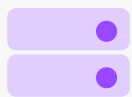


From Product Data to Profit:

# How AI Commerce Puts IT on the Hook for Revenue



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# Executive Summary

Instead of typing keywords into a search bar, shoppers are more frequently asking conversational agents for tailored recommendations and this shift is measurable today: **AI-driven overviews are reducing click-throughs from traditional search results by 15%–64%, and 60% of searches now end without a single site visit.**

And it's not just impacting B2C businesses; **nearly 30% of B2B decision-makers begin their research on AI platforms** like ChatGPT more often than Google, and **SEMrush predicts AI search will replace traditional engines as the preferred method of search by 2028.**

This change places IT teams at the heart of commerce strategy. AI agents can only deliver accurate, trusted recommendations when fueled by rich, contextual product data, yet most organizations still struggle with fragmented systems and outdated processes.

For IT leaders, **PIM is the only solution that directly addresses the core priorities of integration, governance, and scalability.** Unlike ERPs or MDMs, PIM is purpose-built to centralize, enrich, and distribute product data across every channel and AI engine.



Modern, API-first PIM systems ensure real-time access, seamless interoperability, and strong governance, enabling IT teams to maintain data accuracy, meet compliance standards, and scale as buyer behavior evolves.

**Success in the age of AI-driven commerce depends on openness, scalability, and continuous improvement.**

Companies that invest now in structured, enriched product data and API-driven integration will capture the next wave of growth. Those that don't risk losing visibility and getting left behind as AI becomes the primary interface between buyers and brands, and as autonomous agents begin making purchasing decisions on their behalf.

# Key Takeaways

01

**Traditional search is declining:** Generative AI and agentic search are reshaping how buyers discover products, with some research pointing to 15-25% drops in organic traffic due to AI-written results.

02

**Agentic AI is on the rise:** Commerce is moving from keyword-based search to intent-driven, conversational buying, with some businesses predicting that agentic search will replace traditional search as the primary search source by 2028. Most businesses are not yet equipped for this shift.

03

**Data quality is the fuel for AI:** Without complete, structured, and contextualized product data, AI systems can't deliver accurate or relevant recommendations, leading to lost revenue and poor customer experiences; only 45% of consumers trust that AI is able to provide reliable, accurate responses.

04

**IT teams are at the center of AI readiness:** While marketing and product teams shape customer-facing experiences, IT leaders are responsible for the infrastructure, integrations, governance, and security that make AI commerce possible.

05

**Modern commerce requires autonomy, not just automation:** IT must design systems that allow AI agents to sense, decide, and act in real time, with feedback loops and interoperability across the stack.

06

**PIM is the cornerstone of AI-enabled commerce:** Unlike ERPs or MDMs, PIM is purpose-built to centralize, enrich, and distribute product information across systems and AI engines, serving as the connective tissue for the entire stack.

07

**Open systems and data governance are key to success:** Adopting open, API-first systems and implementing ongoing strong governance practices are key practices to building AI-ready tech stacks.

08

**The future belongs to the AI-ready:** Companies that invest in openness, scalability, and data excellence will lead the way in AI-powered commerce. Those that don't risk losing product visibility as AI becomes the primary interface between buyers and brands.

# Introduction

In just a few short years, **generative AI** has shifted from an experimental tool to a daily driver for how consumers and business buyers discover, research, and purchase products. Whether it's a shopper asking ChatGPT for the "best hiking boots under \$150" or a procurement manager using AI to shortlist vendors, the search journey is no longer starting (or ending) in a traditional search bar.

For B2C and B2B companies alike, the rules of visibility and conversion are being rewritten in real time.

Historically, IT's role in the business was clear: **ensure the systems worked, transactions processed correctly, and the infrastructure held together.**

But with the rise of AI-powered commerce, those responsibilities are changing. **Product data no longer just supports campaigns or flows quietly through systems. It now lives, evolves, and travels across them, directly influencing revenue performance.**

So far, the loudest conversations about AI-powered commerce seem to center on marketing, eCommerce, and product teams; the people tasked with creating product experiences that resonate in this new environment.



But there's a quieter, equally critical shift happening behind the scenes: IT departments are quickly becoming the gatekeepers of AI readiness.

