

The Headless Commerce Readiness Worksheet

Headless buys freedom and charges you in developer time. This is how to tell whether the freedom is worth the work for your shop.

Score the five tests

The more that are true, the more headless makes sense. Be honest rather than aspirational.

Multiple surfaces

We sell on more than one surface, or genuinely will soon: web, app, screens, social.

1

2

3

4

5

Experience as advantage

Shoppers choose us partly because our storefront is unusually good.

1

2

3

4

5

Developer capacity

We have, or will genuinely hire, a team to own and maintain the front end.

1

2

3

4

5

Rate of change

We expect frequent redesigns, new channels, and evolving requirements.

1

2

3

4

5

Hitting platform walls

Our current platform genuinely cannot do what we need, and we have felt it.

1

2

3

4

5

Reading it: Mostly high, headless likely pays off. Mixed, go headless on the storefront only and keep a traditional engine behind it. Mostly low, a good templated platform will serve you better for far less to run. Choosing it is judgement, not caution.

Compare the costs

The front-end maintenance line is the one teams forget. Fill both columns.

Cost line	Templated platform	Headless
Platform / subscriptions		
Storefront build		
Ongoing front-end maintenance		
Internal developer time		
Time to first sale		

Conveniences you would need to rebuild

Things that came free in the templated platform and may need building in headless. List them now so none surprise you later.

Convenience	Rebuild, wire up, or drop?
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Content and page preview	
Merchandising and product sorting tools	
Promotions and discount rules	
Search and filtering	
(your own)	

The trap to avoid. Do not choose unconstrained because it sounds better than constrained. Constraints you do not feel are free, and freedom you do not use is expensive. Headless pays off only when you will actually use the control it gives.