

# HCL Commerce Cloud Results



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PARADIGM B2B



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2023 | Midmarket Edition

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## PRODUCT ANALYSIS

## HCLSoftware

# HCL Commerce Cloud

### **HCL Commerce Cloud medaled in 12 of the 12 categories of the 2023 Midmarket Combine evaluation**

**(2 gold medals, 6 silver medals, 4 bronze medals).** HCL Commerce Cloud combines several industrial-strength capabilities into one integrated commerce platform and goes to market with two different pricing models, PVU (cores) or RVU (order lines), both of which are based on utilization. HCL Commerce Cloud is offered by HCLSoftware, a division of HCL Technologies, a publicly traded company headquartered in New Delhi, India, with US offices in New York, New York.

Customers spoke highly of HCL Commerce Cloud's platform stability, reliability, and scalability with customers calling it "high-performance" and "fully functionally out of the box." Some clients commented that HCL is "still a bit of a heavy platform" and "requires a learning curve." They also cited underpowered functionality in product areas such as Site Search and OMS.

### STRENGTHS

- ▶ Handles complexity well
- ▶ Ability to create custom catalogs
- ▶ Facility for spinning up and managing dealer sites
- ▶ Strong promotions functionality
- ▶ Mature back-end interfaces and punchout-related workflows

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ▶ Underdeveloped Product Information Management (PIM)
- ▶ Developing Site Search
- ▶ Limited independent systems integrator partner footprint
- ▶ Underpowered Order Management System (OMS)
- ▶ Underdeveloped reporting

### BOTTOM LINE

HCL Commerce Cloud is particularly well-suited for midmarket B2B companies seeking a stable and high-performing commerce platform capable of handling complex B2B eCommerce scenarios, like creating and managing a multitude of customer catalogs and sophisticated promotions.

## SCORING RESULTS ▶



## PRODUCT SCORES

**HCLSoftware**

# HCL Commerce Cloud

## Category breakdown



**Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology** to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the “voice of the customer” via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Ability to Execute



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Ability to Execute”

**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

Understaffed and underfunded eCommerce platform vendors struggle to deliver on promises—and clients know it. Everyone has had a bad experience with a vendor over-promising and underdelivering. Savvy practitioners are now doing deep due diligence on the quality of the management team and the resources of the company to determine whether vendors can actually make good on their claims.

- ▶ Management team experience and domain expertise
- ▶ Resourcing levels
- ▶ B2B priority/focus
- ▶ Overall staffing levels



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Customer Service & Support



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Customer Service & Support"  
**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

Problems always arise in the implementation and operation of an eCommerce platform. Most of the time the issues are minor, but sometimes they're major. Vendors today must maintain detailed processes and policies in order to ensure that they are highly-available and eminently qualified to fix problems.

- ▶ SLAs, customer policies, and maintenance contracts
- ▶ (Customer Service Rep) CSR structure, staffing, and training
- ▶ Customer service metrics and measures



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Partner Ecosystem



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Partner Ecosystem”

**DIFFERENTIATED**

## Criteria

B2B companies know that they're no longer buying a one-size-fits-all platform that's owned and operated by one company. Every platform is augmented by independent developers and implementation partners. The breadth and depth of the ecosystem is now a critical factor in the decision-making dynamic.

- ▶ Implementation partner footprint
- ▶ Front-end design and customer experience partner footprint
- ▶ Developer footprint



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Total Cost of Ownership



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Total Cost of Ownership”

**DIFFERENTIATED**

## Criteria

Whether a B2B company has millions or just tens of thousands of dollars to spend on installing and implementing a solution, the price of the platform matters. Beyond the initial price, a platform can quickly go from affordable to unaffordable over a 3-5 year time period when the full costs of implementation, operation, and maintenance are incorporated.

- ▶ Average annual license or subscription pricing (including maintenance)

- ▶ Average implementation cost by size of project



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Vision & Strategy



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Vision & Strategy”

**EXCEPTIONAL**

## Criteria

Choosing an eCommerce platform is a major investment of time and money. B2B companies know that their digital success is tied to their vendor's success. It's important that vendors be crystal clear about their near-term roadmap and long-term vision and how they plan to recruit partners and acquire customers.

