ERP Platform Process Guide For B2C eCommerce

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This guide outlines the **standard business goals**, **data flows**, and **data mappings** associated with ERP implementations for B2C eCommerce companies. It is intended to provide a clear, industry-aligned foundation for understanding how ERP platforms integrate with sales channels, fulfillment providers, and operational systems.

Common Business Goals of ERP Integration

ERP systems streamline business operations by automating and connecting disparate functions. B2C eCommerce businesses typically implement ERP systems to achieve:

Operational Goals

- **End-to-end order automation** from online storefronts to shipping
- **Real-time inventory visibility** across multiple warehouses or fulfillment locations
- **Centralized financial tracking** of sales, payments, and expenses
- **Streamlined returns processing** with consistent customer communication

Strategic Goals

- **Scalability** for handling increased order volumes or multichannel expansion
- **Improved customer experience** through faster fulfillment and fewer errors
- **Data-driven decisions** via consolidated dashboards and reporting
- **Reduced manual data entry** through system integrations and automation

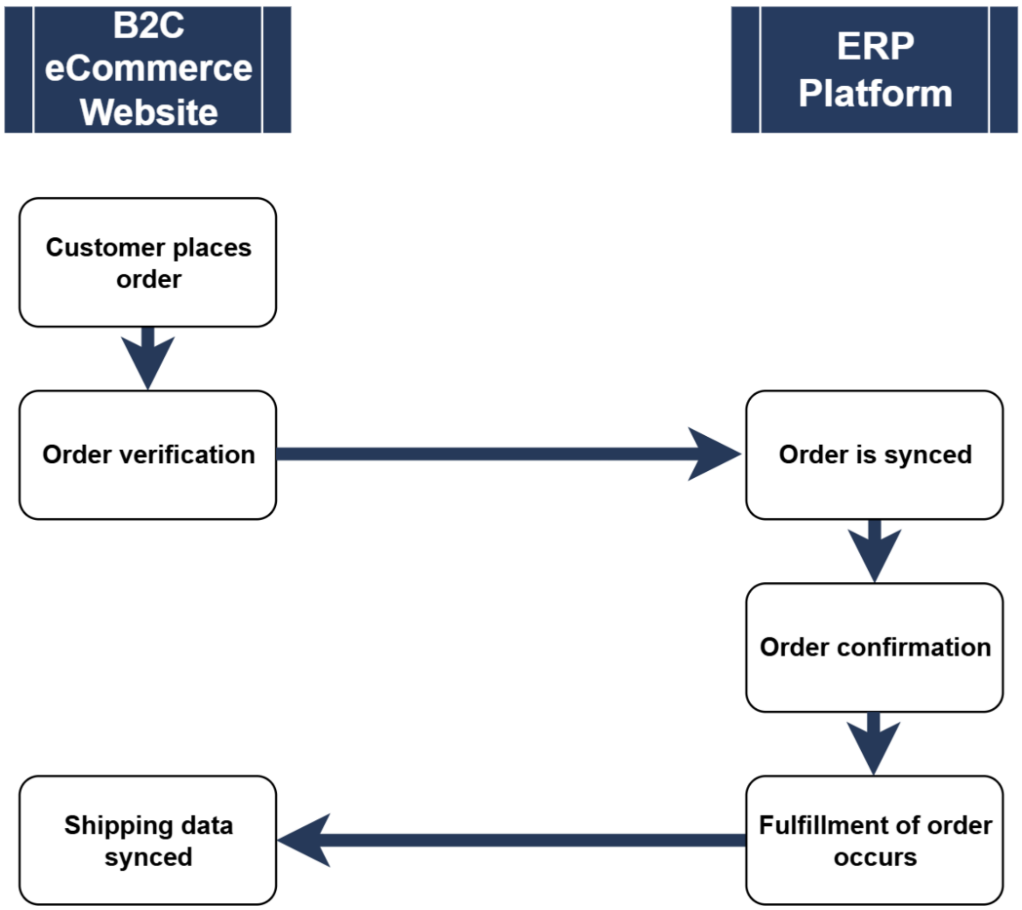
Standard ERP Data Flows

These flows represent standard operational lifecycles between systems involved in order-to-cash, drop-ship, procure-to-pay, and return processes. ERP acts as the hub of orchestration.

