tech

BigCommerce’s open architecture gives brands the flexibility of a custom build, with the reliability of a [SaaS platform](#). That’s what makes composable commerce with BigCommerce both future-ready and grounded in enterprise performance.

Take premium sound equipment supplier, [Music Direct](#), for example. After feeling held back by their old ecommerce platform, their team took a good look at what they wanted in their next one, choosing BigCommerce for its API-first architecture that allowed them to build a site that gave them the freedom to build a custom payment system, with all the security needed to keep their customers’ data safe.

“With BigCommerce’s API functionality, we were able to build exactly what we needed. When an order comes in, webhooks trigger our integration, which goes back to BigCommerce with an API call and grabs transactional information. With that information, it reaches out to our payment gateway, grabs tokens, and sends them to our ERP system so we can process the order.”

— Steve Shapiro, Director of Ecommerce and IT, Music Direct

Within a one-year period Music Direct’s new site saw a [43% increase in conversions](#), quicker page load times, and even a 73% decrease in server response time.

## 12. Shopping goes social.

Social media isn’t just for scrolling anymore; it’s for shopping.

Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have evolved into full-fledged social commerce hubs, where discovery, engagement, and checkout all happen in one place.

In 2024, more than [110 million people](#) in the US made purchases directly through social channels. And that number is only growing.

Statista reports that upwards of [98% of active users](#) access the internet through mobile devices and mobile shoppers have a cart abandonment rate of nearly 86%, making it more important

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than ever for ecommerce sites to ensure their store is mobile-friendly and linked with social media.

What's driving the shift to [social commerce](#)? Customer expectations.

Shoppers want experiences that are fast, convenient, and built around how they already spend their time online. Social platforms now offer:

- One-click checkout for instant purchases
- Live shopping events that combine entertainment and ecommerce
- Personalized recommendations powered by user behavior
- Direct links from content to product pages
- Seamless ad-to-cart journeys that reduce friction

For ecommerce brands, social commerce represents a high-growth, low-barrier opportunity to:

- Reach new audiences through content and creators
- Drive brand discovery and community engagement
- Turn likes and views into real conversions

### **Influencer commerce can help you convert.**

Influencers have become trusted voices in the buyer journey, and their impact goes far beyond awareness.

Influencer commerce blends social proof with storytelling, turning product recommendations into direct conversions. Whether through unboxings, tutorials, or live Q&As, creators help brands reach audiences in a more personal, authentic way.

Here's how ecommerce brands are leveraging influencers to drive results:

- **Product launches and limited drops:** Create urgency and buzz around new arrivals.
- **Affiliate partnerships:** Trackable links and discount codes tie influencer reach to revenue.
- **Shoppable content:** Tag products directly in posts, Stories, and Reels.
- **Niche targeting:** Work with [micro-influencers](#) to reach highly engaged, specific audiences.
- **Live shopping events:** Combine influencer trust with real-time selling.

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When done right, [influencer marketing](#) feels more like a recommendation from a friend than a sales pitch, and that's what makes it work.

### **In-app checkout experiences make or break the shopping experience.**

One of the biggest friction points in ecommerce? Leaving the platform to complete a purchase.

That's why in-app checkout is quickly becoming a standard feature on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. Instead of redirecting users to an external site, brands can enable purchases directly within the app.

Benefits of in-app checkout include:

- **Faster conversions:** Reduce steps from product discovery to purchase.
- **Higher conversion rates:** Eliminate drop-off during redirects or login requirements.
- **Improved UX:** Keep customers engaged within the native platform they're already using.
- **Better performance tracking:** Get clearer insights on what content is driving sales.

As social platforms continue to build out native shopping features, in-app checkout will be a key tool for turning attention into revenue, without ever leaving the feed.

## **13. Subscriptions keep customers coming back.**

Subscription models aren't just for streaming services anymore.

From coffee deliveries to curated apparel boxes, subscriptions are becoming a go-to strategy for ecommerce brands looking to build recurring revenue and stronger customer relationships.

Why? Because subscriptions offer value on both sides:

For customers:

- **Convenience:** Automated deliveries reduce hassle and save time.
- **Personalization:** Tailored recommendations improve the unboxing experience.
- **Exclusive perks:** Members get early access to new products, limited drops, or discounts.

For brands:

- **Predictable revenue:** Recurring payments improve forecasting and cash flow.

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- **Higher retention:** Subscriptions keep customers engaged over longer periods.
- **Cross-sell opportunities:** Add-on products or upgrades can increase average order value.