- ▶ 3-5 year vision
- ▶ 18 month roadmap
- ▶ Sales momentum
- ▶ Partner momentum



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Content & Data Management



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Content & Data Management”

**DIFFERENTIATED**

## Criteria

Without command of their data, B2B companies can neither create compelling customer experiences nor customize and personalize buyer interactions. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of a solution to create, store, and search-enable content and data for purposes of driving commerce and sustaining customer loyalty.

- ▶ **Product Information Management (PIM) and/or Digital Asset Management (DAM)**
- ▶ **Content Management System (CMS)**



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
— MIDMARKET EDITION —

“Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure”

**EXCEPTIONAL**

## Criteria

As vendors move to the Cloud, how they deliver their solution, perform and scale, and incorporate key partner functionality and services increasingly matters. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of the solution to monitor, activate, and extend the commerce capabilities of the system.

- ▶ Microservices-based architecture/APIs
- ▶ Workflow
- ▶ eProcurement integration
- ▶ Performance & scalability
- ▶ Deployment
- ▶ Releases and upgrades



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

## Marketplaces



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Marketplaces"

**DIFFERENTIATED**

## Criteria

With buyers increasingly starting the path to purchase on marketplaces, B2B companies realize that they need to be where buyers make decisions. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible for buyers to purchase a seller's products or services via that seller's owned or operated marketplace as well as on horizontal and vertical marketplaces.

- ▶ Company-owned or operated marketplace offering 3rd party sellers
- ▶ Selling on horizontal and vertical marketplaces



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Promotions Management



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Promotions Management"  
**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

All buyers today expect personalized buying experiences, including custom catalogs and pricing. Increasingly, they also expect to make recurring purchases and establish subscriptions. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to price products and services and promote them to targeted audiences.

► Promotions

► Subscriptions

► Pricing



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Sales & Channel Enablement



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Sales & Channel Enablement"

**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

A website is just one channel by which customers can buy products and services. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible to enable customer-facing sales reps and customer service reps, as well as channel partners, to participate in the digital sales of goods and services.

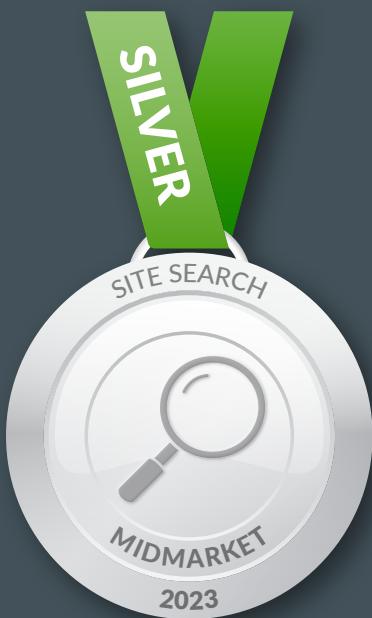
► Sales enablement

► Traditional channel enablement



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

### Site Search



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

"Site Search"

**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

It is a truism of eCommerce that buyers cannot buy on a site what they cannot find on a site. This section describes the functionality that enables B2B buyers to use keywords and natural language search to find desired products and services.

- ▶ Traditional keyword search
- ▶ Natural language & semantic search



## MEDALIST SPOTLIGHT

# Transaction Management



## HCL Commerce Cloud

**HCLSoftware**

2023 PARADIGM B2B COMBINE by Andy Hoar  
MIDMARKET EDITION

“Transaction Management”  
**SUPERIOR**

## Criteria

At the end of the day, buyers need to be able to add an item to a cart and check out in order to complete a purchase. They may also need to configure purchases and ask for quotes. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to record and report on orders and transaction activity.

- ▶ Shopping cart
- ▶ Configurator
- ▶ Order Management System (OMS)
- ▶ Reporting
- ▶ Analytics



## The 2023 Paradigm B2B Combine

Informed by leading B2B eCommerce practitioners and designed to zero in on the individual strengths and weaknesses of vendors, the Paradigm B2B Combine (Midmarket Edition) is targeted directly at the key interests of the eCommerce technology buyer. In my years covering the B2B industry, VPs of eCommerce and their IT counterparts rarely asked me to force-rank software solutions. Rather, not only did they ask me about the capabilities of the product (e.g., promotions, upgrades), but they frequently asked me how well companies have historically delivered on their promises (e.g., vision, pricing).

