



Modern Distribution Technology:
**Adapting to a
Changing Marketplace**



Taking business to the next level of profitable growth requires a transformative company mindset and integrated business technologies that transcend common pain points. For many companies, determining which areas to focus on first to meet these goals commonly impacts the ability to move forward, hindering profitability even more. In this publication, we spotlight three key areas of focus that leverage the data within your ERP system to deliver immediate results and drive your business toward operational excellence.

Knowing Your Customers Makes All the Difference

Everything we hear revolves around being better connected with customers to combat traditional competitive pressure, distributor consolidation, and encroaching online retailers. In today's marketplace, it's not enough to just satisfy an order—your customer relationships are being tested by a wave of innovation and digital disruption.

Successful distributors know that everything depends on their customers' experience with their organizations. Your customers' perception of how your company and staff treat them is based on the way they communicate and engage with your staff. These perceptions influence not only how much customers will spend, but also the stability of your critical repeat business. Customer relationship tools allow distributors to see the details they need to know their customers. Single-click technology presents distributors with customer purchase patterns, contact-related tasks,



Give your employees the tools to successfully engage their customers – who in turn spend more, visit more often, resist competitive overtures, promote and refer your brand to others.

personal profile notes, outstanding orders, product price and stock inquiries.

Effectively managing the customer experience results in decreased price sensitivity, stronger repurchase rates and increased customer referrals. Your business software should help frame this experience, by providing users with intuitive tools to address and even anticipate a customer's needs. These technology tools are labeled by leading ERP software provider [DDI System as CEM or Customer Engagement Management](#). CEM is a single-screen console of contact and customer centric tools that lets your staff deliver extraordinary service and support. Clients leverage the CEM console to quickly review activity history, generate repurchases, build quotes and orders and view order statuses. CEM is equally as effective in engaging both prospects as well as existing customers.

Starting a conversation with rich contact-level details gives sales and service staff a better way to connect with their buyer. DDI System's Inform ERP Software combines a snapshot view of past purchase behavior and product information with customer profile details in an easy-to-use, actionable single-view. Inform ERP elevates the customer engagement experience by maintaining a focus on the customer need specific to that client. From pertinent customer information and super fast order entry to order fulfillment follow-up, Inform CRM provides a seamless approach to operational excellence and unifies teams across the board.



85%

ERP IS IMPORTANT TO THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Nearly 85% of large organizations indicated that their ERP is a vital platform for delivering a good customer experience.





Don't Let Your Online Storefront Cost You Customers

Consumer eCommerce has revolutionized how B2B buyers place orders in distribution. With the rise of online ordering, the bar for modern online purchasing experiences has been raised by consumer-oriented eCommerce sites. A polished digital catalog, advanced search functionality, real-time stock and price, order status and a full featured service portal are the new normal. A nightly upload of inventory, products and pricing just doesn't cut it anymore.

What Your Customers Expect

Your B2B eCommerce platform must accommodate the way you sell and directly integrate to your back-end systems. Your customers expect to see every order—past and present, open and historical invoices, proof-of-delivery, and their complete purchasing history. To drive customers to your site, up-to-the-minute accuracy and reorder guidance are pivotal features. Without these elements, your customers can easily be lured to another distributor who has invested in them, providing tools to manage their purchasing and even payments online.

Buyers exposed to omni-channel strategies are likely to be more active, more loyal, and higher-spending customers.



**According to Forrester, 75% of B2B buyers around the world said they would buy again from the same supplier because of that supplier's omni-channel capabilities.*



Staying competitive requires a [mobile optimized eCommerce storefront](#) that can be accessed from a smartphone as well as a desktop. Your customers need a readily available and easy-to-use portal to the products they buy, with the advantage of real-time system pricing. They expect access to their purchasing history, saved shopping lists, price quotes and purchasing analysis. Adding value means giving your customers a real-time, online portal to connect with your business 24/7.

*Source: Building The B2B OmniChannel Commerce Platform Of The Future: B2B Buyer Expectations Are Driving Sellers To Deliver Fully Functional Omni-Channel Experiences

80%

CONSUMERIZATION OF B2B

Percentage of companies implementing B2B eCommerce who believe customer expectations have changed as a result of B2C practices.





50%

MOBILE ACCESS LIMITATIONS

Nearly 1 in 2 sales professionals cite lack of mobile access as a sales challenge.



Your Sales Process Isn't Broken; Your Mobile Access Is

Sales people and business owners with the right information, at the right time, provide better service than their competitors - and build better relationships, with loyalty that resists simple price competition. 60% of high performing sales teams use a mobile sales app today, enabling these salespeople to double their sales performance. Mobility allows your sales team to be much more productive, serve customers with immediacy and authority, and streamline communications with the home office—resulting in more effective time with customers and increased sales.

The Road to Mobility

The good news is that many of your sales teams are already walking around with a cloud device in their pocket. Enablement applications are vastly improving the way reps interact with customers and prospects, working

effectively on the move, with the power and tools to act on customer queries, opportunities, and requests. Mobility also empowers your on-site staff to access ERP information with tools and devices that free them from a desk.

Nearly one in two sales professionals cite “limited access to key selling systems” and “inefficiencies in administrative work that wastes selling time” as major challenges in sales enablement.

Providing mobile solutions allows sales teams to improve the experience they have with the clients they see every day. Sales representatives are better prepared for meetings, and deliver more value with real-time pricing, ordering, and quoting information at their fingertips. Expect improved overall productivity from on-the-go completion of routine CRM tasks—such as creating a quote and email, updating opportunities, completing call reports, or even capturing a customer’s signature at a delivery, without paper or delays and frustrating double entries. Sales reps no longer have to wait until the end of the day to catch up on daily tasks or place the order.

Is Your Field Sales Force Ready for a Critical Shift?

Working effectively on the move doesn’t mean just having access to information—it also means having the tools to act on that information. The right ERP system will work to enable your teams to use a range of [collaborative and social tools on their mobile devices](#). As such, users work more effectively to boost business responsiveness and strengthen overall performance.

Staying competitive requires easy-to-use, real-time access that makes your sales team more valuable to their customers. Engaging a customer in their office or on a jobsite, with up-to-the-minute stock and pricing, proof-of-delivery, or an instant, emailed price quote sets you apart.



Learn more about **Inform ERP**

Visit DDIsystem.com/demo for a list of upcoming demo dates and our trade show schedule.

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About DDI System

DDI System's platform, **Inform ERP**, powers the most successful, progressive wholesale distributors in North America. Over 800 distribution companies use **Inform ERP** for a comprehensive view of daily operations, eCommerce, Customer Engagement Management, and Analytics. DDI System's highly configurable, market-aware, distributor solution has the highest rated support, implementation and customer satisfaction among distribution-centric ERP systems.



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