Why? **Because AI-powered search and buying experiences are only as good as the data that fuels them.**

Generative AI engines need rich, accurate, accessible, and contextualized product information to deliver relevant, trustworthy recommendations. That means **IT teams are now under pressure to adapt their systems and infrastructure to not only store data, but to ensure it can flow into AI tools** in real time, in the right format, and with the right context, all while remaining compliant with data governance standards.

The challenge is that **most commerce tech stacks weren't built for this level of agility.** Many organizations still rely on siloed product data, scattered across ERP systems, spreadsheets, eCommerce platforms, and more, that's slow to update and difficult to integrate.

Without a tech stack designed for interoperability, real-time data exchange, and adaptive decision-making, AI's potential gets lost in translation.

**The future of AI-powered commerce is here now. The question is: will your tech stack be ready?**

# The Shift Away from Traditional Search

For decades, companies relied on search engines like Google to drive traffic, leads, and sales. SEO strategies (optimizing keywords, building backlinks, producing content tailored to search algorithms, etc.) were the cornerstone of digital discovery. But generative AI is disrupting that model, and fast.

**Agentic search tools and solutions like Google's AI Overviews are changing how both consumers and business buyers interact with information.**

Instead of clicking through multiple links, users increasingly receive condensed, context-driven answers generated by AI that require zero clicks.

This shift obviously has a measurable impact on organic traffic: studies indicate that AI overviews can reduce click-throughs from traditional search results by anywhere from 15% to 64%, depending on the industry and search type, and 60% of searches now terminate without users clicking through to another site.



## How Do Customers Feel About the AI Shopping Experience?

Based on real feedback from real consumers, this report outlines exactly how shoppers want (and don't want!) AI to be integrated into the customer experience.

[Learn More](#)

In other words, the old model of capturing attention through high-ranking search listings is losing its guaranteed reach.

This impact is not restricted to just B2C organizations. According to G2, **nearly 8 in 10 business decision-makers** report that AI search has already influenced how they conduct research, and **nearly 30% of these decision-makers now start their searches on AI platforms** like ChatGPT more often than Google.

For companies that rely on search-driven lead generation, these numbers are a wake-up call: **if your content and product information aren't optimized for AI, you risk being invisible to a growing segment of buyers.**

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For years, digital marketers have focused on optimizing search engine rankings to drive brand discoverability and traffic to their websites. Now, AI-generated search results are rewriting the rules, and SEO optimization is no longer enough. Brands must evolve or risk losing visibility into their customer journey, and control over their brand positioning, in a world where traditional clicks are disappearing.

Natasha Sommerfeld  
Partner, Bain & Company's Technology & Could Services and Customer

Now, it's important to note here that **this doesn't mean traditional SEO is dead**. Keyword strategies, content quality, and backlink authority still matter, especially for driving brand awareness and supporting broader marketing goals. However, companies can no longer treat SEO as the sole pillar of digital discovery as **GenAI Optimization, or GEO, needs to become a central consideration**.

## The Next Chapter of Commerce

Discover how AI and the rise of intent-based search is revolutionizing the customer experience, and gain actionable insights into how to future-proof your commerce strategy.

[Learn More](#)

GEO involves structuring and enriching content and product information so that AI engines can understand, interpret, and surface it effectively, including providing rich product descriptions, contextual metadata, and clear relationships between products, categories, and user intent.

**The era of relying solely on traditional search is fading.** Companies that adapt early to optimize for both human users and AI engines can capture new audiences, maintain visibility in emerging channels, and position themselves as trusted sources of information.

# The Rise of Agentic Search

If the decline of traditional search is the warning light for businesses, the rise of agentic search is the engine swap - a complete retooling of how buyers interact with commerce platforms and how businesses need to respond. In fact, SEMrush even predicts that AI-driven search will **replace traditional search engines as the primary search source by 2028**.

Gartner predicts that **33% of enterprise software applications will include agentic AI by 2028**, up from just 1% in 2024. In other words, this is a fundamental change in the buying process. Soon, we'll see full disintermediation, where the conversational interface doesn't just recommend products but actually completes purchases on behalf of the customer, which is where the stakes get even higher.

The challenge? Most businesses aren't ready for this shift. **Product data, the very fuel that powers these AI interactions, is often incomplete, unstructured, siloed, or just plain messy.**

Without clean, centralized, and richly contextualized data, AI tools can't accurately match products to buyer intent.

