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# The Agentic AI Advantage: Your Guide to Autonomous Commerce for Retail


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# Traditional Ecommerce is Evolving, Are You Prepared?

The world of ecommerce is changing. What began as a simple digital storefront on a single site has evolved into a complex ecosystem where customers shop from anywhere at any time. As this complexity grows, so does the demand for a more sophisticated approach. The latest shift is not just another evolution; it is a complete reinvention of the customer experience, driven by the rise of AI agents.

In the near future, your next best customer might not be human. It could be an autonomous machine—an AI agent acting on behalf of a human to accomplish a specific goal. Gartner predicts that by 2028, autonomous "machine customers" will account for 20% of all interactions at human-readable digital storefronts. PayPal anticipates that within five years, as much as 30% of its customers will start their shopping journeys through these new AI agents.

These agents are proactive and autonomous, executing complex, multi-step tasks on a user's behalf. They represent a paradigm shift from generative AI, which assists users, to agentic AI, which acts for them. For retailers, the competitive battleground will no longer be about the beauty of your website's UI/UX, but about the fluency and performance of your APIs. The new customer journey is a delegated, goal-oriented directive, not a series of clicks.

# The Architectural Trap: Why "Bolt-On" AI Fails

You cannot build a skyscraper on a cracked foundation. Layering intelligent agents onto disconnected systems only creates chaos. Choosing the right architectural approach is essential for a successful agentic strategy. Each model comes with its own set of trade-offs. Here is a breakdown of the three primary approaches:

### All-in-One Platform

| Pros: | Cons: |
| --- | --- |
| This approach offers a powerful, customizable solution, allowing you to build agents for any purpose without needing outside integrations. | You are limited to the platform's technology stack. It can be difficult to connect with external systems that have complex API structures, and the platform may not be optimized specifically for commerce. |

### Mix of Platform and Modular (The “Bolt-On” Approach)

| Pros: | Cons: |
| --- | --- |
| This model combines a foundational platform's integrated tools with the flexibility to connect to other systems, offering a modular yet cohesive approach. | This approach is rare in the market, meaning there may be limited proof points. |

### Point Solution

| Pros: | Cons: |
| --- | --- |
| These solutions are highly specialized for specific use cases and often work right out of the box. There are established customer examples to prove their effectiveness. | Performance may not be fully optimized for your existing systems, and there can be integration issues. These solutions often lack the configurability and customizability needed for unique business requirements. |

Launching a customer experience driven by AI agents requires a platform that offers the flexibility of a composable architecture with a suite of natively integrated solutions. KIBO, for example, is the only platform that offers commerce, order management, and subscriptions all built on a single, unified data model. This cohesive foundation is the key to delivering true agentic experiences.

# The Shift to Strategic Automation: Use Cases for Agentic Commerce in Retail

The future of commerce isn't about simply automating tasks; it's about deploying intelligent systems that can think, act, and solve problems across your entire business. In this section, we explore real-world use cases where AI agents transform the core functions of retail—from personalized shopper interactions to proactive back-office operations. You'll see how a unified commerce platform makes it possible to move beyond simple, siloed automation and unlock a new era of strategic, intelligent retail.

# Shopper Agents:

## Enhancing Customer Engagement and Driving Revenue

A shopper agent is a proactive AI designed to engage directly with customers, understand their complex requests, and autonomously execute multi-step tasks on their behalf. Instead of navigating a traditional website, a customer can interact with an agent to find product information, check real-time inventory, add items to a cart, and even complete an entire order in a single conversation. This new approach is fundamentally about displacing traditional UI as the primary way humans interact with a business, offering a more intuitive and efficient experience.

## Use Case: Unknowing Giftgiver

**Situation:**
A customer is shopping with a specific person and budget in mind, but they don't know what they should buy them. They need someone to give them ideas and help the make a selection.

**Challenge:**
Traditional ecommerce tools rely on browsing and clicking, which is inefficient for a customer who needs inspiration. The shopper becomes frustrated and abandons the purchase journey.

**Outcome:**
A Shopper Agent engages the customer in a natural conversation, offering personalized gift ideas based on the recipient's interests and the user's budget. The agent uses product data, attributes, and categories from a unified platform to suggest relevant options. It can dynamically present a range of products, adjust the list as the conversation evolves, and seamlessly add the selected item to the cart. This reduces friction and guides the customer to a confident purchase decision.

