

The Forrester Wave™: B2C Commerce Suites, Q1 2015

by Peter Sheldon, January 13, 2015

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Demandware, hybris, IBM, And Oracle Lead The Pack

Forrester's research uncovered a market in which Demandware, hybris, IBM, and Oracle Commerce lead the pack. Digital River, eBay Enterprise, Elastic Path, Intershop, and Oracle Retail (Micros) offer competitive options while MarketLive and NetSuite represent effective solutions for midmarket clients.

It's All In The Suite

Few firms today seek just an eCommerce platform. eBusinesses have growing needs for sophisticated omnichannel fulfillment and online merchandising tools and are buying a suite of commerce technologies from these vendors that includes core commerce functionality, an order management system (OMS), experience management, and product information management (PIM).

Differentiating Between These Solutions Is Increasingly Difficult

The leading commerce technology solutions in the market all offer robust tools that are proven to meet the needs of even the largest of online retailers. Differentiating at the feature level is increasingly difficult — firms must instead focus on tool set usability, extensibility, suite integration, and innovation when evaluating these solutions.

Access The Forrester Wave Model For Deeper Insight

Clients can use the detailed Forrester Wave model to view every piece of data used to score participating vendors and create a custom vendor shortlist. You can alter Forrester's weightings in the Excel model to tailor the Forrester Wave model to your specifications.



The Forrester Wave™: B2C Commerce Suites, Q1 2015

In A Maturing Solution Category, Discerning The Differences Between The Leading Vendors Is Becoming Increasingly Difficult

by [Peter Sheldon](#)
with [Zia Daniell Wigder](#) and Rebecca Katz

WHY READ THIS REPORT

In Forrester's 69-criteria evaluation of global business-to-consumer (B2C) enterprise-class commerce suite vendors, we identified the eleven most significant software providers — Demandware, Digital River, eBay Enterprise, Elastic Path Software, hybris (an SAP company), IBM, Intershop, MarketLive, NetSuite, Oracle Commerce, and Oracle Retail (Micros) — in the category and researched, analyzed, and scored them. This report details our findings about how well each vendor fulfills our criteria and where they stand in relation to each other to help eBusiness professionals select the right partner for their B2C online and omnichannel commerce needs.

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Forrester conducted lab-based evaluations in October and November of 2014 and interviewed 11 vendor and user companies: Demandware, Digital River, eBay Enterprise, Elastic Path Software, hybris (an SAP company), IBM, Intershop, MarketLive, NetSuite, Oracle Commerce, and Oracle Retail (Micros).

Related Research Documents

[Commerce Technology Investment And Platform Trends — 2014](#)
September 22, 2014

[The Forrester Wave™: Omnichannel Order Management, Q3 2014](#)
July 29, 2014



THE COMMERCE SUITE TECHNOLOGY MARKET IS SET TO DOUBLE IN FIVE YEARS

The market for commerce suite technology is mature, yet it is set to almost double from a \$1.2 billion market in 2014 to \$2.1 billion in the US alone by 2019.¹ Although adoption of commerce technology in B2C verticals such as retail and consumer products is already largely saturated, much of the anticipated growth over the next five years will be driven by replatforming activities as established online retailers look to fortify the scalability of their technology and branded manufacturers increase their focus on direct-to-consumer (DTC) digital channels.

Further influencing the growth in this market segment is the investment online retailers are making in PIM, OMSes, experience management, advanced personalization, recommendation engines, and other applications that improve the online shopping experience and drive conversion results. All told, the market for commerce suite technology looks robust for the foreseeable future.

Commerce Technologies' Rise To Fame Has Led To Significant Market Consolidation

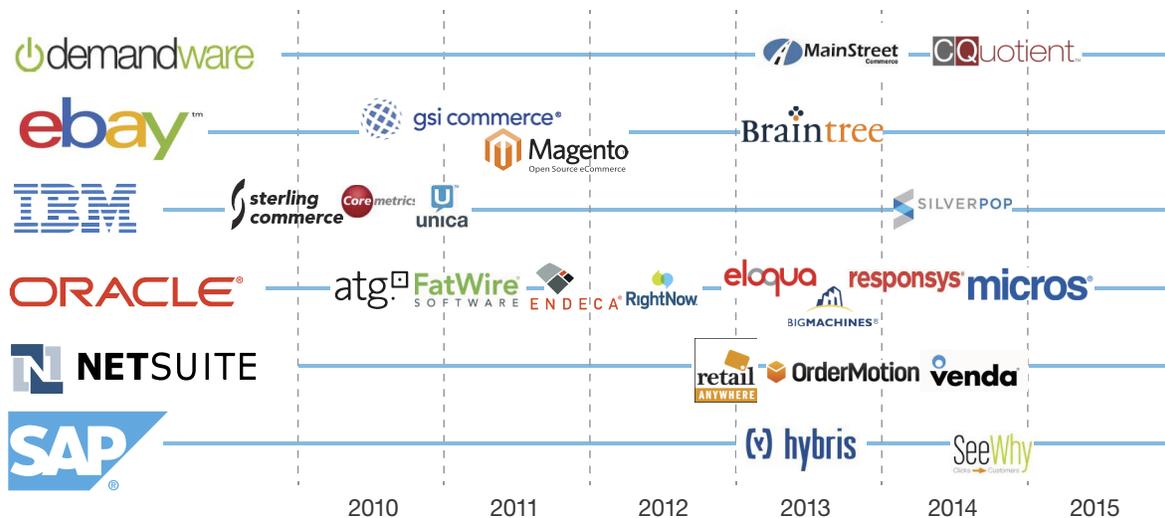
Over the past four years, the commerce technology market has undergone significant consolidation. Commerce technology is now table stakes for any enterprise software vendor with a focus on systems of engagement. Consequently, Forrester has observed an unprecedented chain of mergers and acquisitions (M&A) in this space over the past four years with eBay, IBM, Oracle, and SAP alone having spent in aggregate over \$10 billion on commerce related acquisitions (see Figure 1).

Outside of these four heavyweights, Digital River and Micros have both recently been acquired while NetSuite and Demandware are both public with a combined market cap of over \$10 billion, making acquisitions of these firms unlikely.² This leaves limited options (Elastic Path, Intershop, and MarketLive, plus a few others not included in this Forrester Wave evaluation) for firms keen to buy into the commerce technology market.

Despite the slim pickings, there is a growing list of potential suitors. Microsoft and Salesforce compete aggressively against IBM, Oracle, and SAP in almost all areas of cloud and digital experience technology, yet both are currently void of any credible commerce strategy or offering. Web content management (WCM) vendors including Adobe, Acquia, and Opentext are all developing strategies to support commerce for their clients, yet have no native commerce capabilities in their respective portfolios.

Additionally, point of service (POS) vendors including Fujitsu and NCR are facing increasing pressure from their retail clients to support omnichannel commerce but again lack any solutions in their portfolios to do so. With the demand for commerce technology in the market set to almost double in the US, and grow even faster globally over the next five years, Forrester expects further consolidation and frenzied M&A activity in the next 18 months as the last of the independent commerce suite players get acquired.

