

How composable architecture can help e-commerce keep up on Black Friday

 By [Nick Durrant](#)

10 Nov 2022

Every year, Black Friday causes a massive spike in online transactions and online shopping activity. However, Amazon recently announced that they expect the upcoming holiday shopping season to be a little slower than usual.



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With shoppers cutting down on spending because of economic uncertainty, the tech giant predicts that their sales will rise between 2% and 8% during this period. This figure represents the lowest sales increase during 'peak season' in the brand's history.

If a mega e-commerce business like Amazon foresees a less than festive end of year shopping season, others can expect similar too. Research also supports this, according to a recent assessment by KPMG/Ipsos Retail Think Tank (RTT) members, the Christmas shopping period will be challenging for retailers this year.

The same assessment notes that the health of the retail sector is expected to decline at the year draws to a close, despite this quarter being dubbed the industry's 'Golden Quarter' because it is by far the most lucrative.

A drop in Christmas trading like this has not been seen since 2011. With this reality in mind, many retailers are pinning their hopes on Black Friday, which has become one of the biggest shopping days of the year.

But how can e-commerce brands ensure that they stand out this Black Friday?

Obviously, they have to offer customer's good deals but they also need to offer a good experience. Making sure that the technology powering their online business' holiday shopping experiences doesn't let shoppers down, is essential.

The business case for composable architecture

When using a composable architecture design pattern, developers build applications using only the best-of-breed features and functionality and bring everything together via APIs. In a fast-changing world, this modular architecture makes it possible to replace or add new 'parts' to your platform without a major system redesign.

This gives retailers the flexibility to adapt so that they can handle the kind of spikes in demand expected on big shopping days like Black Friday. This approach allows organisations to build more robust digital experiences and dramatically improves site speed.

For holiday shoppers in a rush, faster load times translate to more purchases. And when one considers that the conversion rates on a website with a one-second load time are three times higher than those on websites with a five-second load time, having a fast website is a must.

By leveraging modular components and headless technologies, composable architecture offers retailers a more flexible structure that allows them to deliver fast-paced, scalable innovation.

Let's look at a typical Black Friday shopping experience. A customer heads over to a website at 12:01 in search of a good deal. While the promotions retailers were running ahead of Black Friday might have driven this individual to visit the specific website, it's unique experiences that make sales. Particularly on a shopping day like Black Friday when every brand is vying for customers' attention.

Three of the major benefits of composable architecture include flexibility, personalisation and localisation.

Flexibility

When it comes to major shopping events like Black Friday, the rule book kind of goes out the window because what works on a regular day isn't likely to be effective. But this doesn't mean that retailers need to reinvent the wheel.

With composable architecture, it's easy to quickly launch new apps and bring new capabilities onto an e-commerce platform so that retailers can handle the influx in demand during periods that are busier than normal.

Personalisation

When one considers that shopping now happens in the palm of our hands, there is no way it can't be personal. And I'm not just talking about inserting someone's first name into a marketing email. The brands that are able to create retail experiences that feel as personalised as possible will secure sales this Black Friday and, hopefully, win customer loyalty in the long term.

With composable architecture, websites change and adapt based on each interaction with a customer. The benefit of this is that a retailer can offer special deals based on customer behaviour and loyalty.

If, for example, a visitor puts something in their cart but leaves before checking out, composable architecture makes it easier to entice this customer to come back and complete the sale. It would be difficult to get this right with legacy e-commerce platforms but with a composable strategy, sending a notification that stock of this item is running low or offering them a special deal is easy.

Localisation

As part of this, localisation is also made simpler. If a customer is logging in from Australia or Antarctica, composable architecture empowers retailers to offer geo-based promotions by customising product content based on the user's location. So, if someone is shopping in the US or the UK, the retailer's website should note the IP address and load the country's preferred language and present prices in their local currency.

By embracing composable architecture to create great digital experience platforms (DXP), these platforms make it possible to connect a range of different touch points throughout the customer journey and, thus, offer customers a better experience.

ABOUT NICK DURRANT

Nick Durrant is MD at Bluegrass Digital, a digital production agency. We work with marketing teams and creative agencies around the world delivering digital platforms. After spending 15 years in working the industry in the UK and setting up the business in London in 1999, Nicholas now runs the business from Cape Town, developing the business in Africa and Europe.

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