## Use Case: Complex Product Selector/Explainer

**Situation:**
A shopper wants an espresso machine, and they know what features they're looking for, but they don't know which machine has them. Alternative, they're looking at a specific machine, but they don't know if it has the features they value.

**Challenge:**
Finding a product with specific, often technical features can be a time-consuming and frustrating manual process. Customers may leave if they cannot find the information they need quickly.

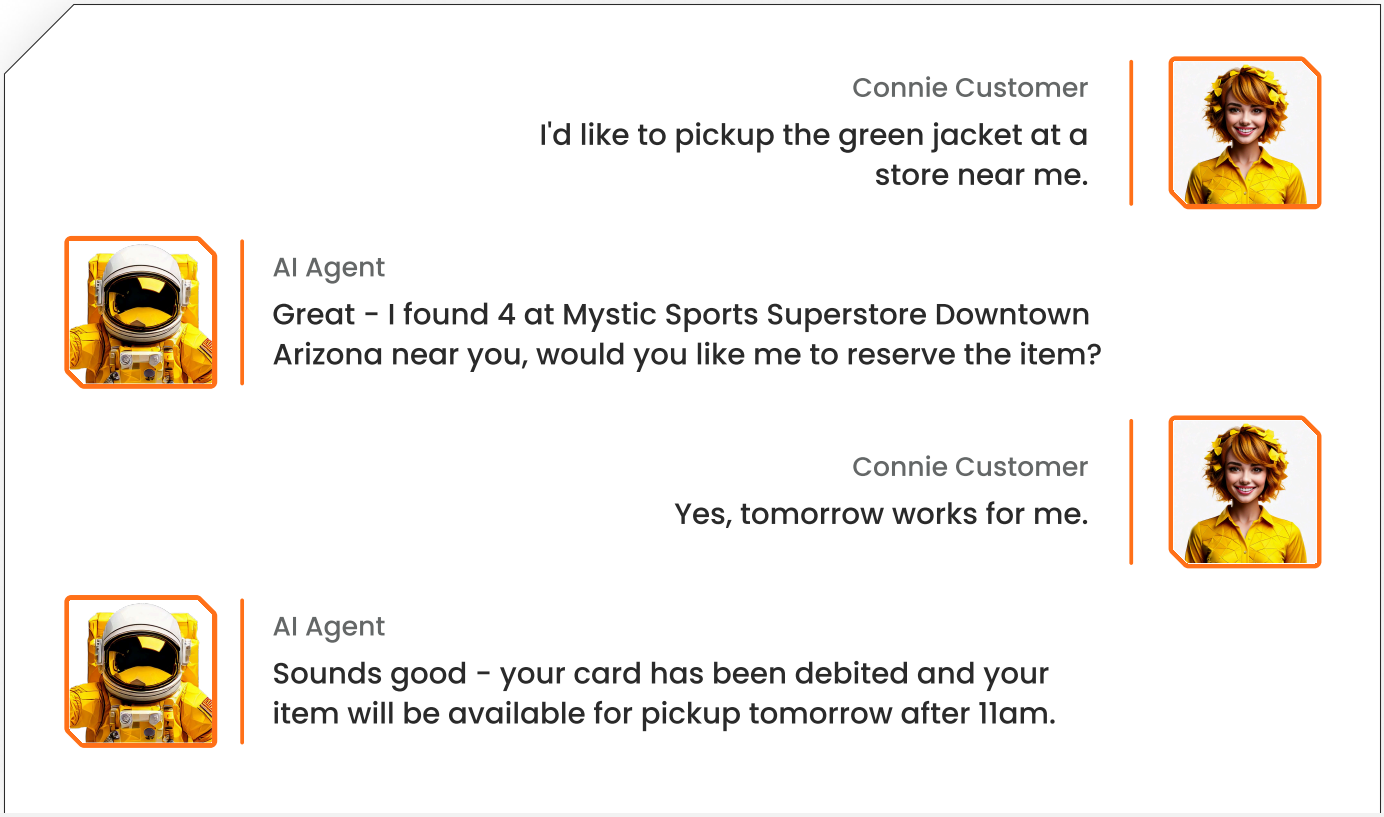
**Outcome:** The Shopper Agent acts as a product expert, answering detailed questions about product features and comparing different models in real-time. It can also proactively answer critical questions about policies, such as returns and warranties, to help convert a hesitant shopper into a customer. The agent leverages the connected product catalog, where attributes and descriptions are stored, to provide accurate, on-the-spot information. This creates a high-value, personalized shopping experience that a static product page cannot match.