Figure 1 Vendors Have Gone On A Shopping Spree In The Commerce Solutions Market



This figure is meant to be representative of the commerce solutions acquisitions over the past five years by those vendors in the Forrester Wave evaluation. Acquisitions with no relevance to commerce are not shown. Vendors that have not made acquisitions are not shown.

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B2C COMMERCE SUITE EVALUATION OVERVIEW

To assess how well the B2C commerce suite vendors meet the evolving needs of the market and to determine how the vendors stack up against each other, Forrester evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of 11 of the leading B2C commerce platform vendors across a range of business and technology criteria.

The Vendors Each Have A “Suite” Story, But Strategies And Capabilities Differ Vastly

As eBusiness leaders’ commerce technology investments reflect the age of the customer, so, too, do the investments of the vendors reflect the needs of their eBusiness customers. Over the past five years, the vendors in the commerce technology space have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in research and development (R&D) and M&A to grow the capabilities of their platforms beyond traditional commerce management and offer more comprehensive solutions. In doing so, the humble commerce platform has gotten very complex. To understand this complexity, we must break down today’s commerce suite into four foundational pillars that form the core of the road map for all of the vendors featured in this Forrester Wave evaluation (see Figure 2). These are:

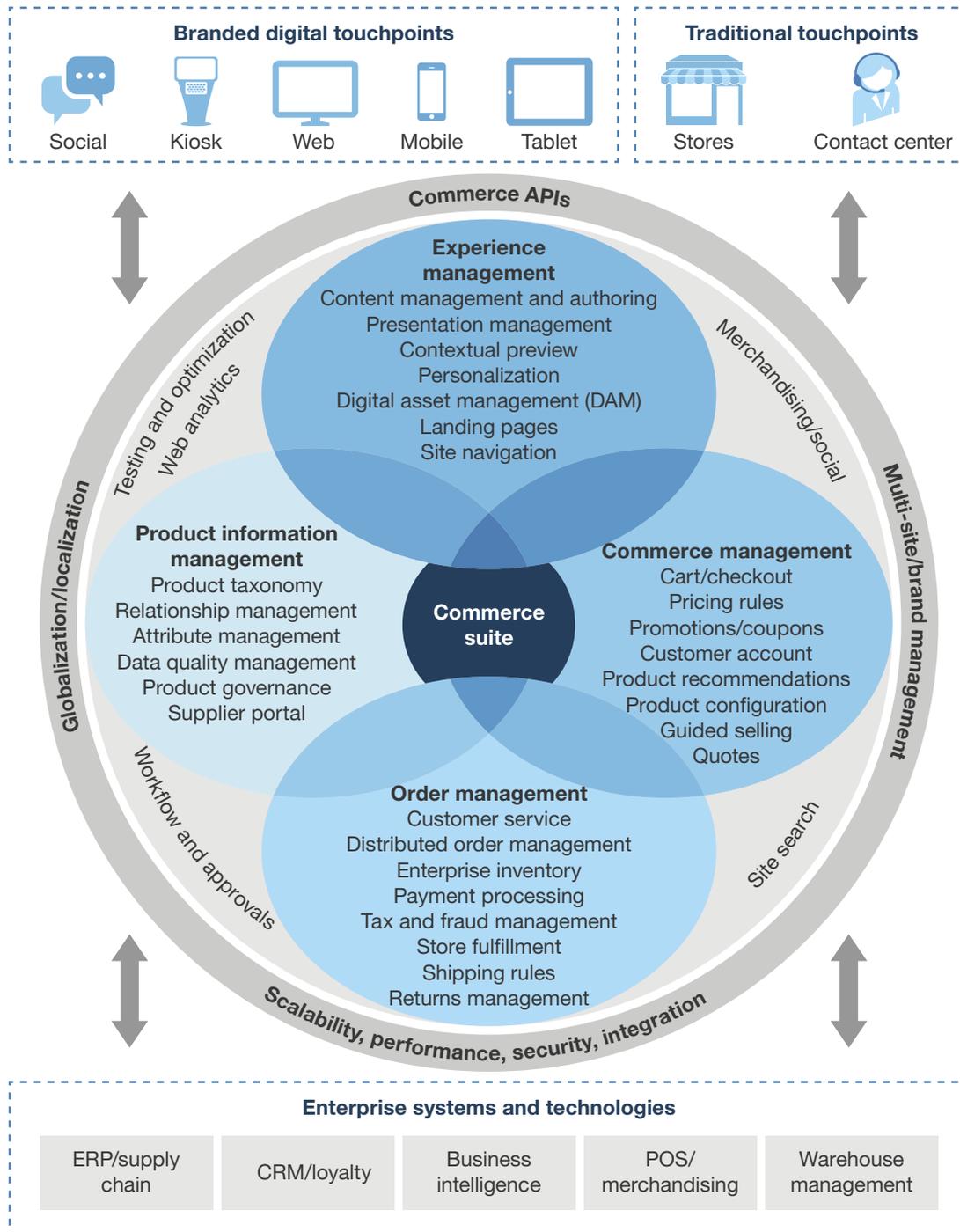
- **Experience management.** In the age of the customer, brands seek a unified experience between the six stages of the customer life cycle (discover, explore, buy, use, ask, and engage). For eBusiness professionals, this means tighter collaboration with their corporate marketing and

brand counterparts to find ways to embed commerce (the buy phase) into the heart of the dot-com experience. To achieve this, the digital marketers and eBusiness merchandisers need to be on the same page (and using the same applications) when it comes to managing all aspects of experience delivery. This means that personalization, campaign management, presentation management, site testing, and content management functions require more governance and coordination than in times gone by.

- **Product information management.** As consumers spend more time researching product purchases online, the importance of high-quality product content becomes paramount for retailers, manufacturers, consumer packaged goods (CPG) firms, and distributors alike. Today these retailers need advanced tools to manage complex product taxonomies, manage data syndication, validate and enforce data quality, support complex content creation processes, and, above all, provide governance oversight. The lowly eCommerce catalog found in most legacy commerce platforms simply doesn't offer these capabilities. eBusiness professionals need full-fledged PIM capabilities to gain support for larger product catalogs, reduce time-to-market for new product launches, ensure a consistent cross-channel customer experience, and support increasingly demanding channel distribution partners.
- **Commerce management.** At the heart of every commerce suite lies the core commerce functionality that supports pricing, promotions, the shopping cart, and, of course, the actual purchase transaction. This is the bread and butter of all of the commerce suite vendors; many have been investing in and evolving these capabilities for over a decade. Consequently, these features are generally very mature, making it difficult for eBusiness teams to really differentiate between the vendor offerings during the vendor evaluation and selection process.
- **Order management.** eCommerce platforms have always offered basic order management, capable of capturing orders and orchestrating them through fulfillment workflows, but today eBusiness professionals require decidedly more sophisticated capabilities that will intelligently route orders not only to the web distribution center, but also to stores, drop shipper partners, and third-party logistics facilities. Furthermore, eBusiness professionals need their order management systems to support complex edge-case order scenarios that include recurring orders, pre-orders, back orders, partial shipments, split orders, drop shipments, and digital or service items.

