

10

SIGNS

Your B2B Company
Needs an OMS with
Your ERP

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Introduction

The B2B ecommerce market is vast, surpassing the B2C segment dramatically. This landscape offers substantial revenue opportunities for every business. However, efficient order management is a critical yet often overlooked factor for success. Dealing with complex customer orders can be time-consuming and error-prone.

The storefront is not an island; it is a critical extension of the entire business. A seamless front-end experience demands a robust, bi-directional data flow with core backend systems like your ERP. After an order is placed, a complicated series of steps must occur: price verification, inventory availability checks, allocation of products, warehouse instructions, packing, and shipping. Ensuring smooth customer tracking is key to repeat business and overall satisfaction.

A modern, dedicated Order Management System (OMS) provides the essential foundation to manage this complexity. It minimizes fulfillment errors and expedites processing for quicker delivery. It integrates tightly with inventory systems to optimize stock levels. An OMS built for the modern enterprise, like the platform from KIBO, enables automation, leading to substantial cost savings. It significantly enhances real-time order status visibility, which facilitates better decision-making and customer communication. Moreover, an adaptive OMS allows businesses to scale effortlessly with growth. This capability is crucial for success in dynamic B2B commerce operations.

As businesses grow, order complexity increases. Relying on an inflexible Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system or a patchwork of outdated tools leads inevitably to inefficiencies. Recognizing the clear signals that point to the need for a dedicated OMS is the first step toward modernization. This eBook explores the top ten signs that suggest it is time to implement a unified solution, leveraging the capabilities of KIBO's Adaptive Commerce platform.



sign #1

Your order process is becoming more complex

You manage numerous orders scattered across various systems. Each order requires its own set of steps, including approvals, custom pricing calculations, and post-placement changes. The ERP system you use to manage this workflow proves rigid and simply cannot adapt to evolving business needs. Teams handle these tasks piecemeal, relying on institutional knowledge. This patchwork increases overhead, creates friction in the buying journey, and can erode margins. This friction might show up as delayed order processing, errors in pricing or order details, difficulty tracking orders, or manually reconciling information across multiple systems. For example, a customer order requiring custom pricing may sit for hours while a sales rep calculates special rates and secures multiple approvals, delaying fulfillment and frustrating both staff and the buyer. This friction is a clear sign you need an OMS.

KIBO Solution: Unified Platform for Simplified Operations

KIBO's unified platform collapses this system sprawl into a single, seamless order experience. This is a single source of accountable truth for your organization. A unified platform streamlines control over the entire order process, from initial submission to final fulfillment.

The benefits are immediate: you gain heightened efficiency and speed, ensuring fulfillment is completed on time. Furthermore, all orders are handled consistently, maintaining a high standard while minimizing costly errors. This reliability is crucial in B2B. It strengthens buyer relationships and reduces customer churn, ultimately leading to higher long-term value from every account. Once KIBO OMS is implemented, it acts as an intelligent bridge between how you sell and your core ERP. Substantial orders from regular customers no longer linger in a queue awaiting unnecessary manual approval. This automation eliminates hidden costs and makes your order servicing more profitable.



sign #2

Inventory data is often delayed or inaccurate

Relying on an ERP system for inventory visibility often leads to sub-optimal results. These systems frequently rely on slow batch jobs. They are not built for real-time, event-driven processes. Event-driven processes automatically trigger updates or actions when specific events occur, rather than waiting for scheduled batch updates. For instance, when a shipment arrives at a warehouse, an event-driven system immediately updates inventory levels across all sales channels and triggers alerts if stock is low. This real-time approach reduces inaccuracies, prevents stockouts, and ensures that orders can be fulfilled promptly. An ERP's architecture creates inaccuracies in inventory levels, resulting in choked inventory, missed commitments, and slow service. Their complexity and high customization requirements make them cumbersome for specific inventory needs, necessitating costly, time-consuming modifications.

KIBO Solution: Real-Time Capabilities for Dynamic Processes

A modern, distributed order management system from KIBO delivers unified stock levels across multiple locations into one dynamic system for real-time inventory visibility. Moving beyond slow batch jobs is essential. This architecture enables dynamic, event-driven processes. It ensures immediate responses to order changes, preventing inventory choke-ups.

