

RafterOne

— An IPG Company —

Upgrading from B2B Classic to Lightning: Transition your ecommerce into a Post-Pandemic World

Reduce the cost to serve, increase revenue and improve customer experience with B2B Lightning.

✓ The Conversation You Don't Want to Have

Imagine a key executive from your company comes back from a Salesforce marketing event like Connections or Dreamforce and is excited about personalization, order management and a mobile-first commerce they just saw demonstrated. They know that your company is leveraging Salesforce's B2B Commerce and has starting envisioning how to increase revenue and reduce the cost to serve leveraging software they already own.

Unfortunately, it is your job to explain that while the company is in fact using Salesforce B2B Commerce, you're on the classic edition and NONE of the 'must have' features they just saw are available with the version of B2B Commerce you have deployed today. All the cool demos and all the state-of-the-art AI-features can't be leveraged at all since you're on legacy technology. All you can hope is that the executive doesn't 'shoot the messenger.'

The biggest problem B2B Classic customers face is they can't see a compelling reason to cost justify upgrading from Classic to Lightning. Salesforce's largest B2B Customer won't even take phone calls from Salesforce since they are driving over \$30 million annually through their current ecommerce site. They see it as an 'upgrade' problem where they are spending to get on the newest version.

While this is technically true, the upgrade from B2B Classic to Lightning is not an 'apples to apples' type of upgrade. It is about transforming commerce by



Reducing the cost to serve customers in the post-order process



Increasing revenue by leveraging AI-powered recommendations for cross-sell and upsells



Improving the customer experience with a faster mobile-first application

It is not just an upgrade, it is a transformation to a modern Commerce application that is not only built on the Salesforce platform, but it also leverages the same objects as both Sales and Service Cloud. It is really this synergy of Commerce+Sales+Service that propels businesses and their self-service relationship with customers.

Now, the upgrade also retires significant technical debt and the ongoing costs of custom development on a legacy platform. But what companies love the most is how the upgrade reduces the friction they feel with their B2B Classic while also helping them scale their existing sales and service investments.

B2B Classic: Stuck in a Pre-Pandemic World

The biggest issue with B2B Classic is that the world has fundamentally changed since Salesforce launched B2B Lightning in the summer of 2019. No one saw the COVID-19 Pandemic coming and the lasting effects it has had to the B2B buyer experience. Almost overnight, sales shifted to online, and expectations have never been higher.

The following table shows the differences between customer behaviors and expectations before the Pandemic and afterwards. Add in the fact that Salesforce has sunset support for B2B Classic in 2026, customers who still leverage B2B Classic are on legacy technology that is getting further behind what B2B buyers expect from their online experiences.



	Pre-Pandemic		Post-Pandemic
Commerce	Nice to have	→	Must have
Audience	Generic	→	Personalized
Recommendations	Similar products	→	AI-Driven
Post-order servicing	Simple, only a few touches	→	Complex, lots of manual interventions
Updates to the site	IT – mainly through code	→	Business – wants declarative tools
Preferred Device	Desktop	→	Mobile
Artificial Intelligence	Only in sci-fi movies	→	Everywhere
B2B Classic Support	3x a year		No innovation, ends 2026

The data on online purchases is compelling. According to a recent Gartner study, **83%** of buyers prefer digital channels for sales. And it isn't that they prefer online sales, they are voting with their wallets. McKinsey found that:

3 out of 4

buyers will spend **\$50k+** on digital orders

1 out of 3

buyers will spend **\$500k+** on digital orders

4 out of 5

buyers will look to a **competitor** if there is no prices or inventory availability online**

The B2B buyer world is expecting the same personalized experiences they get from their consumer life. Personalization, once a 'nice to have' is now a 'must have' for most buyers. They expect visibility to their orders in transit, the same way they get from food delivery services. And B2B Classic was not built for this new world.

✓ B2B Lightning: Built for a Post-Pandemic World

The great news is that B2B Lightning was built to handle the growing expectations and complexities of post-pandemic B2B buyers. As we've surveyed our current B2B customers, here are three ways that B2B Lightning helps customers meet their growing customer's needs.

Reduce Cost to Serve

More than ever, companies are looking to innovation to keep up with growing customer expectations. Another result of the COVID-19 pandemic is that there are less available customer support agents and more expensive IT resources to serve customers. As a result, companies need applications that are built for business users to leverage and automation to handle regular tasks.

Simple customer requests like 'where is my order' (WISMO) can make up as much as 70% of a customer's inbound customer questions. Being able to proactively send out email updates on order status changes or notify a customer when a shipment is delayed can end up saving up to 20% of a customer service agent's time each day.

Businesses are also looking to send high volume, low-revenue customers online instead of interacting with expensive sales reps. Instead of servicing all customers through a rep-heavy quoting channel, businesses want to find way to self-serve the same orders in a 'touchless' way.

One of B2B Lightning's biggest values is the way it reduces the cost to serve customers through:

- Drag-and-drop functionality for business users making updates, instead of depending on developers writing custom code.
- Leveraging automations like Salesforce Flows to send emails to customers on order status updates, resulting in less customer support cases.
- 3 B2B Updates + 3 Experience Cloud Updates a year driving innovation.
- Partner Ecosystem accelerators supporting B2B Lightning (not Classic)

When businesses upgrade to B2B Lightning they reduce the cost to serve their customers and reduce the cost to support commerce. Not only is B2B Lightning better technology to serve customers, but it is also delivered at a lower price than is required to continue supporting B2B Classic.

