

Executive Summary

**Gartner Five-Year
Outlook: The
Future of Digital
Commerce in 2030**

Gartner Five-Year Outlook: The Future of Digital Commerce in 2030

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AI will drive a shift in digital commerce toward customer centricity by 2030. Agility and seamlessness are key to keep up. Digital commerce leaders can use this research to compare future commerce trends to their own strategic roadmap.

Overview

Key Findings

- The foundational principles for digital commerce remain valid: trustworthy, anticipatory, solution-driven and continuous.
- Future-facing trends for digital commerce in 2030 can be organized around four overarching themes: organizations becoming customer-centric, connected, agile and smart.
- Digital commerce will be increasingly ubiquitous over the next several years and remains a very dynamic market that is uniquely impacted by economic conditions.

Recommendations

The future of digital commerce through 2030 will require organizations to change processes and strategy to:

- Enable **customer centricity** by putting customers at the center of products, services and experiences; removing constraints; and building bridges among organizational, operational and technology silos.
- **Connect** people, things and data points to realize truly frictionless digital customer experiences that develop market value greater than the sum of the individual things connected.

- Promote business and technical **agility** to accommodate more rapidly changing customer expectations and quicker evolution of what's possible.
- Develop **smart** commerce functions by leveraging emerging technologies like AI to better understand customers, deliver more personalized experiences and improve efficiency and business productivity.

Strategic Planning Assumptions

By 2025, developers outside of formal IT departments (citizen developers) will account for at least 80% of the user base for LC technology/tools, up from 60% in 2021.

By 2027, 20% of B2B sales organizations will employ digital twins of customers to improve revenue outcomes and improve customer experience.

By 2026, 25% of all newly acquired or custom-built applications will leverage digital twins.

By 2028, digital twins built using data and analytics best practices will retain their value 50% longer than those built using current practices.

By 2028, 15 billion connected products will exist with the potential to behave as customers, shopping for services and supplies for themselves and their owners.

By 2030, sellers will seamlessly be 'in the loop' in both B2C and B2B digital commerce scenarios, when required by customers.

By 2030, conversationally driven automation will be part of everyday life, including for commerce.

By 2030, one-sixth of online shoppers, representing approximately 500 million consumers, will interact with enterprises through the customer's bot advocate.

Digital commerce's four foundational principles remain valid: trustworthy, continuous, anticipatory and solution-driven.

These principles increase in importance as digital channel usage continues to rise to the following challenges:

- Organizations use technology for self-service and must deliver digital experiences which customers perceive as trustworthy.
- Digital commerce touches many parts of organizations, forcing them to broaden perspectives beyond efficient departmental processes to cross-company endeavors that produce customer-desired outcomes.
- Digital commerce is 24/7. Customers engage on their schedules and desired channels, with capabilities such as autoreplenishment and subscriptions for services and consumables tightening the relationship.
- The plethora of accumulated customer data is enabling a shift from receiving an order to creating an order for the customer to approve.

The past years of commerce have focused on products, technology, architecture and data. Future success, however, will require a shift from:

- Owning the customer relationship to understanding the customer.
- Implementing the technology to delivering the experience.
- Speeding up technology implementations to accelerating the results by becoming agile and composable.
- Gathering data and intelligence to applying intelligence.

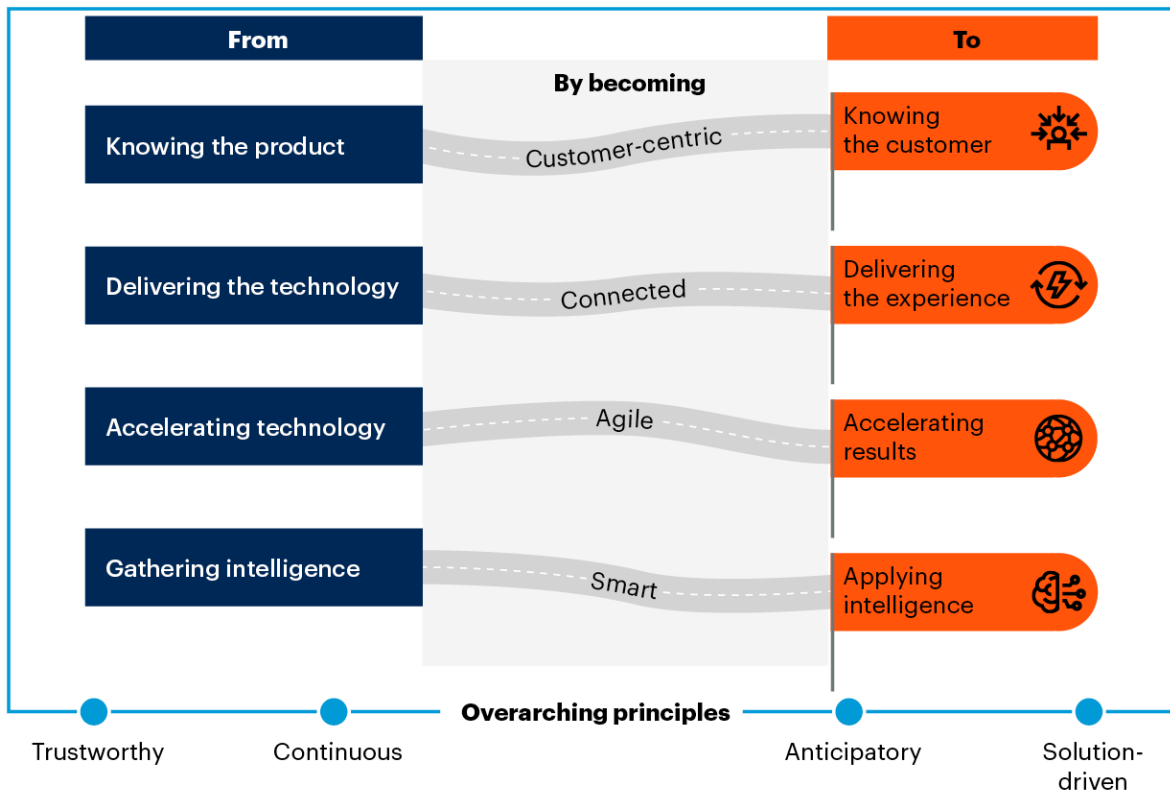
Gartner clients can leverage the [full-version](#) of this research to identify shifts and emerging trends in digital commerce through 2030 gathered under four themes (see Figure 1):

