Adobe® Experience Manager integrates with e-commerce platforms for personalized shopping experiences

Customers want to experience your products through rich visualization while shopping from the comfort of their couch. A traditional store experience with basic product shots in rows and columns minimizes the value of your marketing and the power of your brand. Merchandisers have known for decades that store appearance and how items are presented and positioned with other products not only increases the appeal of an individual item, but also drives additional sales. To maximize the return on online marketing, it’s critical to bring the same innovation to the web experience across all touchpoints, from the desktop browser to mobile phones and tablets.

Opportunities

Although e-commerce accounts for less than 10% of total retail sales, it fuels the growth of the retail industry. Global e-commerce sales will reach nearly $1 trillion by 2013, predicts Goldman Sachs, and is growing 19.4% (Goldman Sachs, Sales in billions of dollars). Indeed, 2012 was another unprecedented year for U.S. online commerce, which rang up over $186 billion in total revenue up 15% from a year ago (comScore, Feb. 7, 2013). Consumer brand manufacturers are not to be left out with double-digit growth year over year, according to Internet Retailer. Furthermore, retail sales made on smartphones reached $8 billion in 2012, 3% of the total e-commerce sales (Forrester Research, January 2013).

The quick pace of e-commerce growth is in large part attributable to the rapid adoption of web-enabled mobile devices and social media, as consumers continue to shift their activities, including shopping, to the online channel. And in doing so, they are demanding great experiences across all the touchpoints they interact with. From browsing online to sharing products on Facebook to downloading full product specs via QR codes, today’s shopping experience is increasingly mobile, social, and content-rich. No longer a linear experience, shopping is now a journey of many touchpoints spanning online storefronts, mobile apps, social media, call centers, web-enabled terminals and kiosks in brick-and-mortar stores, and interactive campaigns— all consumed across a wide range of devices and screens. As a result, retailers have more opportunities than ever to reach and engage shoppers and build profitable relationships with them.

Challenges

As customer touchpoints multiply, retailers must be quick and nimble in managing their interactions with shoppers both online and in-store, delivering consistent experiences to the many screens and channels preferred by their customers.

Online merchants also have to deliver differentiated, personalized experiences to build the kind of brand that can demand premium prices. Today, hyper-connected consumers are more empowered than ever. Two-thirds of smartphone owners shop from their mobile devices, which reinforce bargain-hunting behavior as consumers compare prices across both brick-and-mortar and online stores, as noted in the Dec. 5, 2011 comScore press release, “Mobile Shopping Goes Mainstream.” In response, retailers have to elevate their brand experiences at every touchpoint to communicate value beyond just price.
Many retailers, however, use traditional product-centric e-commerce systems that fall short as an enabler of marketing and e-business strategies in this increasingly complex and fragmented environment. Commerce solutions tend to be siloed and transaction focused. They lack user-friendly tools that allow marketers to rapidly deliver and optimize personalized shopping experiences and communicate with their customers consistently across all channels.

Moreover, retailers are hampered by inefficient content development processes, because e-commerce, direct marketing, and retail store teams often use different tools to manage their content and execute based on their siloed view of the customer. As a result, customer experiences are often out of sync and feel disjointed.

An experience-driven commerce solution must support the consistent delivery of rich, personalized visitor-centric shopping experiences across all channels. It starts with managing product content in a central data repository to display products and pricing consistently. This, combined with visitor context information, leads to a single view of the customer and opens up the opportunity for fast execution of targeted campaigns to acquire visitors across web, mobile, email, and other channels. After shoppers land at the site, marketers must engage them with compelling experiences that may be a combination of different products, expert advice, and customer reviews to lead them deeper into the site where they can drive conversion. From these interactions, marketers need to analyze and understand customer preferences to optimize future interactions and better anticipate needs and desires. At every touchpoint, retailers must measure and analyze customer responses to enforce a closed-loop mechanism that gathers feedback for continuous business optimization.

The ability to manage every online interaction—from acquisition to conversion, varied by visitor interest and context—with speed and ease is a major competitive advantage for any online commerce operator. In the absence of such an end-to-end, closed-loop multichannel commerce platform, online merchants will find it hard to attract new customers, increase loyalty, and sustain growth.

Solution
Extend the reach of your e-commerce platform with Adobe Experience Manager. Experience Manager is a complete web content management and digital asset management system that enables marketers and merchandisers to provide all web experiences from lookbooks and collections to blog entries and landing pages. The entire shopping experience, including enhanced product category pages, product detail pages, and checkout, can be created to accentuate the products and brand. Marketers and e-commerce managers can self-publish content, test ideas, and make changes to the customer experience. Businesses can effectively differentiate based on brand engagement and drive conversion and customer loyalty.