Pairing subscriptions with loyalty programs can deepen engagement even further, rewarding customers not just for purchases, but for staying committed over time.

Just look to Minnesota-based food manufacturer [Norsland Lefse](#) and the success their team saw when they chose to start offering customers subscriptions to enjoy their products. Already well known for their traditional Scandinavian delicacies, in 2024 they saw an opportunity to turn seasonal demand into recurring revenue.

The results were impressive: 62% improvement in mobile conversions year over year, and 40% revenue growth year over year just months after launching their new site and subscription service.

For ecommerce businesses, subscription models offer a smart, scalable way to increase lifetime value and turn one-time buyers into repeat customers.

## 14. Sustainability becomes top of mind.

Sustainability is no longer a niche concern. It's a key driver of purchase decisions.

Today's shoppers increasingly choose brands that align with their environmental values. Many are not only looking for eco-friendly materials and ethical sourcing, but are also willing to pay more for products that meet those standards.

In fact, [the majority of consumers say they would spend extra on goods that are locally sourced](#), made from recycled materials, or produced with a lower carbon footprint.

For ecommerce brands, that means:

- Highlighting sustainable practices in product descriptions, packaging, and marketing
- Offering carbon-neutral shipping or eco-conscious delivery options
- Partnering with ethical suppliers and showcasing transparent supply chains
- Investing in circular models like resale, repair, or recycle programs

[Sustainability in ecommerce](#) is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a brand differentiator.

Businesses that lead with purpose will earn stronger loyalty, especially from younger and values-driven shoppers.

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## 15. B2B buyers expect modernized shopping experiences.

B2B customers now expect the same convenience, speed, and personalization they get from [B2C shopping](#).

The traditional [B2B model](#), filled with cold calls, PDFs, and manual ordering is being replaced by self-serve ecommerce experiences. Buyers want to log in, find what they need, and check out without friction.

[Modern B2B ecommerce platforms](#) offer key functionality such as:

- Custom account portals
- Dynamic pricing and catalogs
- Bulk ordering and reordering
- Flexible payment terms and invoicing
- Role-based permissions and workflows

[BigCommerce B2B Edition](#) helps brands deliver these experiences at scale, giving buyers control while streamlining operations for sellers.

In fact, a [study conducted with the IDC](#), a respected global supplier of market intelligence for the tech industry, uncovered that B2B businesses achieved greater efficiency, saw measurable cost savings, and improved ROI with BigCommerce B2B Edition. One staggering finding was the **391% three-year return on investment** the platform gave businesses who used it.

### **Self-service portals streamline the purchasing process.**

Today's B2B buyers prefer to do their own research and complete purchases on their own terms.

Self-service portals empower customers to:

- Place orders 24/7 without needing a sales rep
- View and manage past purchases
- Access custom catalogs and contract pricing
- Track orders and view invoices in one central place

With tools like the [BigCommerce Buyer Portal](#), businesses can offer intuitive, branded self-service experiences that meet modern buyer expectations. The Buyer Portal simplifies account

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management and streamlines reordering, making it easier for customers to stay engaged.

For sellers, these portals reduce manual work and allow sales teams to focus on higher-value relationships.

When buyers can help themselves, they buy more, and more often.

### **Personalized pricing and catalogs boost product relevance.**

Not all [B2B buyers](#) are the same, and their pricing shouldn't be either.

With personalized pricing and catalogs, businesses can tailor the shopping experience based on:

- Customer groups or segments
- Pre-negotiated contract terms
- Order volume or frequency
- Geographic location or business unit

This allows each buyer to see the products, pricing, and promotions that are most relevant to them, all while keeping sensitive pricing structures private.

BigCommerce enables this kind of deep personalization through flexible [customer groups](#), [price lists](#), and storefront rules.

The result: a more relevant, efficient buying experience that mirrors the expectations of [modern B2B customers](#).

## **How to determine if a trend is right for your business**

Knowing which trends will be a good fit for you will often come down to knowing your own customers, verticals, and competitors backwards and forwards.

Let's look at a few things you can do to evaluate industry trends and make the right move for your business.

### **Keep up with influencers, publications, and industry reports.**

Deciding if a trend fits your business starts with being in the know.

Follow industry influencers and dive into relevant blogs and news to stay ahead of the curve. Start with your niche, then branch out into other markets to get the full picture.

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And don't forget to keep up with the [latest industry research and trend reports](#) — they're packed with reliable data and insights.