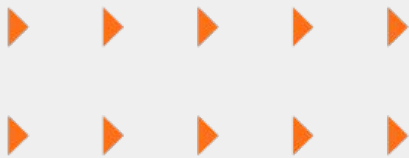
Maintaining this real-time visibility provides numerous business benefits. You can now respond quickly to changes in demand, supply chain disruptions, or other factors affecting inventory. This capability ensures products are available precisely when needed, dramatically reducing the risk of stockouts. Stockouts mean lost sales; overstocks tie up capital and valuable storage space. For a sales representative, real-time visibility can save the sale. Imagine a customer places an order that triggers a rule to tap into designated reserve inventory. If that reserve is insufficient, your representatives, leveraging the KIBO OMS, gain visibility into inventory currently in transit on a truck. They can extend their reach into the supply chain, allocate that inventory promptly, and ensure it arrives precisely when needed.



sign #3

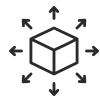
You're unable to expose accurate inventory availability online

A majority of buyers want to know product availability across every channel. Without a powerful distributed OMS, many companies cannot present branch or warehouse inventory accurately to the online customer, causing inaccurate experiences and resulting in missed revenue opportunities.



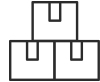
KIBO Solution: Enhance Buyer Self-Service & Satisfaction

Exposing real-time inventory online using KIBO's platform instantly increases your available product assortment. This means you can sell items from local store locations. You can even offer an extended catalog through dropshipping capabilities. **Once you have real-time visibility, you can present accurate availability on your ecommerce site with key functionalities:**



Multi-Channel Integration:

The KIBO OMS integrates seamlessly with your ecommerce site, physical locations, and marketplaces. This ensures inventory data is consistent and synchronized across all platforms, dramatically reducing the risk of overselling.



Automatic Inventory Allocation:

The KIBO platform automatically allocates and reserves inventory for pending orders the moment they are placed. This prevents multiple buyers from purchasing the same item simultaneously. The displayed availability always accurately reflects what is truly ready for purchase.



Future Available to Promise:

This feature allows customers to place orders for out-of-stock items. The system tracks these orders separately and provides accurate estimated restock dates. Customers gain transparency about when they can expect their orders to be fulfilled.

sign #4

You have an extensive network of distribution centers, warehouses, and suppliers

Relying on a handful of expert operators to manually figure out and route orders for the best shipping and delivery time is highly risky. This is especially true when you operate warehouses in different regions or countries. This manual process can lead to costly errors, increasing both shipping expenses and the potential for losing a key customer account.

Some ERPs may possess an elementary order management function, but order orchestration has grown complex as buyers favor omnichannel journeys. Fulfillment strategy now involves many factors: distance, shipping costs, product margin, split order strategy, and even labor rates.

KIBO Solution: Automated Order Routing for Profit-Driven Fulfillment

Order routing, or order orchestration, within the KIBO OMS allows you to establish order-specific assignments and visibility logic for complex routes. With an extensive network of warehouses or distribution centers, intelligent order routing helps you optimize the entire fulfillment process.

KIBO distributed OMS solutions offer flexible, sophisticated rules. They consider factors like proximity, real-time inventory availability, and shipping cost optimization simultaneously. You can even set priorities based on key customer attributes such as account groups, order value, or total lifetime value. **The reasons to automate order routing are compelling:**

- Automation streamlines the process, boosting efficiency and speed while minimizing errors. It helps eliminate the phantom margin loss associated with manual intervention.
- You realize cost savings as the system dynamically adapts to fluctuating demand and inventory reserves.
- The scalability of automated order routing accommodates growing order volumes seamlessly. Integration with multiple sales channels simplifies the entire fulfillment process.
- It increases agility when disruptions occur, automatically rerouting orders around stockouts, carrier delays, or facility downtime.
- Beyond reducing shipping costs and labor expenses, automated order routing enhances customer satisfaction by ensuring prompt and accurate deliveries.
- Improved visibility and analytics give teams real-time insights into order flows, warehouse performance, and fulfillment bottlenecks, allowing for data-driven decisions that optimize efficiency and margins.

sign #5

You're implementing or scaling an omnichannel strategy

Your company sells across various channels: an ecommerce site, B2B marketplaces, and catalogs. When orders roll in, your team must check disparate systems to understand demand and fulfill orders smoothly.

As your omnichannel strategy scales, accurately tracking and managing orders captured across all channels becomes increasingly difficult.

KIBO Solution: Omnichannel Fulfillment for Unified Operations

B2B buyers use numerous channels to complete a purchase today. Your company must be able to fulfill orders originating from any channel.