Order-to-Cash

Purpose: Automate the flow of sales from customer order to payment

Flow Overview:



Typical Steps:

1. **Customer places order via web store (e.g., Shopify or BigCommerce)**
   The customer completes a purchase through the online store, initiating the sales process.
2. **Order Verification**
   a. **Payment Authorization Confirmation**
      i. Verify that payment has been successfully authorized.

   ii. Ensure no issues with declined cards, flagged transactions, or chargebacks.

b. **Order Data Validation**

   i. Confirm that **billing** and **shipping addresses** are complete and match standards (especially for physical goods).

   ii. Check if any required fields are missing or suspicious (e.g., PO boxes when not allowed).

c. **Fraud Detection & Risk Screening**

   i. Use fraud prevention tools (like address verification systems [AVS], CVV verification, IP location matching).

   ii. Sometimes a manual review for **high-value** or **high-risk** orders.

d. **Customer Account or Identity Verification (if needed)**

   i. Especially for first-time customers or orders over a certain threshold.

   ii. May involve sending a confirmation email or SMS to verify the order.

e. **Shipping Method Validation:** Validate that the chosen shipping method is applicable to the destination (e.g., no overnight shipping to remote areas).

f. **Order Notes or Special Instructions Check**

   i. Review any special requests (gift wrapping, delivery instructions) and confirm feasibility.

3. Order is synced to ERP platform for processing

a. Order details are sent to the ERP Platform, where a Sales Order is created.

b. Creation of Customer in ERP system (Can use generic "web customer" or create new customer account

4. **Order confirmation**
    a. Order status is updated to "Confirmed" in web store and notification sent to customer via email and/or text message

5. **Fulfillment of order occurs**
    a. The ERP Platform initiates the pick and pack process
    b. Label generation and shipping
    c. Confirmed shipment updates inventory levels (deduct from inventory)

6. **Shipping data synced back to web store**
    a. Shipment confirmation and tracking details are recorded in the ERP Platform and synced to eCommerce.
    -Delivery tracking updates sent to the customer.
    b. Delivery confirmation sent to customer via email/text message

Procure-to-Pay

Purpose: Ensure inventory availability through an efficient procurement cycle

Flow Overview:

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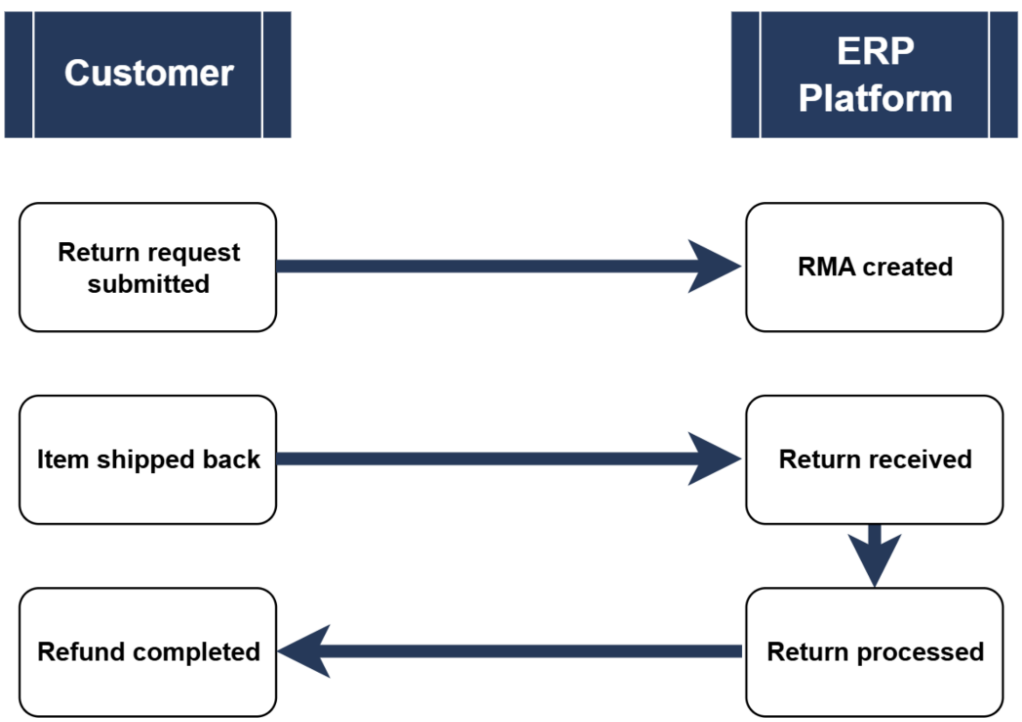
Typical Steps:

1. **Purchase Order (PO) created**
   A PO is generated in the ERP Platform based on inventory needs or manual planning and sent to the supplier with item, quantity, and delivery details.
2. **Goods received and inventory updated in ERP Platform**
   When items arrive, they're received into the warehouse and the ERP Platform updates inventory levels accordingly.
3. **Supplier invoice received and paid**
   The supplier submits an invoice, which is matched against the PO and receipt, and payment is issued according to agreed terms.