## Use Case: Locating Local Inventory

**Situation:** A shopper is leaving for a weekend hiking trip tomorrow and needs to know where they can buy a rain jacket today—specifically in the color green.

**Challenge:** A shopper wants a specific product immediately and needs to know where it is available and how quickly they can get it. Without real-time inventory visibility and location-aware services, this information is difficult to provide.

**Outcome:** The Shopper Agent instantly recognizes the user's intent. It queries the native OMS to check real-time inventory levels across all locations. It identifies that the green rain jacket is low in stock but is available for pickup at a nearby store. The agent can then proactively offer multiple compelling options: free express shipping to guarantee delivery or in-store pickup at the nearest location within the next hour. This is only possible only with a native solution that has  real-time access to both shopper data and unified inventory/fulfillment data. A platform with a fragmented system would be unable to provide such a seamless, multi-option solution.



# Merchandiser Agent:

## Automated Product Content and SEO

The Merchandiser Agent is designed to automate repetitive and time-consuming tasks related to product content and merchandising, freeing up human merchandisers for more strategic work. This agent leverages a unified data model to quickly and accurately generate, manage, and optimize product information across your entire catalog.

## Use Case: Writing Product Descriptions

**Situation:**
A content manager has thousands of product descriptions to write. They have a long list of product attributes and hundreds of pages of technical documents, but they need to do it quickly, with the correct brand voice, and with specific language guardrails. They also want it translated into multiple languages and optimized for SEO.

**Challenge:**
Manually writing, editing, translating, and optimizing product descriptions for a large catalog is a monumental task prone to errors and delays. Without a unified system, a merchandiser must manually access disparate data sources and re-enter information multiple times.

**Outcome:**
The Merchandiser Agent accesses the unified product data model, which includes all product attributes and technical information. It uses pre-defined brand voice and stylistic rules to automatically generate unique, compelling, and perfectly SEO-optimized product descriptions. The agent can also leverage a multi-locale catalog feature to instantly translate these descriptions into multiple languages at once. By automating this process, the merchandiser can focus on reviewing the content for quality and brand voice, allowing for rapid product launches and a consistent global presence.

Mary Merchandiser

Please generate descriptions and SEO for the new product line that I've just imported.

AI Agent

Here is a sample description, before I commit to the rest of the 30 products would you like to make any changes?

Mary Merchandiser

This looks good but please use tonality from the red collection.

# Customer Success Agents:

## Proactive Problem-Solving and Case Resolution

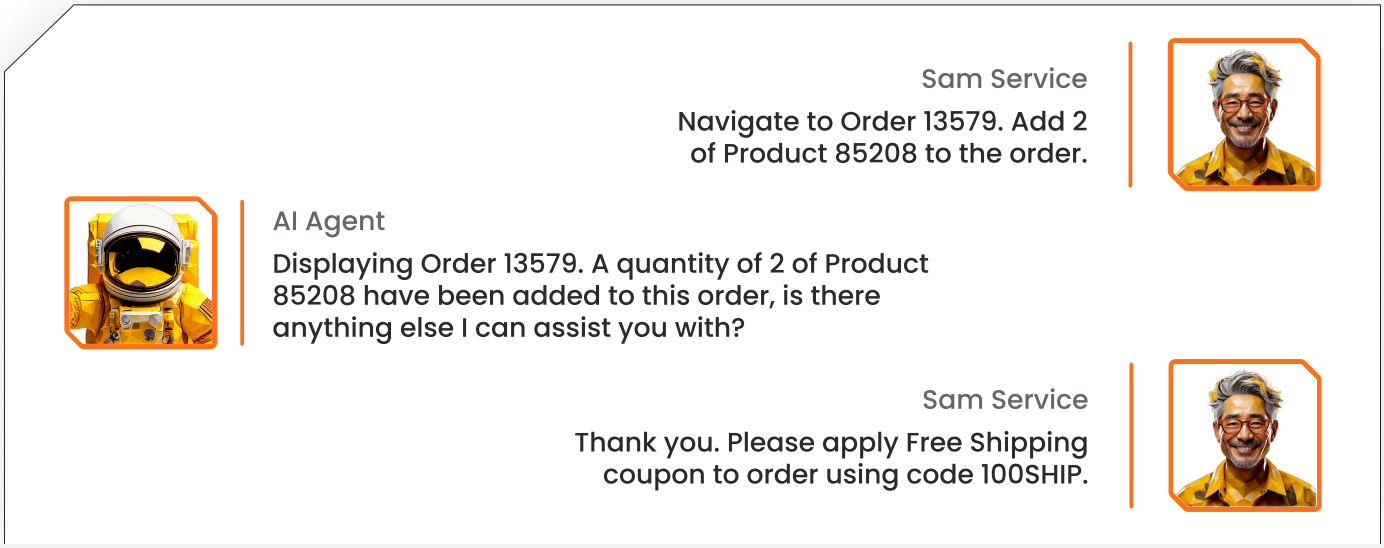
The Customer Success Agent is an AI designed to empower customer service representatives (CSRs) to resolve customer issues with speed and efficiency. This agent is a powerful tool that helps CSRs manage more tickets and achieve better customer satisfaction by acting directly on behalf of the customer. Instead of navigating separate, siloed systems, an agent can look up customer information, review order history, and run business processes behind the scenes—all without the CSR needing to perform manual, repetitive actions.