KIBO OMS serves as the central, unified repository for all orders captured across multiple sales channels. This means every team member can access the exact same, accurate information easily. It reduces the chances of costly errors and makes the entire process much smoother. For companies selling through various online and offline channels, KIBO OMS consolidates and manages orders from different sources more effectively. This capability ensures seamless order fulfillment. Your sales representatives now have a single, unified place to check order details, status, and tracking, drastically improving their efficiency.



sign #6

Customers are asking for order customizations

Do your customers frequently request custom products or unique configurations? Does your sales team struggle to provide accurate pricing and availability information without significant manual effort? This complexity signals a need for a dedicated Order Management System built for B2B.

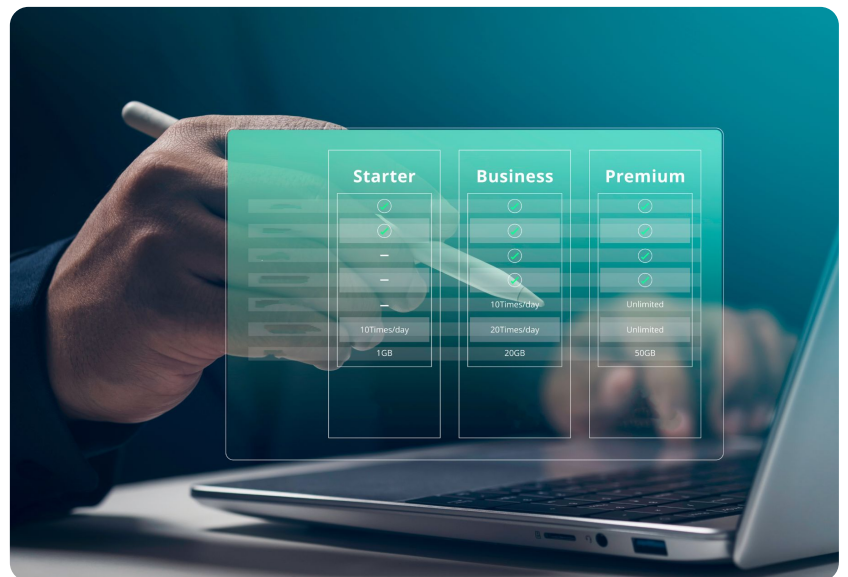
Traditional ERP systems are designed for standard orders and often can't handle the unique logic required for complex configurations. When a customer requests a customized order, sales teams may need to manually check inventory levels, calculate pricing, secure approvals, and track special requests across multiple systems. The fragmented process is slow, error-prone, and consumes valuable resources. For B2B companies managing thousands of SKUs or made-to-order products, manual workflows quickly become unsustainable. This leads to longer quote-to-cash cycles, miscommunication between departments, and frustration across the board.

An OMS automates many of these steps, centralizing rules for pricing, approvals, and fulfillment. It ensures accuracy, accelerates the order process, and allows teams to scale efficiently as customization becomes a growing expectation rather than an exception.

KIBO Solution: Flexible Pricing & Quote Functionality

KIBO OMS facilitates complex order customization. It allows sales teams to configure and quote orders with precision. The platform easily supports the creation of split shipments, where items are divided into custom shipping groups, each with different fulfillment attributes. A split shipment might occur because an item is out of stock, or because items are shipping from multiple warehouses. This ability also provides a partial delivery option for a customer who needs some items urgently while the remainder are prepared for shipping.

Importantly, KIBO can easily integrate with your existing homegrown or commercial pricing services. This accommodates complex, unit-based, or contract-specific rules without requiring a full CPQ engine implementation. It provides robust quote capabilities, allowing buyers flexibility while avoiding unnecessary complexity. For instance, a customer places a single order for sealant, flooring, tiles, and adhesive, but the sealant is needed immediately to start the work. KIBO can ensure the sealant is shipped quickly. The system then automatically routes the flooring material via a more cost-effective transportation option, ensuring it arrives precisely in time for installation.



sign #7

Your ERP requires costly customization to adapt

Have you found that system changes, touted as "easy," come with a significant price tag and long implementation cycles? This happens because traditional ERPs or legacy systems are not designed to keep pace with evolving order processes and new business models. They require major customization to adapt.