Returns / RMA

Purpose: Manage reverse logistics with traceability and minimal customer friction.

Flow Overview:

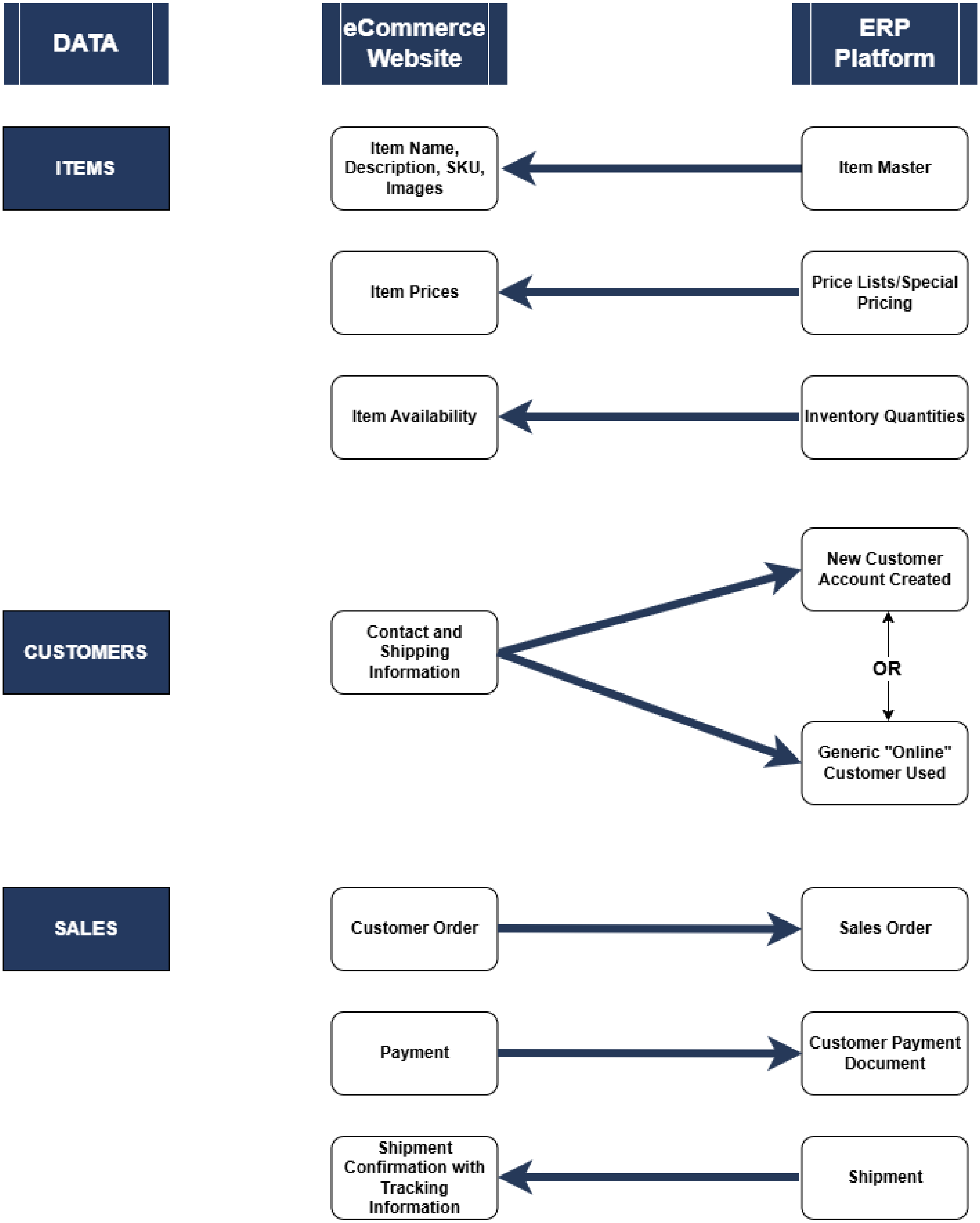


Typical Steps:

1. **Customer initiates return request**
   The customer submits a return request through the eCommerce site or customer service channel.
2. **RMA number issued**
   A Return Merchandise Authorization (RMA) is generated in the ERP Platform and shared with the customer. A return shipping label may be sent to the customer.
3. **Customer ships item back**
   The item is dropped off by the customer to the designated shipping company (UPS, USPS, FedEx, DHL, etc)
4. **Return processed**
   Once received, the item is inspected and logged in the ERP Platform, with inventory updated to reflect the return.
5. **Customer refunded**
   The customer receives a refund through the original payment method, and the transaction is recorded in the ERP Platform.

(See following page for Data Mapping process flow.)

Data Mapping



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