Although each vendor has a story for how they support these four pillars of the commerce suite, their strategies and capabilities vary drastically. The leading vendors all have core capabilities in each of the four pillars, however these capabilities are often fulfilled by separate product lines often as a result of acquisitions. The smaller vendors featured in this Forrester Wave evaluation rely more on strategic partnerships with best-of-breed WCM, PIM, and OMS vendors to support these capabilities for their clients, although even these vendors have either been making acquisitions or making R&D investments to round out their offerings and ensure their core value propositions are not diluted by an over reliance on partner solutions. To understand the current state of each vendor's suite strategy, Forrester has outlined how each comes to market (see Figure 3).

Figure 2 Today's Commerce Suites Support Four Core Pillars Of Functionality



Source: September 22, 2014, "Commerce Technology Investment And Platform Trends – 2014" Forrester report

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Figure 3 Execution Of The “Commerce Suite” Strategy Varies By Vendor

	Native commerce feature*				Supported via separate product or acquisition	Supported by strategic partnership(s)
	Robust	Strong	Effective			
Demandware						
OMS					•	•
PIM						•
EXM		•				•
Digital River						
OMS			•		•	
PIM			•			
EXM			•			•
eBay Enterprise						
OMS					•	
PIM					•	
EXM			•			
Elastic Path						
OMS						•
PIM						•
EXM						•
hybris Software						
OMS		•				
PIM	•					
EXM	•					•
IBM						
OMS					•	
PIM					•	
EXM	•					•

*Vendors that have effective, strong, or robust capabilities for order management, product information management, or experience management as a native capability of their core commerce management products. Forrester considers robust functionality as having an aggregated score of 4 or more for each criteria, strong functionality as having an aggregated score of between 3 or 4 for each criteria, and effective functionality as having a score of 3 or less for each criteria as defined in the Wave scores.

Figure 3 Execution Of The “Commerce Suite” Strategy Varies By Vendor (Cont.)

	Native commerce feature*				Supported via separate product or acquisition	Supported by strategic partnership(s)
	Robust	Strong	Effective			
Intershop						
OMS			●			
PIM		●			●	
EXM		●				●
MarketLive						
OMS						●
PIM			●		●	
EXM			●			
Oracle Retail (Micros)						
OMS					●	
PIM			●			
EXM		●				
NetSuite						
OMS			●		●	
PIM			●			
EXM			●			
Oracle Commerce						
OMS					●	
PIM					●	
EXM	●					

*Vendors that have effective, strong, or robust capabilities for order management, product information management, or experience management as a native capability of their core commerce management products. Forrester considers robust functionality as having an aggregated score of 4 or more for each criteria, strong functionality as having an aggregated score of between 3 or 4 for each criteria, and effective functionality as having a score of 3 or less for each criteria as defined in the Wave scores.

Differentiation Lies In The Suite Strategy, Not The Core Commerce Feature Set

All of the solutions in this Forrester Wave evaluation do the basics of commerce (pricing, catalog, offers, promotions, shopping cart, and checkout) very well; however it is becoming increasingly difficult to discern differentiation between the features and tools. For example, 10 of the 11 vendors evaluated all leverage the open source search engine SOLR to power site search and faceted navigation features.

This creates a common, high baseline for all the vendors with differentiation coming primarily through the effectiveness of the business user tool set rather the underlying capabilities of the site search architecture. Similarly, all of these platforms have mature promotional capabilities with strong tools for creating product- and cart-level promotions that appear on the surface to offer very similar functionality during a demonstration. When evaluating these solutions, eBusiness leaders must focus not on checking off features in a request for proposal (RFP), but instead focus their search for differentiation against these five key areas:

- **Toolset usability.** Agility is key: eBusiness leaders must empower their limited merchandise resources with the best possible tools, to allow them to onboard new products; create offers, promotions, and campaigns; and change merchandising assortment and personalization rules with the minimum effort. Focusing on the usability of the tools to perform repetitive merchandising tasks is paramount. The best commerce suites offer highly effective power-user tools that seamlessly span between complex administrative configuration functions and testing of scenarios in the storefront. They also successfully abstract complex architectural concepts into easy-to-follow terms, navigational structures, and concepts that enable a non-technical merchandiser to jump straight into the driver's seat.
- **Extensibility and configurability.** Although all of the solutions evaluated offer software development kits (SDKs) and APIs to allow developers to customize and extend these solutions, today's eBusiness teams are increasingly tech savvy and want the ability to customize these solutions themselves without being beholden to corporate development resources, release schedules, vendor updates, or outsourced system integrators. They seek robust visual configuration and workflow design tools that empower them to instantly design, build, and test new processes, features, and workflows without the need for writing code or waiting for the next software release. eBusiness professionals also seek mature technology partner ecosystem marketplaces, where pre-integrated, certified third-party extensions can be rapidly trialed, acquired, and implemented.
- **Suite integration.** All of the vendors we evaluated have a vision for delivering the suite (commerce, PIM, OMS, and experience management) to their clients; however, each vendor has a different approach. eBusiness leaders must carefully evaluate how well these pillars of the suite are integrated and support one another, especially if the vendor is relying on partner products, acquisitions, or separate product lines to round out the suite story.

- **Experience management.** Online merchandising today is a continuum of ongoing experimentation and incremental improvements. Subsequently, merchandisers need tools that allow them to rapidly make, test, approve, measure, and apply changes. This means they need to be 100% self-empowered with visual merchandising tools that allow them to change content and layouts (for desktop, tablets, and mobile) via live edit WYSIWYG tools in the storefront without needing deep CSS or design skills. Furthermore, they want to be able to build personalization, content targeting, and promotional rules and visually validate their changes via contextual preview tools. Although all the vendors offer a shared vision for merchandiser empowerment, there are big differences between the effectiveness and maturity of the tools within the suites we evaluated.
- **Innovation.** Although the solutions are highly mature and difficult to differentiate by feature count alone, the vendors are still trying to innovate primarily through improving the efficiency of common, repetitive tasks. One example of innovation on top of a mature feature is the ability in IBM's WebSphere Commerce to debug the inner workings of a promotional rule directly from the storefront shopping cart. This empowers a merchandiser testing a new offer or promotion to forensically diagnose issues and conflicts between promotions without having to re-trace the entirety of the steps taken during the setup process. eBusiness leaders should push hard for evidence of past and planned innovations during the selection process as too often the road maps of the vendors are weighted toward catch-up features rather than game-changing disruptive innovations.

How The Criteria Are Organized

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we developed a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria. We evaluated vendors against 69 criteria, which we grouped into three high-level buckets:

- **Current offering.** We evaluated each offering against seven core groups of criteria: consumer-facing digital touchpoints, solution architecture, experience management, product information management, commerce management, order management, and marketing tools; however, our criteria are biased toward the maturity of the architecture (including the usability of the administrative tools), the core commerce merchandising functionality, and the tools that support the merchandiser with the delivery and optimization of the experience to the consumer. In total, these three criteria account for 63% of the overall score weighting.
- **Strategy.** We compared the strategies of each company with the needs of eBusiness executives, industry trends, and Forrester's forward-looking vision of the B2C commerce market to assess how well each vendor is positioned for future success. We examined each vendor's vision and road map, planned B2C product enhancements, target markets, key technology partners, commerce service provider partnerships, professional services capability, typical deployment time frames, and cost of ownership.