## Use Case: Helping an Unhappy Customer

**Situation:**
A customer is unhappy and needs a resolution quickly. As a CSR, they want to take action on the customer's behalf, reduce their workload, and handle more tickets with a high CSAT score.

**Challenge:**
In traditional systems, a CSR has to navigate multiple interfaces to access customer data, order history, and business rules. This multi-system approach is slow, inefficient, and frustrating for both the agent and the customer.

**Outcome:**
The Customer Success Agent acts as a central hub, enabling the CSR to manage all aspects of a customer's issue from a single screen. The agent can look up customer information, review order history, process returns, initiate refunds, and modify orders—all through a natural language interface. For example, when a CSR receives a request like "Create an RMA for half of this order for the customer," the agent automatically executes the necessary API calls to create the return authorization, reducing the number of clicks and accelerating the resolution process. This streamlined workflow significantly reduces resolution time and improves customer satisfaction.



# Promotional and Pricing Agent:

## Strategic Offer Management

The Promotional and Pricing Agent enables merchandisers to manage discounts and pricing with unprecedented speed and accuracy. This agent eliminates the complexities of manual rule creation, allowing you to quickly respond to market trends and customer behavior. It uses a straightforward, natural language interface to manage pricing policies, freeing you to focus on high-level strategy rather than administrative details.

## Use Case: Creating New Discounts

**Situation:**
A merchandiser wants to create a new discount, but they do not want to spend hours figuring out how to do it only to make a mistake. They want to quickly and easily set prices for groups of products based on specific criteria.

**Challenge:**
Creating complex discounts manually is a time-consuming and error-prone process. A single mistake in a rule can lead to significant financial losses or customer dissatisfaction. This rigidity prevents marketers from responding quickly to market trends, potentially leading to missed opportunities.

**Outcome:**
The Promotional/Pricing Agent simplifies this process by allowing the merchandiser to create discounts through a simple, natural language request. For example, she can ask the agent to "Discount all green jackets by 10% this week". The agent immediately accesses the product catalog, identifies all green jackets, and applies the discount based on the specified criteria. This seamless process reduces the risk of error and allows the user to set and adjust pricing strategies with agility and confidence.

Mary Merchandiser

Create a 10% promotion on all green items called "Christmas".

AI Agent

Please review this promotion.
When would you like this active?

Mary Merchandiser

Only on December 25th.

## Use Case: Setting Prices for Product Groups

**Situation:**
A merchandiser wants to quickly and easily set prices for groups of products based on product criteria. They need to manage pricing for different customer segments without manual, complex configurations.

**Challenge:**
In traditional systems, setting and managing different price lists for various customer groups can be complex. The flexibility of a composable but fragmented architecture can make it difficult for an agent to apply the correct pricing to the right customer at the right time.