Staying informed not only keeps you in the know but will also help you develop a sixth sense for spotting trends that are worth your time and knowing which ones can take a backseat.

## **Harness digital tools and analytics to understand customer behavior.**

Your [ecommerce strategy](#) will only be as good as how well you know your customer.

Utilize platforms like Google Analytics, social media insights, and [CRM systems](#) to gather data on customer interactions, preferences, and buying patterns. By analyzing this data, you can identify emerging trends and evaluate their potential impact on your business.

This data-driven approach ensures that you make informed decisions, aligning your strategies with your customers' needs and preference

## **Gather feedback from your customers.**

Customer feedback can be a goldmine of insights that can guide your decision-making on adopting new trends, so don't be afraid to ask current customers what they want.

[Conduct customer surveys](#), ask for product reviews, and interact with customers on social media to get a feel for their needs, preferences, and pain points.

You never know, a customer might even suggest an idea you hadn't thought of yet.

## **Observe your competitors.**

Take a look at your competitors.

Did they jump on a specific trend? If so, how did it work for them?

Analyze their strategies, product offerings, and marketing tactics to identify what's working and what's not. Pay attention to how they're adopting and implementing trends, and observe the responses from their customers.

## **Understand cost and ROI to implement new trends.**

Before investing in a new trend, you'll want to make sure it's worth your time and money.

Consider the potential costs and resources required for implementation, including technology, training, and marketing expenses. Assess whether the trend aligns with your business goals and if

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the expected ROI justifies the investment.

By first analyzing these factors, you'll be able to make informed decisions, ensuring that your time and efforts are directed toward trends that offer the most significant benefits and future growth for your business.

## The final word

Ecommerce innovation in 2026 requires brands to move quickly while staying grounded in customer needs.

From AI automation and semantic search to immersive shopping and flexible payments, today's trends demand more than just awareness. They require action.

Having the right tools helps.

With flexible architecture like [Catalyst](#) and modern commerce capabilities, BigCommerce supports businesses as they adapt, scale, and build experiences that meet evolving expectations.

## FAQs about ecommerce trends

### What is the future of ecommerce?

What is the future of ecommerce? The only sure thing about the future of ecommerce is that it's always evolving. Many ecommerce trends come and go, but others have the potential to permanently change how customers shop online. As we look to the coming year and beyond, we've compiled a list of trends that are shaping the future of ecommerce: Blockchain Livestream shopping Augmented reality (AR) Voice search Artificial Intelligence (AI) Personalization Big data Chatbots Mobile shopping Flexible payment options Headless and API-driven ecommerce Video Subscription-based commerce Sustainability Digital strategy B2B

### Is ecommerce growing?

Yes, ecommerce is growing. According to Statista, US revenue will hit \$1.17 trillion by the end of 2025, and growth at an annual rate of 5.59%.

### Is omnichannel a new ecommerce trend?

Omnichannel is not new, but it is more important than ever. What started as a trend is now the standard for modern ecommerce. Shoppers expect a consistent experience across every touchpoint, from your website and mobile app to marketplaces, social platforms, and in-store.

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Leading brands are taking omnichannel even further by: Syncing inventory and promotions across all channels Offering flexible fulfillment options like buy online, pick up in store (BOPIS) Using customer data to personalize experiences across devices and platforms BigCommerce and Feedonomics helps brands unify their commerce strategy across channels, making it easier to meet customers wherever they shop.

## **Is accessibility important to the future of ecommerce?**

Yes, accessibility is important to the future of ecommerce, and a key element of this is mobile commerce. With the rise in popularity of mobile devices and on-the-go shopping, online businesses need to ensure their ecommerce stores are responsive on mobile and provide a seamless experience across all devices.

## **Is headless commerce becoming popular?**

Yes, headless commerce is becoming increasingly popular. Headless commerce is a solution that allows a store's ecommerce platform to be completely decoupled from the frontend presentation layer. More ecommerce businesses are adopting a headless approach because it allows for greater flexibility in creating unique digital experiences and faster speed to market.

## **How do I measure the success of adopting a trend?**

To measure the success of adopting a trend, track key performance indicators (KPIs) such as increased sales, higher conversion rates, and improved customer engagement. Additionally, monitor metrics like average order value, customer retention rates, and website traffic to gain a comprehensive understanding of the trend's impact on your business. Using analytics tools can provide valuable insights into these metrics, helping you make data-driven decisions.