- **Market presence.** Many firms today support their online businesses with legacy platform technology that has been orphaned by vendors who struggled to innovate, have gone out of business, or were acquired and subsequently lost their focus on this market. Together with their business technology (BT) counterparts, eBusiness executives must look for vendors that have a strong and stable installed base, demonstrate steady growth, and have a solid network of implementation and support partners. To determine the current market presence for our evaluation, we combined information about each vendor's installed base, new customers, revenue, revenue growth, and financial resources to support their stated product and market strategy.

Vendor Selection Criteria

Forrester included 11 vendors in our assessment: Demandware, Digital River, eBay Enterprise, Elastic Path, hybris, IBM, Intershop, MarketLive, NetSuite, Oracle Commerce, and Oracle Retail (Micros) with each of them able to demonstrate (see Figure 4):

- **A significant focus on — and market presence in — enterprise B2C commerce solutions.** Although many of the vendors included in this assessment serve clients in other market segments, such as business-to-business (B2B), or have solution portfolios that extend well beyond the core scenarios of supporting an online retail business, each has a focused product offering for the needs of enterprise B2C clients as well as an ongoing strategy and road map commitment to B2C commerce.
- **Native products or partnerships in support of Forrester's definition of a "commerce suite."** Beyond supporting core eCommerce functionality, these vendors are able to support their clients' needs for omnichannel order management, product information management, and experience management via embedded functionality, companion products from within their solution portfolio, mature partnerships with best-of-breed vendors in each of these categories, or a combination of these approaches.
- **A profitable or stable business with at least \$20 million in revenues and client momentum.** To ensure that the vendors we evaluated will remain viable in this evolving market, Forrester limited its analysis to companies that have the resources and momentum to sustain themselves through variable market conditions. Each of these companies has a minimum of \$20 million in annual commerce solution product sales, is profitable or indicates it is approaching profitability, and has at least 50 existing clients as well as positive sales momentum.
- **Mindshare among the Forrester client base.** The vendors we evaluated are frequently mentioned in Forrester client inquiries, shortlists, consulting projects, and case studies.

Forrester did not include companies in this assessment with a primary focus on other related market segments, such as:

- **Web content management (WCM) solutions.** Increasingly, WCM vendors are talking the talk when it comes to commerce, but few are yet walking the walk. Vendors including Adobe, Acquia, CoreMedia, and OpenText have in the past 18 months developed strategic alliances with some of the commerce suite vendors featured in this report; however, only two WCM vendors (Sitecore and EPiServer) have actually invested in native commerce functionality.
- **B2B-focused solutions with limited current B2C commerce capabilities.** Configure price quote (CPQ) solutions like Oracle's Big Machines, IBM's Sterling Commerce, Endeavor, Technicon, and FPX as well as B2B-focused commerce suites like Insite Software offer robust capabilities for supporting complex B2B channel ordering scenarios. However, these solutions are rarely used to support direct-to-consumer commerce.
- **Solutions focused on small and medium-size businesses (SMBs).** This includes solutions from Shopify, Volusion (including Mozu), Bigcommerce, and Yahoo Merchant Solutions, which tend to serve clients operating with less than \$10 million in annual online revenues. However, we have written research on these and many other SMB commerce solutions in North America and Europe in the past.³
- **Full-service solutions.** We have recently written separate research on the capabilities of full-service solutions like arvato Systems, Brandshop, Digital River, eBay Enterprise, Newgistics, Onestop Internet, PFSweb, and Speed Commerce.⁴ Although these full-service providers offer commerce technology as part of a broader a-la-carte suite of commerce services, their offerings commonly leverage licensed solutions from the enterprise vendors featured in this research. Two of the vendors included in this B2C commerce suite evaluation (Digital River and eBay Enterprise) also offer full-service solutions.
- **Digital- or subscription-focused solutions.** These providers focus their solutions on media, software, online subscriptions, and other virtual or digital goods. We have written separate research on vendors that specialize in the unique requirements of selling digital goods and online subscriptions, including asknet, Avangate, Bluesnap, cleverbridge, Zuora, Vindicia, and Aria Systems.⁵ Two of the vendors included in this B2C commerce suite evaluation (Digital River and Elastic Path) also offer solutions for the digital and subscription market.

Figure 4 Evaluated Vendors: Product Information

Vendor	Product evaluated	Version evaluated	Partner products demonstrated
IBM	Websphere Commerce Sterling Commerce MDM Infosphere Collaborative Edition	v7, Feature Pack 8 v9.3 v11.3	N/A
MarketLive	MarketLive Commerce	v14.2	Shopatron
Intershop	Intershop Commerce	v7.5	N/A
hybris (an SAP company)	hybris Commerce	v7.3 & 7.4	N/A
eBay Enterprise	Magento Enterprise Edition Retail Order Management SKU Space Store Fulfillment	v1.14 N/A N/A N/A	N/A
NetSuite	SuiteCommerce Advanced	v14.2	N/A
Demandware	Demandware Commerce Business Flow	v14.8 N/A	e-Spirit CMS
Oracle Retail (Micros)	Oracle Relate Customer Management Cloud Services Oracle Retail Order Broker Cloud Services Oracle Retail Xstore Software Oracle Retail Open Commerce Platform Cloud Services	v11 v5.1 v7 v6	N/A
Oracle Commerce	Oracle Commerce Fusion Product Hub Fusion Order Management Oracle Marketing Cloud	v11.1 v9 v9 N/A	N/A
Elastic Path	Elastic Path Commerce for Adobe Marketing Cloud	v6.11	Adobe AEM, Agility Multichannel
Digital River	Digital River Global Commerce Blue Hornet Global Fulfillment	v14.1 N/A N/A	N/A

*Evaluations were conducted October-November 2014.

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THE RESULTS: ONLY A FEW LEADERS OFFER THE COMPREHENSIVE SUITE

The evaluation uncovered a market in which (see Figure 5):

- **Demandware, hybris, IBM, and Oracle Commerce lead the pack.** These four vendors represent the best of the best and reflect a solution space that has been maturing since its inception 15 years ago. These vendors go head-to-head in almost every midmarket and enterprise commerce deal and for the buyers of these solutions, the ultimate selection decision often comes down to price, vision, and alliances more than functionality and features. When it comes to the core capabilities such as pricing, offers, site search, promotion, carts, and checkout, these vendors all pack a heavy punch, with extensive, mature capabilities that, frankly, go beyond the needs of many of their clients.

So mature and similar are some of these core capabilities that 24% of North American and European retail and wholesale firms believe that these vendors have stopped innovating.⁶ When it comes to packaging, hybris, IBM, and Oracle Commerce all offer cloud-based deployment options with usage-based subscription ownership pricing models in addition to their traditional licensed offerings. Demandware stands out as the only true multitenant SaaS offering, although the solution can only be acquired via a revenue share business model. All four vendors come to market with a comprehensive “suite” story; however, the commonality ends on the product marketing sheet. Under the surface there are fundamental differences that Forrester clients who are buying the suite must consider.