Adobe Experience Manager can drive your next-generation shopping experience by allowing marketers and merchandisers to create and manage a more compelling customer experience. Experience-driven commerce moves away from traditional store designs and brings the lifestyle of your brand to the forefront, letting your business compete on brand and customer loyalty rather than price. Experience Manager provides APIs that accelerate the integration with e-commerce platforms so that marketers and e-business leaders can rapidly customize the shopping experience.

In addition, Adobe offers a prebuilt integration with hybris, a leading multichannel commerce software vendor that drives the global commerce operations of the world’s top retailers and manufacturers.

The combination of Adobe Experience Manager content delivery and optimization capabilities and e-commerce platforms results in an enterprise-grade, end-to-end commerce solution. Experience Manager powers the shopping experience and is responsible for all content delivery, including the home page, search, product category, product detail, checkout pages, product imagery, and navigational elements.
Adobe Experience Manager + commerce platform = A single tool for managing and optimizing shopping experiences

Adobe Experience Manager integrated with an e-commerce system offers a unified environment for creating and managing product, website, and campaign content, as well as optimizing the entire experience from the initial customer touchpoint to checkout.

Create content
Experience Manager provides an intuitive web publishing environment with in-context, drag-and-drop page design and authoring, empowering marketers to publish content quickly and easily.

To generate category and product pages, Experience Manager gathers product information from the e-commerce system’s PIM, which drives all product information, such as labels, SKU numbers, and product attributes like size and color, categories, descriptions, imagery, and prices.

With direct access to structured and unstructured product data, marketers can more easily execute merchandising initiatives, such as customized checkout pages or content-rich experiences that target customer lifestyle, interests, and passions that are not directly mapped to a single product.

In this sample Geometrix website, structured product information is combined with rich media and social content, such as videos, blogs, and social conversations, to create a personalized shopping experience that builds brand differentiation and customer loyalty.

All product attributes are managed within the e-commerce system environment. Experience Manager and the e-commerce system sync in real time. When product data is altered, such as new colors or a price change, the update is immediately live.

To edit the product content, users access the e-commerce system. For the hybris integration, this would be the hybris Product Cockpit.

Digital asset management
To increase productivity, from shot-list to production assets, brand owners, marketers, and commerce teams can store their digital assets in the Adobe Experience Manager digital asset management (DAM) system to maximize sharing and reusing assets. DAM helps users easily find, manage, share, collaborate, and access images, videos, rich media, and other assets using flexible search and retrieval across diverse file formats, thanks to native support for industry-approved metadata formats such as XMP. The Adobe Experience Manager DAM capabilities provide a round-trip integrated workflow from Adobe Creative Suite software to production applications, automating the creation of renditions and providing customizable workflows to manage the digital asset production lifecycle.
Manage and deliver content
Adobe Experience Manager provides many tools to ensure rapid multichannel and global delivery of rich, targeted content that support the entire shopping experience.

- **Rich merchandising**—Easily aggregate web and product content to communicate value above and beyond just the product detail page. Enhance and publish dynamic marketing assets to deploy rich viewing experiences, such as zoom-and-pan, 360-degree spin, and video. Rich merchandising can lift conversion by creating immersive product interactions that emulate touch-and-feel and other rewarding in-store shopping experiences. Marketers can associate specific products in lookbooks, collections, or articles with a dynamic connection to product information, pricing, and the ability to add direct to cart. Whether it's the upcoming season's runway show or a creative page with a catalog-like experience showcasing a set of products, Experience Manager can make the entire experience shoppable.

- **Social and community-building**—Use social channels to amplify your brand and better target customers with products of interest, creating a more relevant experience. Leverage social collaboration tools like comments, ratings and reviews, multiuser blogs, forums, and surveys to create engaged communities to drive product interest and purchase decisions. Create conversations by easily embedding community and social features throughout online properties. Allow social sign-in, along with the ability to read the customer's social graph (Likes, interests, demographics) and further personalize the shopping experience.

- **Mobile, tablet, and in-store experiences**—Easily orchestrate campaigns and publish content across the web, email, mobile, and social channels within one authoring environment. Experience Manager delivers both mobile web experiences and native mobile applications for feature phones, smartphones, and tablets. Automated device detection and other smart components within Experience Manager automatically adapt and optimize content, such as images and videos, to fit each screen and leverage native device capabilities, such as geo-location services.