## **Is ecommerce undergoing a digital transformation?**

Yes, and the transformation is accelerating. Ecommerce is shifting from traditional online stores to flexible, experience-driven ecosystems. This evolution is fueled by AI, mobile-first design, composable architectures, and changing customer expectations. Digital transformation in ecommerce looks like: Moving from monolithic platforms to composable commerce Automating manual processes with AI and machine learning Delivering personalized experiences through data-driven insights Expanding beyond a single storefront to reach customers wherever they shop BigCommerce is built to support this transformation. With tools for headless commerce, B2B personalization, and multichannel selling, we help brands modernize at their own pace, without compromising performance or flexibility.

## **Should I adopt all ecommerce trends?**

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Adopting every ecommerce trend isn't necessary or practical for every business. Instead, focus on the trends that align with your specific goals, target audience, and resources. Carefully evaluate each trend's potential impact on your business and prioritize those that will drive the most significant benefits and growth.

### **Is there ROI for adopting an ecommerce trend?**

There can be a significant return on investment (ROI) for adopting an ecommerce trend. Trends like agentic checkout, AI-driven personalization, or mobile shopping enhancements can potentially lead to substantial long-term growth and profitability. However, make sure that a trend actually makes sense for your business goals and target audience before investing a significant amount of time and resources.

### **When does it not make sense to adopt an ecommerce trend?**

While some ecommerce trends will provide a huge value-add, others might be out of touch with your particular audience or might be too costly to implement for your business to maintain a reasonable ROI. Knowing what trends will be a good fit for you will often come down to knowing your own customers, vertical, and competitors backwards and forwards.

### **Are there more ecommerce trends?**

Yes, there are many more trends shaping the ecommerce industry. While our article highlights the most impactful trends for this year, the ecommerce landscape is continually evolving with new advancements and shifts in consumer behavior emerging regularly.

### **How is blockchain improving ecommerce security?**

Blockchain technology is transforming ecommerce security by providing a decentralized and tamper-proof ledger for transactions. This helps prevent fraud, enhances transparency, and secures customer data. With blockchain, retailers can offer safer payment processing, track product authenticity, and ensure supply chain transparency. As more businesses prioritize data privacy, blockchain adoption in ecommerce is expected to grow significantly, making online shopping more secure and trustworthy for consumers.

### **Why is livestream shopping becoming so popular?**

Livestream shopping combines entertainment and instant purchasing, creating a more immersive customer experience for today's online shoppers. This format allows brands to demo products in real time, answer questions, and drive online sales directly from the video. The rise of social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube has made it easier than ever for

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customers to watch, engage, and buy without leaving the app. For online retail, livestream shopping offers a powerful mix of storytelling, urgency, and social proof that drives both customer satisfaction and conversion.

## **What ecommerce technologies will dominate in 2026?**

In 2026, the technologies transforming global ecommerce will be the ones that improve online purchases, personalize the customer experience, and support omnichannel selling. Top ecommerce technologies include: AI and automation for predictive insights, content creation, and operations AR and VR for interactive product discovery Composable commerce and API-first platforms for flexibility and scale Headless architecture for custom storefronts Mobile wallets and platforms like PayPal for faster, safer checkouts Social commerce integrations with leading social media platforms These tools help brands streamline operations, reduce friction, and meet online shoppers wherever they choose to engage.

## **How should I prioritize ecommerce trends for my business?**

Start by focusing on trends that align with your customer experience goals, business model, and current tech stack. Ask yourself: Does this trend address a clear customer need or challenge? Will it improve online sales, retention, or customer satisfaction? Can it enhance how you serve both online shoppers and in-store customers? Also consider your growth stage. If you're scaling rapidly or expanding from a brick-and-mortar store into online retail, prioritize trends that improve efficiency and reach, like automation, mobile payments, or multichannel selling. Use analytics, customer feedback, and industry benchmarks to guide your decisions. And when in doubt, test small before scaling up.

## **Is livestream shopping worth investing in for smaller brands?**

Yes, especially if you're active on social media platforms and want to build stronger connections with your audience. Livestream shopping offers a cost-effective way to: Showcase products Engage with online shoppers in real time Drive more confident online purchases Smaller brands can use live events to build trust, generate buzz, and differentiate from competitors. You don't need big budgets to get started, just a phone, a strong brand voice, and a willingness to interact with your audience. As new technologies continue to shape online retail, livestream shopping is a smart, scalable way to stay relevant and drive growth.

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