- **Customer centricity:** Deliver desired customer outcomes and improve business results.
- **Connected experiences:** Drive satisfaction and loyalty of both customers and employees.
- **Agility:** Enable quicker responses to customer and market demands, preventing lost revenue.
- **Smart approach:** Improved processes and the use of AI will take customer experiences to new levels.

Figure 1: Journey to the Future of Commerce

Journey to the Future of Commerce

Key shifts in business attributes



Source: Gartner
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Future of eCommerce Trends	Recommended Action Steps
Customer Centricity	Enable customer centricity by removing organizational constraints
	Remove friction: Analyze data, map customer journeys, use AI for seamless CX.
	Practice customer empathy: Embed empathy in AI-based decision-making and processes.
	Make privacy self-service: Improve data transparency, develop intuitive privacy notices, ensure continuous control over personal data.
	Empower employees: Bridge siloed approaches, improve employee tools, and empower decision-making.
	Solve customers' problems: Bundle products into solutions, create solution-oriented marketplaces, and develop industry cloud platforms (ICPs).
Connected Experiences	Create connections among people, things, and data
	Connect experiences: Integrate data entities for unified commerce, use customer journey analytics, personalization engines, AI-augmented guided selling, clienteling apps, and promotion engines.
	Connect physical and digital: Blend physical and digital channels for seamless "phygital" experiences, disrupt in-store stack with digital commerce solutions.
	Connect technologies to experiences: Use AR/VR for immersive commerce.
	Connect business to end consumers: Embrace B2C digital commerce, calculate ROI based on engagement and data.
	Connect employee- and customer-facing technologies: Share technology to reduce complexity and support cost, enhance self-service through human interaction.

Agility	Promote business and technical agility
	<p>Shift to outcome-driven leadership: Adopt disciplined practices, use outcome-driven metrics, and establish OKRs.</p>
	<p>Drive rightsized cross-organizational collaboration: Increase cross-functional collaboration, define ownership and collaboration areas.</p>
	<p>Create fusion teams: Formalize cross-silo collaboration with fusion teams.</p>
	<p>Make your business and technology composable: Use modular components, automate composition with GenAI, develop industry-specific components.</p>
	<p>Empower business technologists: Use low-/no-code tools, select experience orchestration and management tools.</p>
Smart Approach	Develop smart commerce functions
	<p>Make it personal: Use GenAI for enhanced personalization, conversational commerce, and digital twins of the customer (DToC).</p>
	<p>Create a privacy-centric customer value exchange: Manage first-party data, balance customer and business value.</p>
	<p>Adopt conversational technologies: Implement GenAI and LLM solutions, disrupt traditional UIs with new product discovery interfaces.</p>
	<p>Prepare for a new customer segment: Machine customers: Adapt platforms for machine customers, change marketing and sales practices.</p>
	<p>Plan for emergence of Web3: Consider decentralized finance, NFTs, and blockchain for digital asset management and metaverse components.</p>

Evidence

2023 Gartner Consumer Omnibus Survey Q2: The purpose of this survey was to understand consumer behaviors and sentiment across a wide range of topics and industries. The research was conducted online from 24 March through 18 April 2023 among 2,025 respondents in the United States. Respondents were required to be at least 18 years old.

Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents surveyed.

Live Commerce 2023: What Retailers in Asia-Pacific and the US Need to Know Now, Insider Intelligence.

2022 Gartner B2B Buyer Survey: This survey was administered in November and December 2022, and includes data from 771 B2B buyers from the U.S., Canada, the U.K. and Australia. Respondents who qualified for this survey had to be employed full time at an organization with total revenue of at least \$250 million or the equivalent, and had to have participated in a significant B2B purchase decision. A “significant B2B purchase decision” is defined here as a decision that requires deliberation with at least one other person and the evaluation of more than one potential supplier or vendor. Respondents were instructed to answer questions based on their experience with this recent purchase and with the supplier that was used to complete the purchase. Respondents evaluated the quality of the purchase decision and provided insights into various stages of their recent purchase decision.

Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

IKEA’s Fancy New AR App Lets You Design Entire Rooms, Wired.

Virtual Artist, Sephora.

How Walmart Automated Supplier Negotiations, Harvard Business Review.

Tokenized Real Estate: Crypto Hungry for Real-world Assets — Blockworks.

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