- **Digital River, eBay Enterprise, and Intershop are nipping at the heels of the “big four.”** These three vendors represent a different value proposition from the “big four” enterprise software vendors. Each offers strong eCommerce capabilities but comes to market with a different value proposition, strategy, and target market focus. Additionally, each offers strong eCommerce features and has a strategy for offering the suite even if this means technology partnerships, recent acquisitions, or emerging product capabilities.

Digital River is a good fit for software firms and branded manufacturers that want to get to market quickly, outsource part or all of their operations, and need to operate and sell globally into developed and emerging markets. Intershop represents a leaner alternative to working with IBM, Oracle Commerce, or hybris and will appeal to firms that have equally weighted needs for both B2C and B2B commerce scenarios. With Magento Enterprise Edition, eBay Enterprise offers a maturing open-core commerce product with a significant installed base that is rounded out well with partner extensions while the broader eBay Enterprise organization brings to the table OMS, marketing solutions, and outsourced operations via an à-la-carte menu.

- **Elastic Path and Oracle Retail (Micros) offer compelling solutions.** These two vendors have experienced lackluster new client growth in the past 18 months; however, both have made significant R&D investments to continue to round out their respective product offerings.

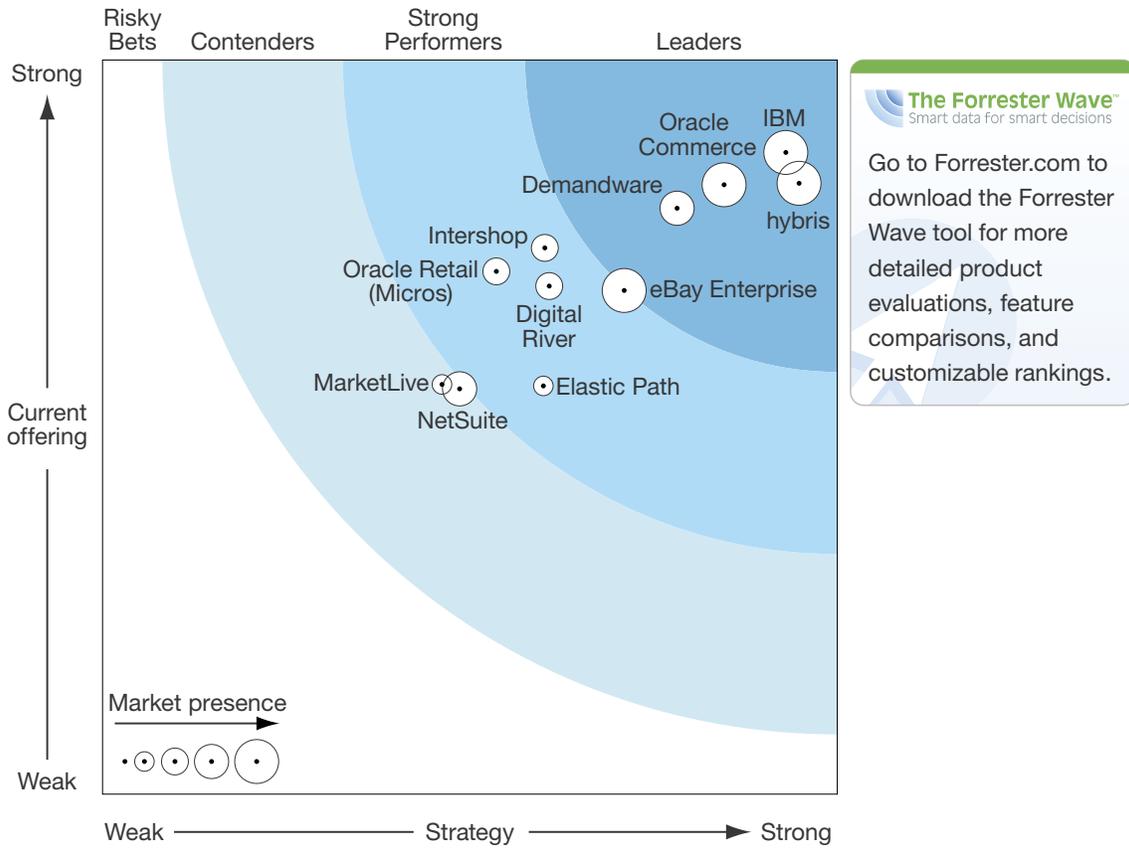
Both offer effective to moderately strong eCommerce features and has a strategy for offering the suite even if this means technology partnerships or emerging product capabilities. The biggest difference between these vendors and the leaders are the effectiveness of the business management tools in complex enterprise usage scenarios where governance, auditing, versioning, approvals, and workflow are critically important.

Elastic Path is a good fit for firms that already own or are considering Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) for their corporate experience delivery layer. Oracle Retail (Micros) represents a good fit for midmarket retailers seeking an end-to-end suite for their online, store, and multichannel selling needs.

- **MarketLive and NetSuite have a strong midmarket focus.** These two vendors have deep roots serving the midmarket (clients with online revenues typically ranging between \$10 million to \$50 million). MarketLive has seen strong client growth in the past 12 months and fills a gap in the market between SMB solutions like Volusion, Mozu, Big Commerce, and Shopify and the larger enterprise vendors who strategically are focused on bigger accounts but often opportunistically come downmarket. NetSuite, while undoubtedly focused on the commerce space and the retail vertical, remains a solution best suited for midmarket clients that are already invested in a firm's ERP and CRM modules.

This evaluation of the leading B2C commerce suites is intended to be a starting point only. We encourage clients to view detailed product evaluations and adapt criteria weightings to fit their individual needs through the Forrester Wave Excel-based vendor comparison tool. We also encourage clients to review our complementary Forrester Wave research on best-of-breed PIM, OMS, WCM, and digital experience delivery platforms and to leverage their inquiry access to learn more about these solutions.⁷ Forrester also offers a formal vendor selection methodology through our consulting division to assist clients with their vendor selection processes.

Figure 5 Forrester Wave™: B2C Commerce Suites, Q1 2015



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Figure 5 Forrester Wave™: B2C Commerce Suites, Q1 2015 (Cont.)

