



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN B2B

Trends driving businesses to automate payments and how you can help evolve operations for tomorrow



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NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL B2B LANDSCAPE

Right now, digital transformation in B2B is spurring companies to modernize how they conduct business with their buyers, pushing organizations to adopt new operational models that create efficiencies and encourage growth for them and their customers.¹

Find out how businesses and industries are evolving digitally. Then discover five ways to help adapt your business for the future.

5 TRENDS DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

- Surge in online shopping²
- Advancement in tech and artificial intelligence³
- Moving toward mobile payments⁴
- Launching banking as a service⁵
- Decline in check usage⁶

Explore this e-book to learn more.

 TREND 1:

SURGE IN ONLINE SHOPPING

 Forrester forecasts that US B2B e-commerce will reach \$1.8 trillion by 2023.⁷

What's Behind the Trend?

Partially it's the newly minted business decision-makers: Millennials and Gen Zers. They're accustomed to researching extensively and independently before making a purchase decision, and they are more willing than previous generations to buy online without contacting any sales representatives.⁸ When making a purchase, they expect their experiences with B2B e-commerce to be just as seamless as consumer e-commerce.⁹

How Can Your Business Adapt?

Harness the power of next-gen business leaders by enabling them to easily buy and pay for products or services online. Consider implementing an online payment portal to make their B2B transactions with your business as simple and user-friendly as consumer purchases.¹⁰

Nearly 70%
of business buyers



indicate they expect a
“consumer-like” buying
experience from their
business vendors.¹¹

 TREND 2:

ADVANCEMENT IN TECH AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

 **Automation could raise productivity growth globally by 0.8% to 1.4% annually.¹²**

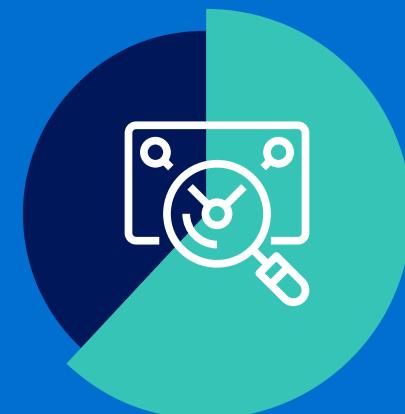
What's Behind the Trend?

Automation via technology and AI decreases the need for manual processes, freeing up resources for other tasks. The immediate efficiencies gained could translate to substantial benefits for your organization, including reduction of transaction costs and an increase in staff productivity.¹³

How Can Your Business Adapt?

Evaluate how automation can free up employees to focus on other high-value tasks. The next wave of labor-augmenting technology could lead to an average labor productivity increase across sectors of about 30%, compared to 2015.¹⁴ Consider automating payments first. Additional automation opportunities can be found later to optimize processes for other business operations, including invoicing, financial reporting and forecasting.

By 2022, machines are projected to perform 62%



of an organization's data processing, information search and transmission tasks, compared to 46% in 2018.¹⁵

TREND 3:

MOVING TOWARD MOBILE PAYMENTS



Tokenized mobile spend could reach \$42 billion in 2022 (43% CAGR).¹⁶

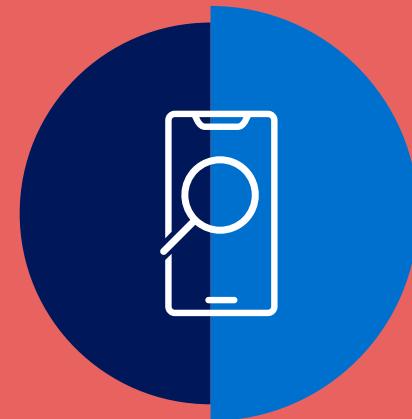
What's Behind the Trend?

Many B2B companies are supporting mobile payment, a growing demand of Millennials and Gen Xers.¹⁷ They're also beginning to roll out more mobile-friendly websites and online payment portals for their customers, giving them even greater flexibility and automation in the process.¹⁸ On average, mobile shopping is responsible for driving more than 40% of revenue in leading B2B organizations.¹⁹

How Can Your Business Adapt?

Mobile technologies enable businesses to provide more convenient payment options for customers and create extra value.²⁰ Providing customers with payment choices can improve buyer satisfaction. Explore the ways your organization can enable payments via smartphone, smartwatch, tablet or other compatible devices.