**Outcome:**
The Promotional/Pricing Agent can handle these complex scenarios by applying customer-specific price lists based on an account hierarchy or custom attributes. With a single request, the agent can configure prices for a specific product group and apply them to a targeted customer segment. A merchandiser can also create dynamic categories based on product attributes, which the agent can then use to set pricing and promotions for those specific groups of products. This unified approach allows the merchandiser to manage pricing policies with speed and confidence, ensuring that the right offer is always presented to the right customer.

# Agentic AI Readiness Checklist

Shifting to an agentic model requires more than simply adding new software; it demands a foundational readiness across your data, systems, and processes. This checklist serves as a high-level guide to help you evaluate your platform's capabilities and identify potential gaps. By asking the right questions, you can determine if your business is prepared for the transition to an autonomous commerce ecosystem.

## Foundational Readiness

- [ ] **Data and Systems Architecture:** Is your commerce platform built on a unified data model? AI agents require seamless access to real-time information across all systems, including commerce, order management, and customer data. If your data is siloed across multiple, disconnected platforms, your agents will be limited, prone to errors, and unable to perform complex, multi-step tasks.
- [ ] **API Capabilities:** Are your APIs robust, comprehensive, and well-documented? In the age of agentic commerce, APIs are the primary interface for AI agents. The ability of an agent to function effectively depends on the quality and richness of your API layer.
- [ ] **Real-time Intelligence:** Can your systems provide real-time data and respond to events instantaneously? For an AI agent to be truly proactive—like intervening in a cart abandonment or resolving a fulfillment issue before it becomes a problem—it needs access to live data and the ability to act on that data without delay.
- [ ] **Scalability and Performance:** Can your current infrastructure handle a significant increase in automated API calls without sacrificing performance? AI agents will generate a high volume of requests, and your platform must be able to scale to meet this demand to ensure a smooth and reliable customer experience.

## Operational Readiness

- [ ] **Workflow Automation:** Are your core business processes designed for automation? Consider tasks in merchandising, customer service, and fulfillment. An effective agentic strategy identifies manual, repetitive workflows and replaces them with autonomous, agent-driven solutions.
- [ ] **Cross-functional Collaboration:** Is there a strong alignment between your commerce, merchandising, and customer service teams? Successful AI agent implementation requires these teams to work together to define rules, set goals, and create seamless, end-to-end customer experiences.
- [ ] **AI Governance and Guardrails:** Do you have clear policies and controls for AI agents? It's important to establish guardrails for brand voice, tone, and actions to ensure that agents operate within defined limits, maintain brand integrity, and do not create unintended business consequences.
- [ ] **Metrics and Measurement:** Do you have a plan to measure the impact of your AI agents? You need to define success metrics—such as increased revenue, reduced customer support costs, or improved productivity—to ensure your agentic initiatives are driving real business value.

# Your Strategic Choice: Framework vs. Finished Solution

The choice facing modern retailers is not between adopting AI or not adopting it at all. The choice is between building a custom solution from a box of disjointed parts or deploying a finished solution from day one.

Competitors offer toolkits—APIs, SDKs, and frameworks—leaving you with the daunting task of building, integrating, and maintaining the entire solution yourself. This approach is expensive, slow, and full of risk. You will have to hire costly AI engineers, endure complex integration projects, and bear the full burden of maintenance and retraining.

Your business is not a software company; adopting a platform that forces you to become one is a mistake.

KIBO provides a natively unified platform with pre-trained, managed agents that are ready to go out of the box. Our solution delivers tangible value from day one by providing a commerce-expert application that understands and executes on a dedicated roadmap of industry-specific use cases. We absorb the complexity so you can focus on outcomes, not on building from scratch.

Don't fund science projects. Start deploying business solutions. The market is moving now. Don't waste valuable time building a custom agent when you could be generating revenue within 90 days.

Check out **KIBO's Agentic Commerce** solutions, and speak with a KIBO expert today to assess your agentic readiness and build your strategic roadmap to autonomous commerce.

## About KIBO

KIBO is a composable commerce platform for retailers, manufacturers, distributors, and wholesalers who want to simplify complexity and deliver modern customer experiences. KIBO is the only modular commerce platform supporting unified experiences across Order Management, eCommerce, and Subscriptions. Companies like Zwilling, Ace Hardware, Boscov's, Nivel, and REEDS Jewelers trust KIBO to bring sophistication and simplicity to their commerce operations. Learn more at https://kibocommerce.com.