	Forrester's Weighting	Demandware	Digital River	eBay Enterprise	Elastic Path	hybris	IBM	Intershop	MarketLive	Oracle Retail (Micros)	NetSuite	Oracle Commerce
CURRENT OFFERING	50%	3.99	3.46	3.43	2.78	4.16	4.37	3.72	2.79	3.56	2.76	4.15
Consumer-facing digital touchpoints	7%	4.10	4.00	4.25	2.55	2.60	3.80	3.50	2.45	3.10	2.35	2.35
Solution architecture	25%	4.44	4.00	3.52	3.26	4.50	4.28	4.04	3.00	3.46	3.18	4.10
Experience management	18%	3.70	2.60	2.30	2.15	4.40	4.20	3.70	2.80	3.45	1.75	4.40
Product information management	8%	3.34	2.84	3.07	2.62	4.20	4.27	3.27	2.55	2.92	2.80	3.66
Commerce management	20%	4.20	3.70	3.55	3.30	4.75	4.70	4.20	3.00	3.90	3.20	4.80
Order management	15%	3.54	2.93	4.22	2.27	3.23	4.41	2.89	2.27	3.85	2.95	3.91
Marketing tools	7%	4.20	4.40	3.50	2.65	4.20	4.85	3.75	3.10	3.80	2.60	4.65
STRATEGY	50%	3.91	3.04	3.55	3.00	4.74	4.65	3.01	2.31	2.68	2.43	4.23
Product strategy & roadmap	30%	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	5.00
Planned B2C enhancements	15%	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Target market and B2C focus	15%	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
Key technology partners	10%	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Commerce service providers	15%	3.00	1.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	3.00
Professional services	10%	4.10	4.35	4.00	3.00	3.35	4.00	4.10	3.10	4.25	2.75	3.75
Typical implementation time frame	5%	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00
Cost of ownership	0%	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00
MARKET PRESENCE	0%	3.65	2.85	4.30	1.45	4.70	4.25	2.70	2.00	3.00	3.85	4.25
Install base (live customers)	30%	3.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00
New customers	20%	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Revenue	25%	4.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Revenue growth	15%	5.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00
Financial resources	10%	2.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	5.00

All scores are based on a scale of 0 (weak) to 5 (strong).

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VENDOR PROFILES

Leaders Provide Mature And Well Rounded Commerce Suite Capabilities

Leaders in our B2C commerce suite evaluation include:

- **IBM.** IBM's suite comprises three separate products: IBM WebSphere Commerce, IBM Sterling Order Management, and IBM InfoSphere Master Data Management Collaborative Edition. IBM also offers a standalone web content management platform; however, this product is rarely positioned in commerce deals, instead the latest version of WebSphere Commerce ships with an all-new experience management capability "commerce composer" that provides a WYSIWYG live content editing environment for merchandisers atop a new responsive reference storefront. IBM continues to innovate in the marketplace, with unique merchandising features in the latest WebSphere Commerce release, while the recent partnership with Apple has spawned two new iOS apps to further enrich the existing robust support for store fulfillment and endless aisle scenarios in Sterling Order Management.

In recent years, IBM has faced increased competition in the market and as a result experienced slower growth than some of its competitors. However the suite continues to shine in complex enterprise environments, and IBM offers significant flexibility on business model terms and deployment options. Clients also report that IBM has recently become more competitive on pricing which, according to IBM, has had a positive impact on new client growth through 2014. On the product front, IBM has long suffered from tool set fragmentation across the three core products of the suite; however, IBM's 2015 commerce road map calls for consolidation of the Sterling Order Management and WebSphere Commerce tool sets with a common, web-based administration UI.

- **Hybris (an SAP company).** Hybris has experienced significant growth in the past 12 months since being acquired by SAP. Behind the momentum lie a few contributing factors: 1) the core value proposition of the hybris platform (combined PIM, eCommerce, experience management, and OMS on a single, modern architecture platform) remains intact following the acquisition; 2) existing SAP ERP clients are gaining confidence in the integration approach of hybris and the SAP ERP; 3) SAP's global footprint is propelling significant sales momentum in APAC and other emerging markets; 4) the network of commerce service providers working with hybris is stronger than ever; and 5) SAP account reps are educating their existing account portfolios on the hybris solution.

With the hybris acquisition now firmly in the rear view mirror, SAP is consolidating its "front office" portfolio, with hybris taking on the broader role leading all of SAP's systems of engagement. This new portfolio of products is known as Customer Engagement and Commerce (CEC) and currently includes hybris; SeeWhy; SAP's incumbent marketing, billing, and revenue management; and sales and support CRM solutions. Beyond the strategy of the portfolio

consolidation lie some lingering issues. There are now nine different product cockpits across the overall hybris application with a significant portion of the merchandising capabilities still only accessible in the legacy hybris management cockpit; however, the hybris product roadmap calls for these issues to be addressed. Furthermore, the OMS module remains best suited for midmarket scenarios, still lacking the sophisticated enterprise omnichannel OMS capabilities found in best-of-breed OMS solutions.

- **Oracle Commerce.** In the four years since Forrester last evaluated what was then ATG, much has changed. Oracle's commerce unit has been on a multibillion dollar buying spree, acquiring ATG, Endeca, FatWire, and Big Machines. Today these legacy brand names are all but gone; in fact Oracle has successfully persuaded a significant portion of its legacy ATG and Endeca install base to upgrade to the new consolidated Oracle Commerce product. With the latest release v11.1, the firm has made significant progress toward providing a common business user tool set (although some fragmentation remains) while on the commercial side, Oracle has moved away completely from a traditional CPU-based pricing model to a usage-based capacity model.

On paper, Oracle has all four pillars of the suite covered. The core Oracle Commerce product does a good job of incorporating experience management via an evolution of the Experience Manager tools inherited from Endeca, while its new SaaS Fusion suite fills the PIM and OMS gaps respectively with Fusion Order Hub and Fusion Order Management. Prospects should be aware, however, that at the time of evaluation, Oracle had no live customer deployments of the Fusion PIM or OMS products being used in conjunction with Oracle Commerce. In 2015, Oracle will launch an all new midmarket SaaS commerce offering that is intended to compete directly with Demandware; however, this product was not ready for evaluation at the time of publication.

- **Demandware.** In 2014, Demandware added a significant number of new clients with gross merchandise volume (GMV) values over \$100 million, a clear indication that its strategy to extend its footprint upmarket is working. At the product level, Demandware was first to market with a responsive enabled starter store that has seen significant adoption among clients, while emerging innovations such as the firm's pilot for store associate apps (mPOS and endless aisle selling) have clients impatiently waiting for more — especially since the company has been vocal about extending its cloud platform to service in-store transactions. Demandware has also made two acquisitions that partially round out its One Platform suite strategy — Mainstreet for OMS and CQuotient for predictive merchandising and personalization — however Demandware is still reliant on partners for PIM and its experience management feature set is showing signs of age against hybris, IBM, and Oracle.

Despite very high satisfaction with the product, the firm's strategy, and the support services, clients we spoke to cited concerns with long-term cost of ownership as a result of the revenue share business model. As with any renewal cycle Forrester anticipates that Demandware clients

will undertake a strategic review of their commerce technology strategy and TCO will come under increased scrutiny. While Demandware has historically experienced high client retention rates, we expect some larger clients to critically evaluate the cost versus the value of its solution — particularly given these same clients are considering expanding their usage of Demandware to support transactions in the physical store.

