

Exclusive: Why ad platform integrations should be front of mind when choosing an e-commerce platform

By [François Jooste](#)

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In the longer term, e-commerce businesses' ability to leverage first-party data across their digital advertising platforms is only going to become more important.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) Ad platform integrations should be front of mind when choosing an e-commerce platform says François Jooste, +OneX

With the industry moving away from third-party cookies and other identifiers, the ad platforms will have less user data of their own for targeting.

As the move from third-party cookies accelerates, without an effective first-party data strategy, e-commerce businesses could see targeting efficiency decrease and acquisition costs increase.

Digital advertising is key

As every e-commerce business knows, digital advertising is the key to attracting and converting customers and the success of your digital advertising strategy, in turn, depends on how effective you are in feeding platforms such as Google Ads, Meta Ads, and TikTok Ads with sufficient high-quality first-party data.

The better the data these platforms ingest, the more accurate and efficient their algorithms will be in their machine learning, and therefore their targeting of potential customers for you.

Yet many e-commerce companies don't appreciate just how important their e-commerce platform is in feeding their first-party data to their advertising ecosystem via application programming interfaces (APIs).

Making the right choices can help your business to measure performance with higher precision — enabling you to improve the efficiency of your targeting and lower cost per acquisition over time.

As such, now is a time for every e-commerce company to review its core platforms and whether they are meeting today's business needs and whether they are future-proof.

Many companies that are still running on heavily customised, open-source e-commerce platforms, for example, will want to reconsider the benefits of such an environment versus using a cloud platform like VTEX, Shopify or WooCommerce.



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Native integrations included in the monthly subscription

Industry-leading e-commerce platforms include plugins and apps for the major digital advertising platforms in their subscription fee. The e-commerce platforms and their ad platform partners have developers dedicated to maintaining these native integrations and updating them to new API versions as they are released.

This ensures there are no delays in data uploads, maximises the data available to your ad platforms, and helps drive cost efficiencies. While the monthly subscriptions of such solutions may seem steep at first glance, they should be compared to the significant costs and resources it takes to develop and maintain APIs on a customised platform.

That's without mentioning the delays businesses experience in approvals, task creation, development, and deployment when new API versions are released – which happens nearly every day.

Key benefits

Some of the key benefits of these platforms include:

- **Native integrations** — You get access to native, API-based conversion integrations without needing to invest in developing and maintaining them yourself. This ensures a constant flow of first-party data between your e-commerce platform, and the ad platforms for improved targeting, dynamic remarketing, and cost-efficient results.
- **Reduced time to deploy and update** — Apps and plug-ins on the e-commerce platforms are updated as soon as ad platforms release new API versions.
- **Costs** — Your e-commerce platform subscription fees should cover the cost of your integrations, allowing you to save money on in-house development.
- **Product feeds** — Native integrations between your e-commerce platform and the ad platforms ensure that your e-commerce inventory is synced with ad platform catalogues. This enables you to market and remarket the right products from your e-commerce catalogue to the right prospects on platforms like Google Ads, Meta Ads and TikTok Ads.
- **Credibility** — Cross-platform integrations that seamlessly connect to each other are often perceived to be more credible and trustworthy. This helps strengthen internal relationships between the marketing and development teams.

Shopify is an example of an e-commerce platform's plugin or app store, with integrations for Google Ads with the Google & YouTube app, Meta Ads with the Facebook & Instagram app, and TikTok Ads in the form of the TikTok app. These digital ad platforms dedicate resources to supporting platforms like Shopify because they understand that first-party data is becoming key to their customers' success.



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Futureproofing your e-commerce business

While the benefits of an e-commerce platform with native integrations to ad platforms are significant, some businesses may still need to perform a bit of custom development to integrate their first-party data.

Another drawback is that South African clients often need to wait for e-commerce platforms to make new integrations available to our market — for example, the TikTok product catalogue integration for Shopify is not yet available for South African stores. When selecting an e-commerce platform, considering advertising integrations can be a game-changer.

Not only can opting for the right options save you time and money, it can also help you stand out in a crowded digital landscape, attract the right audience, and drive meaningful results.

Whatever platform you choose, ensuring that you have an efficient and effective way to share first-party data with ad platforms is key to reducing your cost per acquisition, and futureproofing your business.

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