For example, I was often asked by VPs of eCommerce and their IT counterparts how responsive a particular vendor's team was if there was an outage, or how many and what kind of partners they had in their services ecosystem, or how open they were to feedback and product roadmap suggestions. These questions mattered to the buyers I worked with as much as, or more than, how many features a product had or what it cost relative to a competitor's offering.



I created the Paradigm B2B Combine to give the people who buy eCommerce solutions my unvarnished assessment of how well vendors are performing in critical categories. I'm mirroring the combine process that professional sports teams use to evaluate the capabilities and fit of draft candidates across key performance areas. My goal is to make it possible for eCommerce teams to easily determine where and how a solution best meets their customer needs and aligns with their culture, technology stack and partner ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Andy Hoar



## The Paradigm B2B Combine Difference

The Combine is an all new tool that was built from the ground up in 2019. Andy Hoar established the criteria based on years of experience in the space and recent interviews with senior B2B VPs of eCommerce and IT decision-makers, as well as eCommerce platform vendors.

The decision-making dynamic for eCommerce platform technologies today is too complex to capture in a single, two-dimensional graphic. It's also the case that there is no single solution that addresses all of the needs of eCommerce platform technology buyers. The Paradigm B2B Combine scores each

solution in mutually exclusive categories and awards Gold, Silver, and Bronze medal distinctions to finishers within certain scoring ranges.

The purpose of the Paradigm B2B Combine is not to force-rank solutions, but rather to score the capabilities of certain offerings against objective criteria and enable buyers to see where individual solutions are relatively strong vs. weak. The goal is to put the eCommerce platform vendors through the paces so that buyers can make well-informed decisions without having to spend months of time executing their own research.





## Digital Commerce Solutions Defined

Digital Commerce Solutions enable the merchandising and sale of goods and services via internal and external websites, mobile devices and contact centers.

They are designed to be used by B2B manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, and resellers. These solutions include (but are not limited to) functionality modules and capabilities such as: shopping cart, content and data management, sales and

channel enablement, and promotions and pricing. In general, vendors offer solutions in this space that take either a substantially best-of-breed approach (e.g., buyers can mix and match core functionality with third-party solutions) or adopt a best-of-suite philosophy (e.g., the offering includes most, if not all, of the functionality modules needed as one integrated solution).

## The Midmarket Combine evaluated 12 leading solutions

Adobe Commerce



OroCommerce



BigCommerce



ROC Commerce



commercetools  
Composable Commerce  
for B2B



Shopware 6



HCL Commerce Cloud



Unilog CX1 CIMM2



Miva



VTEX Commerce Platform



Optimizely  
Configured Commerce



Znode





## Scoring Methodology

Paradigm B2B selects all vendors to evaluate and only allows invited companies to participate. The evaluation is a pure “no pay for play” process—no vendors can pay for admission to or placement within the Combine. All evaluated vendors are given the same opportunity to present their company vision, product capabilities and roadmap, go-to-market strategies and tactics, partner ecosystem, and customer case studies.

Paradigm B2B LLC uses a robust scoring methodology to evaluate all vendors on a scale of 1 to 5 across 38 detailed and weighted criteria. Medals are awarded based on composite scores in 12 distinct categories. Special weighting is given to the “voice of the customer” via market feedback that Paradigm B2B LLC gathered directly from dozens of vendor partners and clients. The opinions expressed in this report are those of Paradigm B2B LLC and should not be considered statements of fact.

### STRATEGIC PILLARS



Ability to Execute



Customer Service & Support



Partner Ecosystem



Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)



Vision & Strategy

### PRODUCT CAPABILITIES



Content & Data Management



Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure



Marketplaces



Promotions Management



Sales & Channel Enablement



Site Search



Transaction Management



## Strategic Pillars Defined

### Ability to Execute

Understaffed and underfunded eCommerce platform vendors struggle to deliver on promises—and clients know it. Everyone has had a bad experience with a vendor over-promising and underdelivering. Savvy practitioners are now doing deep due diligence on the quality of the management team and the resources of the company to determine whether vendors can actually make good on their claims.