KIBO Solution: Adaptive Commerce and MACH Architecture

KIBO is built as an adaptive commerce and order orchestration solution. This is a powerful advantage over cumbersome ERP add-ons or slow, expensive legacy systems. It is engineered on **MACH architecture (Microservices, API-first, Cloud-native, and Headless)**. This foundation equips B2B companies with the agility and scalability required to adapt quickly to growth and evolving customer requirements.

KIBO's modularity and flexibility are key differentiators. You can break down system components, like inventory visibility or order orchestration, into smaller, independent microservices. This makes it simpler to scale individual components. Whether you are expanding to new markets, adding new fulfillment options, or accommodating a new business model, KIBO handles it efficiently. KIBO's API-first approach facilitates seamless integration and connectivity. You can quickly connect with new partners or platforms, enabling you to expand your reach. Embracing cloud-native solutions allows the IT infrastructure to scale as needed. This flexibility is vital for efficiently handling increased workloads and reducing operational costs.



Microservices



API-first



Cloud-native



Headless

sign #8

Your current tools fail to meet modern buyer experience expectations

B2B buyers expect a B2C-like experience. This means providing a streamlined, efficient, and self-service journey. Meeting these needs becomes challenging when using old tools. The result is a sub-par customer experience, from initial order placement all the way to delivery at the buyer's warehouse.

Imagine a call center agent on the phone. They are clicking through a clunky ERP system to find order details. They may even be toggling between multiple, disconnected systems simply to get a full picture. This frustrating reality directly impacts buyer satisfaction and team efficiency.



KIBO Solution: Optimize Account Management & Retention

KIBO delivers the intuitive experience B2B buyers now expect, focusing on self-service and empowered teams. A powerful self-service portal provides buyers with a unique login. Within this personalized view, they immediately see their negotiated pricing and custom product sets.

Placing repeat orders is effortless. Features like auto-replenishment enable buyers to effortlessly create a steady stream of recurring orders for frequently purchased items. This capability increases buyer satisfaction and reduces the burden on your support team.

In addition, the platform empowers buyers to place and manage their own complex orders. Alternatively, your seller can easily step in to assist them. This process is enhanced by integrated features. A sophisticated buyer agent can answer complex questions about products or existing orders. Advanced search capabilities help buyers quickly find specific or complicated products, including complex B2B catalogs. Essential features also ensure transactional ease, including support for various payment options, such as purchase orders, alongside intuitive tools for user, payment, and address management.

For the customers who call or email in, it is critical that customer service representatives (CSRs) have access to accurate customer and order information in a single, unified UI. KIBO acts as the source of truth for orders and customer data. It provides the agent with the information they need quickly, enabling them to resolve issues in a single, value-driven interaction.

sign #9

Custom integrations are consuming your budget and delaying growth

Your commerce storefront is not an island. It is a critical extension of your entire business. A seamless front-end customer experience falls apart without a robust, bi-directional data flow with core back-end systems.

You require various connections—Warehouse Systems, CRM, PIM, Logistics—for a smooth order fulfillment process. Relying solely on custom builds for every connection with core ERP, however, is a high-risk strategy. It is costly, time-consuming, and forces your teams into manual data reconciliation. This sprawl creates long-term tech debt, consuming significant IT budget. These efforts divert valuable resources away from building revenue-driving customer experiences.

KIBO Solution: Pre-Built Integrations for Accelerated Time-to-Market

KIBO is fundamentally built for seamless integration. Our platform is a cloud-native solution designed to connect with your existing systems without unnecessary friction or requiring a "rip and replace" of the core ERP. The goal is simple: ensure all parts of your business are operating from a single source of truth. **Achieving this requires synchronizing crucial B2B data in real time:**



Pricing & Quote Logic:

The commerce platform must apply customer-specific contract pricing and tiered discounts instantly. This capability ensures your B2B buyer sees their accurate, personalized price the moment they log in.



Product & Catalog Data:

B2B catalogs are complex, often containing millions of SKUs and deep technical specifications. KIBO provides real-time access to this information, ensuring product data is always accurate and up-to-date.



Order & Inventory Status:

Orders must flow instantly to the appropriate back-end system for fulfillment and financial reconciliation. Likewise, real-time inventory updates from any location need to be reflected immediately on the storefront to prevent overselling.