Strong Performers Blend Strong Strategy With Maturing Product Offerings

Strong performers in our B2C commerce suites evaluation include:

- **eBay Enterprise.** Since the rebranding of GSI commerce as eBay Enterprise in June 2013, the firm has been executing against a strategy to modularize the components of the former GSI full-service offering. Going forward, Magento Enterprise Edition will now also play a foundational role in this strategy. Like the other vendors, eBay has a fairly robust suite story with 1) Magento Enterprise Edition serving as the backbone of the commerce and experience management capabilities; 2) eBay Enterprise Retail Order Management and Store Fulfillment Solutions providing for omnichannel OMS; and 3) the little-known eBay Enterprise Product Content Manager rounding out basic PIM capabilities. In addition, eBay Enterprise's Retail Associate platform solves for in-store clientelling.

The past few releases of Magento Enterprise Edition have been focused on improving scalability, merchandising tools, and mobile support which has helped the platform gain traction with both mid-market and enterprise firms. The release of Magento 2.0 (a major rebuild and upgrade of the platform) later in 2015 will help further solidify the platform for enterprise client needs. The v2.0 release, in addition to the firm's ability to recruit top tier digital agency and systems integrators (in addition to the existing Magento partner network), will be critical to the firm's vision of gaining more upmarket momentum and credibility. eBay Enterprise has also consolidated together its portfolio of digital marketing technologies and acquisitions into a new suite known as the "eBay Enterprise Commerce Marketing Platform."

- **Digital River.** Digital River is aggressively targeting branded manufacturers and has seen some early success with onboarding new clients from this vertical with attractive time-to-market and pricing propositions. At the product level, the firm's core commerce offering is well rounded and one of only four solutions evaluated to be offered exclusively via a multitenant SaaS architecture. The firm has an emerging OMS capability that already supports physical fulfillment for almost half of their clients. The core platform lacks best-in-class experience management; however, a recently signed partnership and integration with Adobe provides an option for clients to use Digital River as commerce-as-a-service behind the glass of Adobe's web experience manager (AEM) product.

At the time of writing, Digital River was in the final phases of taking the firm private through an acquisition by Siris Capital. The firm continues to make progress on its strategic transformation, which includes shaking off the perception of being only for “digital products,” diversifying its client base, divesting non-core product assets, growing its network of commerce service providers, and opening up and modernizing the core SaaS platform (Digital River has been investing heavily in RESTful [representational state transfer] APIs). Taking the firm private will better position it to do these things with a new injection of capital to fund the overhaul of the underlying platform.

- **Elastic Path.** Elastic Path has previously been included in B2C Forrester Wave research; however, at the time of our last report on the market in 2012, the firm was focused on a niche segment of the market (publishers and software firms selling digital goods) and thus did not meet our inclusion criteria. Since 2012, the firm has secured funding (to the tune of \$15 million), matured its commerce service provider partnerships, widened its target market, and developed a strategic partnership with Adobe. Of particular interest is the last of these, which is now core to Elastic Path’s strategy. Although many of the other vendors in this report (Digital River, hybris, IBM, and Intershop) also have formal partnerships and prebuilt integrations with Adobe, Elastic Path is unique in that it has created a dedicated version of its product that is 100% dependent on the Adobe AEM product for all aspects of experience delivery.

Consequently, Elastic Path has expanded its funnel with many of the firm’s deals now tied to Adobe. Forrester clients that already have a large investment in the Adobe AEM platform and need effective commerce capabilities (e.g., pricing, cart, offers, checkout) exposed via a mature set of commerce service APIs may find Elastic Path to be a good fit. More recently, Elastic Path has announced additional strategic partnerships with Agility Multichannel and Jagged Peak for PIM and OMS respectively, although no joint customers were available at the time of evaluation.

- **Oracle Retail (Micros).** At the time of writing, Oracle has yet to formally communicate the future roadmap for the Micros Retail portfolio. Should Oracle decide to continue investment in the Micros Open Commerce Platform (OCP) there will be considerable overlap between this platform (which itself was an acquisition of Fry in 2008) and Oracle Commerce (formerly ATG and Endeca) — with Oracle Commerce clearly being the more mature platform. Other parts of the Micros portfolio, however, will have clearer strategic roles in shaping out Oracle’s retail omnichannel portfolio. The OMS products (formerly CWSerenade and Locate), the CRM product Relate and x-Store, and the firm’s successful retail POS are all respectively being repositioned and renamed to live within the existing Oracle Retail portfolio providing omnichannel retail assets for second- and third-tier retailers.

Forrester clients considering the Oracle Retail products would be well advised to wait until the strategy for integration is communicated before signing and should anticipate a period of at least 18 months before a truly integrated Oracle Retail/Oracle Commerce suite starts to emerge.

Long-term, the acquisition will allow Oracle to round out its omnichannel retail strategy and retail product portfolio with new robust capabilities for OMS and inventory tracking, targeting offer planning and guest data management.

- **Intershop.** Intershop's v7 platform represents a strong solution that can hold itself well against the leaders in this Forrester Wave evaluation. The product scored well in our evaluation for core commerce and experience management capabilities; however the product's ability to support enterprise PIM and OMS scenarios are limited. In 2014, Intershop, like other vendors in this Forrester Wave evaluation, signed a strategic partnership with Adobe and has consequently developed a connector with Adobe's web experience manager (AEM), although at this time joint customers of the two solutions remain elusive. The firm continues to struggle to break into the North American market despite investments in sales and marketing. Despite this, Intershop has seen positive momentum on net new license sales and with its recruitment of new commerce service provider partners. For clients seeking a strong solution outside of the four leaders, Intershop remains an attractive proposition.

Plagued by its complex ownership structure (the firm is publicly listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, with eBay Enterprise having a minority controlling stake), Intershop was at the time of writing considering the possibility of raising additional funds to fuel its growth. A fresh injection of capital, possibly with a change of ownership structure, will better position the firm for future success as the uncertainty of Intershop's continuous ability to finance future development of the solution has been a drag on sales momentum.

Contenders Present Unique Opportunities

Contenders in our B2C commerce suites evaluation include:

- **NetSuite.** NetSuite continue to make major investments in its commerce strategy as one of the three core pillars of the firm's SaaS suite. In 2013, NetSuite acquired midmarket OMS provider OrderMotion and in 2014, the company spent \$50.5 million acquiring UK-based SaaS eCommerce vendor Venda. The strategy behind these acquisitions remains a little muddy. OrderMotion was primarily a grab of OMS domain expertise, while Venda was a grab for European market share (NetSuite intends to continue to sell Venda as a standalone offering). NetSuite continues to focus on its core target market — midmarket firms — and is seeing significant client adoption of SuiteCommerce in these segments. The core commerce capabilities are effective, but the business user tools are not optimized for an online merchandiser persona and can be difficult to navigate.

SuiteCommerce is clearly a fit for existing clients of NetSuite leveraging the ERP or CRM modules; however, as a standalone commerce offering, it has a number of shortcomings. The product lacks effective experience management tools, with changes to the front-end templates

requiring front-end development skills (the firm plans to rectify this by strategically leveraging the assets of its recent acquisition of LightCMS into SuiteCommerce to provide native content management capabilities). NetSuite is pursuing a commerce service provider strategy and today counts over 20 partners that are now able to support client implementations of SuiteCommerce.