### Customer Service & Support

Problems always arise in the implementation and operation of an eCommerce platform. Most of the time the issues are minor, but sometimes they're major. Vendors today must maintain detailed processes and policies in order to ensure that they are highly-available and eminently-qualified to fix problems.



### Partner Ecosystem

B2B companies know that they're no longer buying a one-size-fits-all platform that's owned and operated by one company. Every platform is augmented by independent developers and implementation partners. The breadth and depth of the ecosystem is now a critical factor in the decision-making dynamic.

### Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

Whether a B2B company has millions or just tens of thousands of dollars to spend on installing and implementing a solution, the price of the platform matters. Beyond the initial price, a platform can quickly go from affordable to unaffordable over a 3-5 year time period when the full costs of implementation, operation, and maintenance are incorporated.

### Vision & Strategy

Choosing an eCommerce platform is a major investment of time and money. B2B companies know that their digital success is tied to their vendor's success. It's important that vendors be crystal clear about their near-term roadmap and long-term vision and how they plan to recruit partners and acquire customers.



## Product Capabilities Defined

### Content & Data Management

Without command of their data, B2B companies can neither create compelling customer experiences nor customize and personalize buyer interactions. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of a solution to create, store, and search-enable content and data for purposes of driving commerce and sustaining customer loyalty.

### Integrations, Operations & Infrastructure

As vendors move to the Cloud, how they deliver their solutions, perform and scale, and incorporate key partner functionality and services increasingly matters. This section describes the functionality that enables buyers of the solution to monitor, activate, and extend the commerce capabilities of the system.

### Marketplaces

With buyers increasingly starting the path to purchase on marketplaces, B2B companies realize that they need to be where buyers make decisions. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible for buyers to purchase a seller's products or services via that seller's owned or operated marketplace as well as on horizontal and vertical marketplaces.

### Promotions Management

All buyers today expect personalized buying experiences, including custom catalogs and pricing. Increasingly, they also expect to make recurring purchases and establish subscriptions. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to price products and services and promote them to targeted audiences.

**CONTINUES ►**





## Product Capabilities Defined (continued)

### Sales & Channel Enablement

A website is just one channel by which customers can buy products and services. This section describes the functionality that makes it possible to enable customer-facing sales reps and customer service reps, as well as channel partners, to participate in the digital sales of goods and services.



### Site Search

It is a truism in the world of B2B eCommerce that buyers cannot buy on a site what they cannot find on a site. This section describes the functionality that enables B2B buyers to use keywords, natural language search, and semantic search to find desired products and services.

### Transaction Management

At the end of the day, buyers need to be able to add an item to a cart and check out in order to complete a purchase. They may also need to configure purchases and ask for quotes. This section describes the functionality that enables sellers to record and report on orders and transaction activity.



## About Paradigm B2B

Digital innovation produces an ever-changing, unpredictable, and challenging environment that can make or break a B2B company. To be successful today, B2B companies must transform archaic business practices and business models and fundamentally rethink how they interact with customers.

Paradigm B2B's purpose is to help guide B2B companies through today's complex, digital-first environment. B2B companies need world-class strategies and roadmaps, as well as clearly differentiated customer experiences, in order to thrive in an increasingly disrupted commerce landscape. Paradigm B2B focuses on offering high-quality advice that's well-informed and immediately actionable.

## About Andy Hoar

Andy Hoar is one of the world's leading authorities on B2B eCommerce business and strategy. He's written about, and consulted extensively with, distributors and manufacturers at global Fortune 100 companies and leading midmarket B2B companies that are digitizing their direct and indirect selling initiatives. Prior to founding Paradigm B2B and Master B2B, his joint venture with Brian Beck, Andy was a vice president and principal analyst at Forrester Research, where he authored the seminal work on B2B eCommerce.

Andy has been quoted in various media outlets including The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, and CNBC. He is a summa cum laude graduate in economics from the University of Dayton and holds advanced degrees from Harvard University and Northwestern University.

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