



Which of the following current topics will significantly change the market in the next year? And what is the impact? (Business Intelligence/Analytics, Customer Engagement, Mobile, Security, or Social)

This year, we will continue to see an increase in customer engagement across multiple touch points in both physical and virtual environments. Omni-channel consumers continue to gain greater power and control each year and they are navigating the information they consume, the offers they redeem, and the products they buy across channels. Certainly, online retail sales in the US are growing strong and they are expected to exceed \$327 billion by 2016. At the same time, Forrester analysts are predicting that B2B Commerce will reach over \$559 Billion dollars by the end of 2013 [\[1\]](#) . The opportunities for companies supporting commerce with both consumers and enterprises are tremendous. Such opportunities fuel optimism and energy, but we must harness that potential by engaging our customers in the ways that they want to be engaged. No other time in our history has this been such a crucial endeavor.

While the volume of activity in business-to-business transactions is more than double the revenue of the B2C market, the enabling technologies and user experience are lagging far behind. We believe that the expectations of the business customer, coupled with the opportunity to dramatically improve sales, drive down costs and increase efficiencies will create a rapid adoption curve of business-to-business buyers emulating and deploying the kinds of solutions that are considered commonplace in the online consumer channel. In fact, the lines of B2C selling and B2B selling will continue to blur as each is learning from the other. Distinctions, from a user experience, will fade. We should not be thinking in terms of B2B or B2C – and we should instead be thinking about creating efficient and rich user experiences that enable complex transactions for any customers and the discreet B2B/B2C labels will converge to simply, B2X.

Those companies that will be applying consumer facing technologies and processes to a

business buyers' environment will be required to take complex business requirements into account including, but certainly not limited to: complex business processes and workflows, unique pricing tiers and rules, multiple buyer permissions, and integrations with legacy systems. On the other side of the coin, we are also seeing and will continue to see B2C retailers starting to adopt some B2B concepts moving forward including tiered pricing, subscriptions, buyer tiers and more.

As the importance of contextual customer engagement continues to rise, so will the prevalence of mobile. Across the ShopVisible platform client base, 25% of overall traffic is coming from mobile devices. In 2013, consumers will continue to engage with companies through multiple touch points and will expect each interaction to be consistent, relevant to the medium, and user friendly. For example, a customer very well may browse a retailer's site on a mobile device, then place an order on their laptop computer and request that the item be shipped to store for pickup. At each of these interactions, the customer expects a seamless experience and flow of information. This emergence of multiple touch points is due, largely, to the influence that tablets and smartphones are having on product research and product purchasing lifecycles.

However, it's important to keep in mind that even as mobile commerce is on the upswing, transactions are going to continue to happen across a variety of different mediums (including the personal computers) for quite some time. Companies need to make sure that they are paying attention to all of their channels and finding ways to put the right content out on the right channels at the right time.

This interview was published in [SIIA's Vision from the Top](#) , a Software Division publication released at [All About the Cloud 2013](#)

[1] Hoar, A. (November, 2012). Thrive By Adopting Proven B2C Principles: Road Map: The B2B eCommerce Playbook. Retrieved November 14, 2012 from Forrester. com.