This gap between buyer expectations and business readiness is already showing. In the B2B space, **90% of buyers are already using generative AI** in their purchasing decisions, but many companies are still delivering an experience designed for yesterday's search habits.

The result? Missed opportunities, poor recommendations, and a competitive disadvantage in markets moving faster than internal systems can keep up.

Gain a better understanding of how your products are being discovered across AI-powered commerce experiences with **Akeneo's AI Discovery Optimization**.

[Learn More](#)

# The Impact on IT Teams

Clearly, the rise of agentic AI in commerce not only changes how buyers interact with brands but it's transforming the role of IT. As AI-powered search becomes standard, **IT leaders are under mounting pressure to adapt their tech stacks to meet an entirely new set of requirements.**

Traditional automation is built on preprogrammed workflows, but in the age of intent-driven search and autonomous agents, IT teams must design **systems that allow AI agents to sense, decide, and act dynamically based on changing conditions, without waiting for human approval.**

This requires an **architecture capable of supporting real-time data integration across core systems** like ERP, PIM, OMS, DAM, and CDP, ensuring that **AI tools have immediate access to accurate information.** It also demands seamless interoperability, so AI can call APIs for pricing, content, or fulfillment data whenever needed, without bottlenecks.

Just as importantly, these systems need **feedback loops that enable AI agents to learn from results, refine their decision-making, and improve over time.** Without these elements in place, AI simply can't deliver on its promise of more intelligent, adaptive commerce experiences.

But meeting these requirements comes with challenges. **IT leaders must avoid the costly trap of duplicate tech investments as AI capabilities spread across multiple platforms,** and they must **keep system sprawl and operating costs under control in order** to maintain performance and manageability as stacks grow more complex.

IT departments are facing the delicate balance of **driving innovation without undermining stability or security,** and they must stay ahead of evolving regulations to ensure compliance, especially as AI tools begin handling sensitive product, pricing, and customer data.

Even with the right infrastructure, **AI is only as effective as the data it consumes,** and this is where many organizations fall short. Too often, product data is incomplete, missing key specifications, images, or contextual details. It's scattered across disconnected systems that don't talk to each other, outdated to the point of being misleading, or so slow to update that it fails to keep pace with market shifts.

**In today's environment, where speed and relevance drive conversions, poor data quality is a direct threat to revenue.**

## How to Drive Operational Efficiency with Composable Commerce



Discover how combining best-of-breed tools can streamline operations, improve the customer experience, and reduce the total cost of ownership with real-world strategies and expert insights.

[Learn More](#)

# Is Your IT Setup AI-Ready?



When it comes to AI readiness, not all IT setups are created equal. Take this quick self-assessment to see where your organization stands on the path to AI-powered commerce.

## 1. Where does your product information live?

- A. In a centralized PIM or equivalent system, accessible via APIs.
- B. In multiple systems (ERP, spreadsheets, DAM, etc.) and later aggregated into an eCommerce platform.
- C. Mostly offline or in unstructured formats with little digital organization.

## 2. How accurate and enriched is your product data?

- A: Always up to date, complete, and enriched with detailed attributes and context.
- B: Mostly accurate but missing some details, or updated infrequently.
- C: Incomplete, outdated, or inconsistent across channels.

## 3. How easily can your systems share data in real time?

- A: Data flows seamlessly across systems via APIs in real time.
- B: Data sharing requires manual intervention or scheduled batch uploads.
- C: Data isn't easily shareable between systems at all.

### Your Readiness Snapshot

**Mostly A's:** You're in strong shape for AI-powered commerce. Keep optimizing! [Learn more about how to optimize product data for agentic search.](#)

**Mostly B's:** You have a foundation, but gaps in centralization and real-time access could limit your AI potential. [Check out these 10 tips for improving product data strategies.](#)

**Mostly C's:** Your setup is at risk of being left behind. Centralizing and structuring your product data should be a top priority. [Reach out to an Akeneo expert today to get started on your journey towards product data excellence.](#)



# The Product Data Backbone of AI-Powered Commerce

So, we understand the problem; the commerce industry is moving towards agentic, autonomous search experiences, and the majority of IT setups are not equipped to handle this migration. The question then becomes, what's the solution?

Here's the harsh reality: while ERPs and MDMs play essential roles in managing operational and generalized data, they weren't designed to handle the kind of rich, contextual product information that powers revenue and fuels AI.