- **MarketLive.** MarketLive has previously been included in Forrester's B2C Forrester Wave research; however, at the time of our last report in 2012, the firm did not meet Forrester's inclusion criteria for revenue. Fast forward to 2014 and with the return of founder Ken Burke to the helm, things are looking up for MarketLive. The core commerce engine is effective with a surprisingly robust feature set and the firm has positive client win momentum. MarketLive is having success closing larger enterprise level deals, bringing it upmarket from its previous focus on SMB and midmarket online retailers. In support of this goal, MarketLive has been maturing the platform by migrating its cloud infrastructure over to Amazon Web Services (AWS) and focusing on improving its upgrade processes.

MarketLive's experience management tools are not best-in-class but do offer effective site preview and A/B testing tools. For PIM and OMS, MarketLive supports integration with multiple PIM partners and has a strategic partnership with Shopatron for distributed order management.

Other Vendors Worthy Of Consideration

The commerce suite market is ballooning. Both eCommerce and POS vendors are spreading their wings to support alternative channels, while WCM and PIM vendors are increasingly positioning themselves into commerce deals and partnering with leading commerce suite vendors to ensure they are getting a slice of the commerce market pie. Subsequently, the landscape of vendors offering viable commerce platform technology is diversifying. Beyond the vendors featured in this research, eBusiness professionals may also wish to consider these emerging solutions:

- **OrderDynamics.** OrderDynamics (formerly eCommera) is undergoing a transformation from being a services provider to a product company. In the past, eCommera was primarily in the business of reselling, implementing, and operating stores on Demandware for its clients. For all intents and purposes, the firm was a commerce services provider with a niche focus on enterprise retailers in the UK market. However with a recent \$41 million series C funding round and the acquisition of Toronto-based OrderDynamics, the firm now owns proprietary eCommerce, OMS, and store solutions. OrderDynamics is now focused on integrating its decision intelligence platform (Dynamic Action) into the core merchandising capabilities of its newly acquired eCommerce and OMS platform. Going forward, OrderDynamics will continue to support and implement Demandware for its clients; however, the firm is now actively positioning its own eCommerce/OMS suite into new deals with win momentum already under its belt.

- **Sitecore.** In 2013, Sitecore acquired Commerce Server.Net (formally Microsoft Commerce Server) and has subsequently released an initial Sitecore-ready version of the commerce product. Over the course of 2015, Forrester expects the Sitecore commerce offering to mature with a focus on retooling the entire legacy Commerce Server rich client tools over to the new “Speak” web-based UI of Sitecore v8 along with investments in customer/order management, pricing, and the addition of omnichannel retailing capabilities through a strategic partnership with Microsoft Dynamics.
- **ShopVisible.** In December 2014, ShopVisible, a midmarket SaaS-based eCommerce and OMS offering, was acquired by Epicor. The acquisition represents a long-overdue recognition by Epicor that digital commerce is key to the omnichannel strategy of its enterprise retail client base; however, Epicor will have to make significant investments to the ShopVisible platform to ready it for enterprise-grade deployments if it is to persuade its existing clients to replatform from other best-of-breed eCommerce and OMS platforms.
- **Mozu.** Volusion, a heavyweight in serving commerce to SMB firms, has created an all-new SaaS offering, Mozu, targeted at midmarket and lower enterprise clients. The firm is aggressively marketing the new platform to its larger Volusion customers and to the broader market and already has live customers and growing network of technology and implementation partners.
- **EPiServer.** EPiServer offers a combined eCommerce and WCM platform with a maturing focus on commerce in recent releases. The firm targets both B2B and B2C firms with evidence of success with its B2C eCommerce offering with midmarket branded manufacturers. For firms seeking to unify customer experience across WCM and eCommerce platforms and alleviating the need to buy two best-of-breed platforms and pay a commerce service provider to integrate, EPiServer represents a viable solution.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource

The online version of Figure 5 is an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

Data Sources Used In This Forrester Wave

Forrester used a combination of three data sources to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each solution:

- **Hands-on lab evaluations.** Vendors spent one day with a team of analysts who performed a hands-on evaluation of the product using a scenario-based testing methodology. We evaluated each product using the same scenario(s), creating a level playing field by evaluating every product on the same criteria.
- **Product demos.** We asked vendors to conduct demonstrations of their product's functionality. We used findings from these product demos to validate details of each vendor's product capabilities.
- **Customer reference calls.** To validate product and vendor qualifications, Forrester also conducted reference calls with two of each vendor's current customers.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and we encourage readers to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve. For more information on the methodology that every Forrester Wave follows, go to <http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/forrester-wave-methodology.html>.

Integrity Policy

All of Forrester's research, including Forrester Wave evaluations, is conducted according to our Integrity Policy. For more information, go to <http://www.forrester.com/marketing/policies/integrity-policy.html>.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Forrester estimates that by 2019, US spend on commerce technology will reach \$2.1 billion, almost double the current 2014 spend of \$1.2 billion. For more information, read Forrester's upcoming "Commerce Platform Technology and Services Forecast, 2014 To 2019" report.
- ² On October 23, 2014, Digital River agreed to be sold to private equity firm Siris Capital Partners for \$480 million. The deal is expected to close in Q1, 2015. Source: "Digital River Announces Agreement to be Acquired by Investor Group Led by Siris Capital Group for \$26.00 per Share in Cash," Digital River press release, October 23, 2014 (<http://www.digitalriver.com/our-company/newsroom/press-release/digital-river-announces-agreement-acquired-investor-group-led-siris-capital-group-26-00-per-share-cash/>). On September 8, 2014, Oracle completed its acquisition of Micros Systems for \$5.3 billion. Source: "Oracle Completes Acquisition of MICROS Systems," Oracle press release, September 8, 2014 (<http://www.oracle.com/us/corporate/press/2287167>).
- ³ For more information on eCommerce platforms for small and medium businesses, see the April 12, 2012, "[SMB eCommerce Solutions 2012](#)" report.
- ⁴ In January 2015, Forrester will publish an updated market overview report on full-service eCommerce solutions.
- ⁵ For more information on digital commerce platforms and subscription billing solutions, see the December 6, 2012, "[Market Overview: Subscription And Recurring Billing Solutions 2012](#)" report and see the November 7, 2011, "[Market Overview: Digital Commerce Solutions 2011](#)" reports.
- ⁶ For more information on commerce technology investment trends, please see the September 22, 2014, "[Commerce Technology Investment And Platform Trends — 2014](#)" report.
- ⁷ For more information on product information management (PIM) systems see the May 21, 2014, "[The Forrester Wave™: Product Information Management \(PIM\), Q2 2014](#)" report. For more information on order management systems (OMS) see the July 29, 2014, "[The Forrester Wave™: Omnichannel Order Management, Q3 2014](#)" report. For more information on web content management (WCM) systems, see the April 8, 2013, "[The Forrester Wave™: Web Content Management For Digital Customer Experience, Q2 2013](#)" report. For more information on digital experience delivery platforms, see the July 22, 2014, "[The Forrester Wave™: Digital Experience Delivery Platforms, Q3 2014](#)" report.

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