50% of B2B search queries



are made on smartphones.²¹ That figure is expected to grow to 70% by 2020.²²

 TREND 4:

LAUNCHING BANKING AS A SERVICE



65% of businesses can further optimize their B2B operations.²³

What's Behind the Trend?

Many organizations are adopting open banking platforms that can speed up digital payments.²⁴ Open banking services, enabled by APIs (application programming interfaces), accelerate payments by aggregating information about the financial state of the business.²⁵ APIs connect accounting and payment systems directly to bank accounts, which can support more seamless business processes.²⁶

How Can Your Business Adapt?

Look for an innovative banking partner that embraces the API ecosystem in order to provide your business with real-time access across multiple banks and accounts to uncover data and insights about cash flow and liquidity.²⁷

70% of accountants



report using electronic bill payment platforms because of processing and reconciliation speeds.²⁸

 TREND 5:

DECLINE IN CHECK USAGE



The US commercial card market is expected to grow 10% annually through 2022, according to Accenture forecasts.²⁸

What's Behind the Trend?

B2B payments by check slow transactions, increase the need for manual processes and leave businesses more susceptible to fraud. That's why more B2B buyers, especially Millennials and Gen Zers, are paying with cards and more suppliers are accepting them. Processing inefficiencies drive 76% of late payments,²⁹ so card payments can make it easier for businesses to receive payments on time, thus providing access to working capital sooner than checks.

How Can Your Business Adapt?

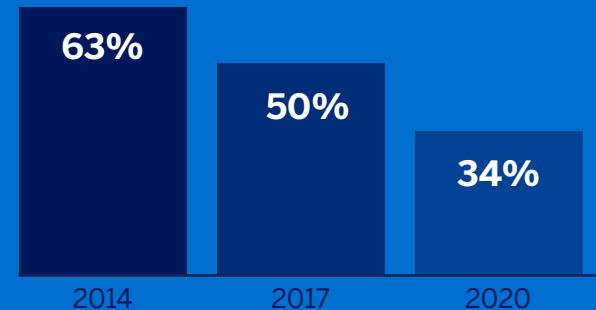
Enable customers to choose how they make payments to your business. B2B buyers are already moving away from payments by check — and that trend is likely to accelerate as younger B2B buyers make purchases and payments by card on their mobile devices.³⁰

B2B payments:

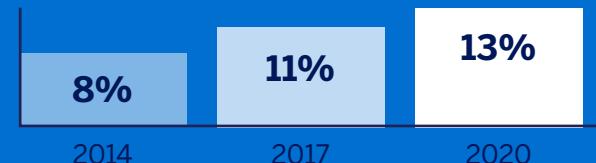
Check usage is decreasing while card payments steadily rise³¹



By check



By card





5 WAYS TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS ADAPT FOR THE FUTURE

As the digital revolution continues, use this checklist to help position your organization for growth and satisfy your customers — no matter the industry.

- **Accept digital payments** by card or automated clearing house (ACH) to speed up the time it takes for customers to pay your business, as well as enhance customer service by offering buyers multiple payment options.
- **Automate accounts receivable (AR) processes** to realize efficiencies and reduce the time spent on reconciliation. When you're ready to take your operations a step further, integrate AR/AP automation.
- **Capture data and insights** that can save time and money, in addition to helping you better engage customers, employees and partners.⁴⁵ Implement personalized discounts and incentives that encourage customers to pay immediately.
- **Consider adopting machine learning**, which can help you predict how likely an invoice is to be paid on time. Implementing systems equipped with AI can track routine processes so that your finance department can focus solely on the most problematic invoices.⁴⁶
- **Stay up to speed with the latest digital advancements and understand your customers' needs**, so you know what you're doing well (and stay the course) and can address any issues that payment technology can help you improve.



IS YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

The digital economy has arrived. If your business doesn't take steps to adapt, it may get left behind. You could start by offering seamless payment experiences to your customers and automating key financial processes.

If you're interested in modernizing your financial operations, American Express can help. We have innovative solutions that could help open your business to opportunities with current and future buyers.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

If you want to learn more about how to digitally transform your business, American Express can help. Let's talk today.

[CONTACT US](#)

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