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While ERPs and MDMs are built to solve the technical and operational problems of storing and governing general corporate data, Akeneo PIM and Product Cloud is uniquely built to directly drive business value through management and optimisation of product data performance in AI-driven commerce, and other channels. Unlike ERP and MDM categories, this approach connects the product record with channel performance, and directly drives revenue and reduces returns and supply chain waste throughout the entire product lifecycle.

Andy Tyra  
Chief Product Officer  
Akeneo

This is where **Product Information Management (PIM)** comes in.

**Think of PIM as the end-to-end supply chain for product data.** Just as supply chains ensure raw materials get transformed into finished goods and delivered to customers, PIM ensures product information is enriched, organized, and distributed wherever it's needed.

Instead of a tangle of spreadsheets, siloed ERP fields, or one-off eCommerce uploads, **PIM provides a single, trusted source of truth that can feed every system, channel, and AI engine with consistent, reliable product data.**

This matters because AI can only work with the information it's given. **A large language model or generative search tool isn't magic — it can't invent accurate specs or infer missing details.** To interpret buyer intent and deliver relevant recommendations, these tools need structured, complete, and contextualized product data.

For IT leaders, PIM directly addresses the core priorities of **integration, governance, and scalability.**

## Integration

On the integration front, modern PIM systems are built API-first, making it easy to connect with ERPs, MDMs, DAMs, eCommerce platforms, and increasingly AI engines. Instead of custom workarounds or brittle connectors, IT departments gain **a flexible, future-proof hub that allows product data to flow where it's needed with a PIM.**

## Governance

Governance is another critical advantage with PIM as organizations can **establish clear workflows and validation rules to ensure that data is complete, accurate, and compliant with internal standards and external regulations**. This reduces the risk of bad data reaching buyers (or worse, regulators) and builds the trust that's essential when AI is making recommendations on a company's behalf; as Gartner predicts, **enterprises using AI governance platforms will enjoy significantly higher customer trust ratings in the years ahead.**



## Scalability

Finally, there's scalability. AI-powered commerce is evolving quickly, and businesses need tech stacks that can adapt just as fast. **A PIM system offers the agility to expand into new channels, markets, or business models without rebuilding the entire data infrastructure each time.**

Whether it's supporting a new conversational AI interface, integrating with a marketplace, or enabling real-time product updates, PIM provides the flexible foundation IT leaders need to scale with confidence.



Ultimately, investing in a **PIM gives IT leaders and their organizations the agility to adapt quickly, the governance to ensure accuracy and compliance, and the integration layer needed to connect every tool in the stack**. Most importantly, it positions businesses to fully leverage AI commerce tools and deliver the kind of seamless, trustworthy product experiences that today's buyers expect.

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IT leaders don't realize yet that they're now on the hook for go-to-market performance. With the rise of AI, product data is the GTM strategy, and if it isn't complete, accurate, and trusted, you just won't sell anymore. IT's role has historically been about ensuring systems could enable customer interactions, but in the world of agentic and conversational commerce, IT is becoming responsible for the business performance of these interactions.

Romain Fouache  
CEO, Akeneo

# Building an AI-Optimized Tech Stack

Centralized, enriched product data is essential, but it can only deliver value if the surrounding systems are equally prepared to support it. That means **IT leaders need to think beyond individual tools and focus on how the entire architecture works together.**

Retrofitting legacy systems can feel daunting, but the path forward doesn't always require tearing everything down and starting over. Instead, it calls for **a deliberate focus on the principles that make a stack AI-optimized: openness, integration, scalability, and governance.**

Let's take a look at a few best practices that can enable IT leaders to be ready not just for today's AI use cases, but for the next wave of innovations that are already on the horizon.

## 01 Adopt Open, API-First Systems

In a world where buyers expect seamless, real-time answers from AI agents, closed or rigid systems quickly become roadblocks. An API-first approach ensures that every system in your stack can connect to others without heavy customization, allowing IT teams to add or replace tools as business needs evolve without overhauling the entire architecture.

An API-first design also means future-proofing your stack against technologies that don't exist yet. AI agents, conversational interfaces, and agentic commerce platforms are advancing quickly, and businesses that rely on proprietary, closed systems risk falling behind when the next wave of tools comes to market.