Increasing Revenue

It isn't enough to just reduce costs with B2B Lightning, sales leaders everywhere are looking to grow revenue online. Whether it is offering new products, personalized promotions, or cross-sell/upsell items, the goal is to increase revenue.

One of the critical revenue-driving features that most legacy commerce systems lack is recommendations. In B2B Classic, products can be associated with other products for cross-sell or upsell but are not powered by Artificial Intelligence. And the key to recommendations or promotions is to use personalization to surface these insights to the right users at the right time.

B2B Lightning was built with AI and personalization at the heart of their commerce engine. Einstein, which already does billions of predictions each day to Salesforce customers, serves up the product recommendations based on customer data, not just product grouping. B2B Lightning leverages CRM data to deliver personalized experiences. No additional code, no additional data source. B2B Lightning looks at CRM data fields (e.g. Title, Lifetime Order Amount) and uses these to drive recommendations, content, and promotions.



But the most important AI advances are things that haven't been identified yet. If you think about all the incredible advances in AI over the past year alone, B2B Lightning which is built on Sales Cloud, is positioned to deliver incredible AI-powered features over the next few years to your self-service customers.

Improving Customer Experience

Lastly, businesses are looking to dramatically improve their customers' buying and post-purchase experiences. According to Forrester, 84% of buyers say that the experience of purchasing is as important, if not more important, than the product or service itself. This has the attention of executives everywhere who are concerned that their most loyal customers will leave to a competitor who has an inferior product, but a better online customer experience.

This means offering buyers a seamless experience across desktop, tablet, or mobile devices. It means that the sales reps have access to the same information that customer service agents have. It means not just creating a frictionless buying experience, but an intuitive portal that has their entire digital relationship on display. It is about anticipating why a buyer would log into a portal and surfacing key data and insights that help them spend less time ordering.

The biggest advantage of B2B Lightning is the site performance speed. Pages load an average of 7x faster than they did in B2B Classic. Pre-pandemic, it was just about being able to see products and orders. Speed wasn't that critical a factor. But post-pandemic, if you must wait 5 seconds for the product page to load or 20 seconds for the cart to start checkout, your customers are going to start looking for a competitor with a better ecommerce website.

It is also easier than ever to add additional content to the portal for customers. Everything from Cases, Quotes, Assets can be easily added to the portal without a single line of code. Business users, and not IT, can then set up the personalization that gives business buyers the type of experience they have in their consumer life. All of these are 'out of the box' in B2B Lightning without ever getting IT involved.

So when customers upgrade from B2B Classic to Lightning they



Reduce the cost to serve
customers



Increase revenue



Improve
customer experience

✓ B2B Lightning + Order Management = Commerce Multiplier

So upgrading to B2B Lightning has clear benefits for businesses, but B2B Lightning also unlocks the ability to leverage Salesforce's Order Management to service customers with the post-purchase order lifecycle. OMS, as Salesforce refers to it, easily handles these use cases:

- Processing Returns, Cancellations, Order Modifications, and Credits.
- Complex routing for different locations or different fulfillment systems.
- Inventory Locations into Salesforce that determines what products are available for purchase—to both customers, sales reps, and service agents.

OMS has pre-built flows and expanded data to handle the complexities of servicing an order. A single order can be broken up into multiple shipments due to location, inventory availability or being fulfilled from different distribution centers. Salesforce's Order object is too simple to handle the full post-order life cycle. Order Management solves this problem with almost a dozen summary objects that track updates and changes to the order.

When businesses expand their Salesforce Commerce footprint by adding OMS, they see the following advantages:

Objectives	Success Metrics	Capabilities
Optimize Service Engagement	↓ Support Costs ↑ Self Service	Automated workflows Case deflection
Reduce Supply Chain Costs	↓ Fulfillment Costs ↓ Shipping costs	Real-time inventory Automated routing
Optimize IT Spend	↓ IT Development Time	Configure standard workflows

When customers upgrade their Commerce to B2B Lightning, and add Order Management, they dramatically reduce the cost to service customers and reduce their IT spend managing the order lifecycle.

Success Story

Recently, one of our customers decided to upgrade from B2B Classic to Lightning and the results have been impressive. What started as a mandate from the CIO to improve site performance, ended with a reduction in total IT spend and retiring significant debt. The company is also positioned to have AI and personalization drive their customer experience as they continue to evolve and improve their ecommerce experience.

Key Factors for Upgrade

- Removal of custom code and technical debt.
- End of life support for B2B Classic in 2026.
- Improve current site performance, key metric for CIO.

Solutions

- Leverage configurations and builder for store updates.
- Take advantage of future releases of B2B + Experience Cloud.
- B2B Lightning Web Runtime is 7x faster than B2B Classic.

Summary

Upgrading from B2B Classic to Lightning is not just about upgrading legacy technology. It is about transforming your commerce site to serve customers in a post-pandemic world by

- Reducing the cost to serve customers in the post-order process.
- Increasing revenue by leveraging AI-powered recommendations for cross-sell and upsells.
- Improving the customer experience with a faster mobile-first application.

While this upgrade retires significant technical debt and the ongoing costs of custom development on a legacy platform, what companies love the most is how this transformation reduces the friction they feel with their B2B Classic while also helping them scale their existing sales and service investments.

[Contact us to learn about our paid B2B Upgrade Assessment](#)

About RafterOne

When we looked to structure the most comprehensive collection of strength, reliability, and quality for solid end-to-end commerce in the Salesforce ecosystem, we extended beyond experience. We sought to secure a spirit connection for solution builders, collaborative creators, and born leaders to do their best work as one problem-solving team.