



Don't Plug in a B2C OMS and Call it B2B

The hidden complexity that's costing wholesale brands millions—and what to do about it.

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The B2B Order Management System Assumption Gap

Most enterprise retailers assume that a best-in-class Order Management System (OMS) built for B2C will naturally extend to their wholesale and B2B channels. It's an understandable assumption—one platform, one source of truth for inventory, one team to manage it all.

But this assumption is both wrong and costly.

At Nextuple, we've spent years embedded in the order management challenges of leading brands across footwear, apparel, and consumer goods. What we've seen consistently is this: **B2B order management isn't a variation of B2C.** It's a fundamentally different discipline and the executives who recognize this early are protecting millions in revenue.

Not all B2B is Created Equal

Before diagnosing the problem, it helps to know which flavor of B2B you're dealing with. There are three distinct models and each one has its own operational DNA:



Seasonal Wholesale

Footwear, apparel, consumer goods brands selling to retailers. Orders placed 6–12 months ahead. Seasonal SKU rotation. Ship windows are non-negotiable. Most complex OMS scenario.



Industrial / Contract B2B

Competing on RFQ/RFP. Highly configurable or bundled products. Pricing negotiated per bid. Contract-governed. Project-based future delivery.



B2B2C Franchisee

Pricing negotiated centrally (school district, franchise HQ, dealer network) — but orders placed by dozens of distributed sub-entities (individual stores, schools, franchisees).

Each flavor creates unique demands on pricing, order lifecycle, inventory allocation, and fulfillment—demands that B2C platforms were never designed to handle.

Five Places Where Standard B2C OMS Logic Breaks Down



Pricing is Not a Commerce Problem Alone

In B2C, pricing lives primarily in the commerce layer. In B2B, pricing follows the order—sometimes for months. Volume tiers, account-specific discounts, time-limited incentives, and negotiated contracts must all reconcile at the OMS level, because by the time an order ships, a lot may have changed since it was placed.



Orders are Future-Dated (and constantly changing)

In B2C, a 30-minute cancellation window is standard. In seasonal B2B, orders can come in a year before the ship date. These orders aren't static—quantities change, ship dates shift, lines get added or removed. The OMS must support mass order editing, bulk line updates, and flexible modification workflows at scale. A 500-line order touching multiple styles, colors, and sizes can't be managed line by line.



Inventory is a Future-to-Future Matching Problem

B2C OMS is built around a simple equation: on-hand supply meets immediate demand. B2B flips this entirely. Future supply (incoming POs) must be matched against future demand (forward orders), within specific ship windows. This requires ATP calculations that account for time-fenced supply, steal-and-share logic, fill-rate based release rules, and parent/child bulk + call-off order structures — none of which exist in a typical B2C OMS.



Fulfillment Rules are Structurally Different

In B2C, split minimization is a major optimization focus to avoid shipping one order from multiple locations. In B2B, inventory is deep and ships from few DCs, so splits aren't the issue. *The issue is partial fulfillment over time.* A B2B customer may accept 500 units today and 500 units next week against the same order. That's not a split, it's a scheduled delivery pattern that the OMS must plan, track and communicate proactively. When fill rates are at risk and ship windows are closing, your sales team needs automated alerts before orders are auto-cancelled.



Returns Don't Follow the Original Order Path

B2C returns are straightforward: tie return to sales order, issue refund. In B2B, a retailer like Dick's Sporting Goods consolidates end-of-season returns from dozens of stores into a single RMA—with no clean linkage back to the six original shipment orders. The OMS must reconcile after the fact, handle overages (more returned than shipped), and flag misships (wrong item returned that was never ordered in the first place).

So What Does Good Look Like?

The goal isn't two separate OMS platforms. A unified system managing both B2B and B2C inventory makes complete sense for several reasons, like avoiding siloed inventory visibility. But the platform you choose must be honestly evaluated against B2B-specific requirements, not assumed to cover them because the vendor checked a box on their capabilities slide.

The Right Evaluation Asks

Every vendor will claim B2B readiness. Use these questions to cut through the noise and get answers to your unique operating model.

Future-Dated ATP

Can the platform handle future-dated demand against future supply with real available-to-promise (ATP) logic?

Steal-and-Share

Does it support steal-and-share reallocation with customer priority rules?

Bulk & Call-Off Structures

Can it manage parent/child bulk + call-off order structures natively?

Bulk Reallocation

Can it rebalance 50K+ open order lines after a supply disruption in minutes, not hours?

Mass Order Editing

Can your operations team execute mass edits across hundreds of order lines efficiently?

Returns Reconciliation

Does the returns engine handle consolidation, overages, and misships at the RMA level?

Approval & Exception Workflows

Are modification, pricing, credit, and fill-rate approvals configurable and auditable?

Negotiated Pricing

Can it stack account-specific pricing, volume tiers, and time-window discounts natively?

Fill-Rate Release

Does it support fill-rate based release with proactive alerting to the sales team?

The Bottom Line

Most platforms claim B2B readiness. Far fewer have the depth to prove it. The difference shows under real operating conditions, not in demo environments.

We've been in the room when these requirements surface mid-implementation. We've seen the workarounds, the custom builds and the operational pain that follows when the wrong platform is chosen based on B2C strength alone.

The brands getting this right, the ones who chose their OMS with B2B complexity as a first-class requirement, are operating with a meaningful competitive advantage in their wholesale channel.

The ones who didn't are managing that debt every day.

If you're evaluating OMS platforms and wholesale is part of your business, the conversation needs to start with B2B. Not end with it.



We'd Love to Talk to You

Nextuple brings deep practitioner experience across seasonal wholesale, industrial B2B, and franchise fulfillment. Come talk to us about getting your OMS strategy right the first time.

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