- **Promotions**—Target visitors based on customer loyalty, previous visit behavior, or purchase history. Adobe Experience Manager can support existing promotions rules from the e-commerce platform and also apply further targeting based on the customer context and segmentation.

- **Localization and multi-country delivery**—Manage multilingual content, allowing the central office to create the core content that can be easily localized by country offices.

Optimize content
Adobe Experience Manager provides out-of-the-box integration with the Adobe Marketing Cloud, enabling online retailers to gain real-time marketing agility for improved conversion and return on campaign spend. Integrations with Adobe Target and Adobe Analytics allow marketers to analyze, measure, and optimize content across any delivery channel.

Marketers can analyze and leverage shopper profiles and activities and better serve them through customized experiences with content targeting based on user profile and clickstream behavior.

- ClientContext contains information about which pages shoppers are browsing, surfing history, and profile information. Marketers can glean insights from this information to define customer segmentation targets and rules that match content with customer context in a drag-and-drop environment.

- Marketers can share user context between Experience Manager and Adobe Analytics and segment users on any interaction. Insights available from ClientContext can be mapped directly to Adobe Analytics for expanded analytics and reporting.

- Recommendations from Adobe Target can be added to any experience to maximize average order value (AOV) or improve product discovery. Merchandisers control recommendations across the shopping experience in both traditional design, such as "Customers similar to you also purchased ..." to more subtle messaging inserted into copy across all content and web properties.

- One in three customers begins navigation on websites through search. For e-commerce businesses, it's not only important that the customers find the product that they are looking for, but also that merchandisers have the flexibility to influence product discovery and highlight specific products and promotional offers. In concert with Adobe Target, merchandisers can control the customer experience and search results presented by Adobe Experience Manager.
Testing and targeting based on user parameters, like gender, age, and preferences, can be used to create relevant experiences optimized for each user, while leveraging in-context user-clickstream simulation for maximum testing targeting effectiveness. Take advantage of Adobe Target advanced A/B and multivariate testing to test merchandising and marketing ideas to drive improvements in conversion.

Benefits
Adobe Experience Manager provides the tools to create rich, omni-channel experiences and optimizes them for business results while streamlining the content creation, collaboration, management, and publishing workflows. When integrated with e-commerce systems, such as hybris, Experience Manager provides businesses with a unified platform to manage the entire commerce experience, from top-of-the-funnel brand engagement to immersive shopping experiences to checkout.

Best-in-class web experience management and omni-channel commerce
Although Adobe Experience Manager can integrate with any e-commerce system, when combined with hybris, it provides the best-of-breed, omni-channel commerce solution that scales with the growth requirements of today’s online businesses. The integrated solution enables organizations to offer a personalized shopping experience, promote their products, increase brand awareness, and communicate consistently across all channels. Adobe and hybris are both cited as leaders in web content management, web analytics, and e-commerce software by independent analysts, including Forrester and Gartner.

Fast time to market with integrated analytics and optimization
By streamlining the content authoring, management, and publishing workflow, the combined solution for personalized shopping experiences helps businesses efficiently bring their content to global marketplaces, accelerating time to market. The ability to rapidly create and optimize customer experiences and launch them across many touchpoints is a key competitive advantage in today’s omni-channel environment. And having ready access to real-time analytics allows marketers to optimize their content for higher ROI.

IT agility
Adobe Experience Manager integrated with an e-commerce system helps IT achieve agility, empowering them to quickly develop and deploy new templates, designs, and web components to business users, thanks to a productive, feature-rich development environment. Moreover, the ease of use of Experience Manager allows users to author and publish rich content without heavy reliance on IT, lowering labor costs and increasing productivity.

Global and personal—tailored content for higher conversion
Adobe Experience Manager is built to power global online businesses. Experience Manager simultaneously delivers granularity and scale, with functions that target users with highly tailored experiences while allowing marketers to manage and deliver multilingual, multinational sites to customers who desire content localized for their preferences and tastes. With real-time personalization and context-aware capabilities, Adobe Experience Manager delivers targeted and relevant content that leads to greater engagement and higher conversion.

From launching customer acquisition campaigns to creating personalized, unique experiences, online retailers have to be fast, nimble, and flexible. The competitive advantage will go to merchants who create the most compelling, relevant customer experience for evolving consumer expectations.