KIBO leverages a unified API approach to power pre-built integrations with market-leading platforms. This centralized integration management eliminates the costly, complex point-to-point integration model. This strategy drastically compresses the deployment timeline, resulting in a faster time-to-market and a much lower total cost of ownership (TCO) for your digital business.

sign #10

Siloed data is causing little insight into operational and customer trends

Businesses must understand order trends and consumer behavior to offer better products and maintain a competitive edge. However, when your systems are siloed and fail to exchange data, it takes a dedicated team of data scientists and significant time to create meaningful reports. This leaves executives blind to critical metrics like average order value (AOV), order frequency, order cycle time, and cost-to-serve, which are all key indicators of how effectively the business fulfills demand and maintains profitability. When this data isn't readily available or consistent across systems, it becomes nearly impossible to identify inefficiencies, forecast accurately, or optimize channel performance. The SVP of Operations may have inventory blind spots, while the CFO will see margin erosion and rising costs-to-serve.

KIBO Solution: Analytics and Reporting for Business Outcomes

KIBO acts as a unifying force in order fulfillment. It brings together data from different sources seamlessly. This breaks down silos, allowing teams to collaborate in real-time. It ensures a smooth, continuous flow of information throughout the entire order journey.

You gain unparalleled insights into the entire process. This allows you to customize offerings and fine-tune operations for extra efficiency and profit. Now, you can pinpoint exactly where to add resources to reduce fulfillment time from twelve hours to four hours or less. You can also quickly determine the best warehouse for incoming shipments, optimizing distribution and saving on shipping costs. KIBO's data capabilities frame the solution around solving critical business problems, moving the focus to profit, loyalty, and cost advantage.



Steps to Future-Proof Your Order Operations



Recognizing these signs is just the beginning. Taking action is what drives meaningful change. Start by evaluating where processes rely on manual effort, lack of visibility, or are constrained by outdated ERP systems. Measure the impact on key metrics like AOV, order cycle time, and cost-to-serve to understand the cost of inefficiencies, uncover blind spots, and guide improvements. Engage cross-functional teams to align priorities and explore modern OMS solutions like KIBO, which offer event-driven updates, automated routing, and unified data visibility. Starting with targeted improvements that can be scaled over time can streamline operations, improve customer satisfaction, and build a strong foundation for long-term growth.

Conclusion

Implementing an order management solution is a crucial step for businesses aiming to enhance their order fulfillment processes. The ten signs discussed here serve as valuable indicators that businesses should pay close attention to. From overcoming the limitations of rigid ERP systems to addressing challenges in order customization, inventory allocation, and customer experience, a modern OMS emerges as a versatile solution.

The adoption of best practices—centralizing order processing, maintaining real-time inventory visibility, and empowering customers through self-service portals—contributes to streamlined operations and increased customer satisfaction. The role of the KIBO OMS in facilitating automated order routing, omnichannel fulfillment, and its use of pre-built integrations further solidifies its significance in modern B2B operations.

As businesses strive to meet the evolving demands of B2B commerce, the scalability, efficiency, and transparency offered by KIBO become indispensable tools for sustained growth and success. Embracing these technologies addresses current challenges and positions businesses for a future characterized by agility, responsiveness, and enhanced collaboration.



How Smith Can Help

Smith is The Performance Commerce Agency. Ambitious brands and businesses partner with Smith to solve their most complex digital commerce challenges and connect with their customers at every stage of the customer lifecycle. Our team helps modernize order operations through platform migration, implementation, and system integration, ensuring technology supports growth, efficiency, and long-term scalability.

Learn why Smith is home of the Performance Commerce People at www.smithcommerce.com

About KIBO

KIBO is a composable commerce platform for retailers, manufacturers, distributors, and wholesalers who want to simplify complexity and deliver modern customer experiences. KIBO is the only modular commerce platform supporting unified experiences across Order Management, eCommerce, and Subscriptions. Companies like Zwilling, Ace Hardware, Boscov's, Nivel, and REEDS Jewelers trust KIBO to bring sophistication and simplicity to their commerce operations.

Learn more at <https://kibocommerce.com>.

Authors



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For over seven years, Shannon has worked in the commerce technology industry—first with Blue Acorn iCi, then joined KIBO in 2022. As the corporate marketing manager, she manages KIBO's content, PR, and brand strategies. Shannon graduated from Clemson University in 2014 and enjoys spending her free time with her husband, two dogs, and horse in Charleston, SC.



Katie Fiechter
Marketing Communications Lead

Katie Fiechter is the Marketing Communications Lead at Smith, where she combines strategic thinking with clear messaging to craft compelling content across multiple channels. With broad experience in commerce, her approach turns complex ideas into stories that resonate with audiences and influence action.