### Support AI-Powered Commerce with Akeneo PIM

Akeneo PIM's flexibility and robust ecosystem of API-driven integrations enable your teams to deliver product experiences that drive real business impact across all channels.

[Learn More](#)

## 02 Invest in PIM as the Central Hub for Product Data Enrichment



Connect enriched product data in Akeneo to top retailer and marketplace sites to drive compelling customer experiences, increase conversions, and sell more products with Akeneo Activation.

[Learn More](#)

A PIM should serve as the central hub where product records are cleaned, structured, and enriched with attributes, metadata, and relationships. From there, the PIM distributes consistent, high-quality data across eCommerce platforms, marketplaces, and AI engines. This centralization ensures that no matter where a buyer interacts with your brand, they're receiving the same reliable product story.

## 03 Implement Strong Data Governance

As AI becomes embedded into commerce systems, the risks of poor data quality, duplication, or compliance lapses grow exponentially. A governance framework ensures that product information meets clear standards before it enters circulation. This includes rules for completeness, accuracy, version control, and accessibility, which are all critical to preventing bad data from undermining customer trust or violating data regulations.

### The Cheat Sheet for Data Governance

Dive into the framework of policies, processes, and standards that ensure high data quality, security, and compliance within your organization.

[Learn More](#)

Beyond accuracy, governance also builds transparency. Buyers are increasingly aware that AI systems influence their decisions, and they want to trust the recommendations they receive. IT leaders who implement governance frameworks today position their organizations to not only comply with evolving regulations, but also earn the confidence of customers who demand to know how and why a product recommendation was made.

## 04 Establish Processes for Ongoing Maintenance

Finally, building an AI-ready stack is not a “set it and forget it” project. Commerce technology is evolving at breakneck speed, and maintaining an AI-optimized stack requires ongoing oversight. IT teams must establish processes for monitoring data quality, testing integrations, and upgrading systems regularly. Just as product information must be kept fresh to remain relevant, the systems that manage it must also be continuously tuned to meet new demands. Regular audits and proactive updates ensure the stack remains resilient, secure, and adaptable.

Models evolve, interfaces change, and buyer behaviors shift faster than traditional IT cycles anticipate. By embedding continuous improvement processes into their operations, IT leaders can ensure their organizations stay ahead of the curve rather than scrambling to catch up. It's about treating the commerce stack as a living system that needs care, attention, and flexibility to thrive in an environment where change is the only constant.



### Prepare for the Future of AI Commerce

Centralize, enrich, activate and optimize product information across all channels with a single source of truth, driving exceptional product experiences that will help scale your business in the age of AI.

[Learn More](#)



## How AI Commerce Puts IT on the Hook for Revenue

The interface of commerce is shifting from search bars and storefronts to intelligent, adaptive systems that work on behalf of the customer.

At the heart of this transformation are IT teams. Marketing, product, and commerce leaders may shape the customer-facing experiences, but those experiences are only as strong as the infrastructure behind them. **IT holds the keys to making AI commerce possible:** ensuring real-time data flows, connecting systems through APIs, governing information for trust and compliance, and maintaining the agility to adapt as technologies evolve.

**The future will reward organizations that treat their tech stack not as a patchwork of tools but as a strategic platform for innovation.** AI agents will soon be making and completing buying decisions on behalf of customers if they aren't already. **Businesses with structured, enriched, and accessible product data will win visibility** in these new channels, and those without will find themselves invisible in the conversations where purchase decisions are made.

**The path forward for IT leaders is clear: embrace openness, centralization, governance, and continuous evolution.** By doing so, they will not only keep their organizations competitive but also help define what AI-powered commerce looks like in the years ahead.

***The question is no longer if AI will reshape commerce, it's whether your systems will be ready to lead that change.***



# How AI Commerce Puts IT on the Hook for Revenue

## About Akeneo

Akeneo is the product experience (PX) company and global leader in Product Information Management (PIM). Leading brands, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers, including Chico's, CarParts.com, TaylorMade Golf, Rail Europe, Kering, and more trust Akeneo to scale their commerce initiatives. Using Akeneo's intelligent Product Cloud, companies can create elevated product experiences with user-friendly and AI-powered product data enrichment, management, syndication, and supplier data onboarding, and an app marketplace and partner network to meet business and buyer needs.

For more information:

<https://www.akeneo.com>

