

Headless vs. headed

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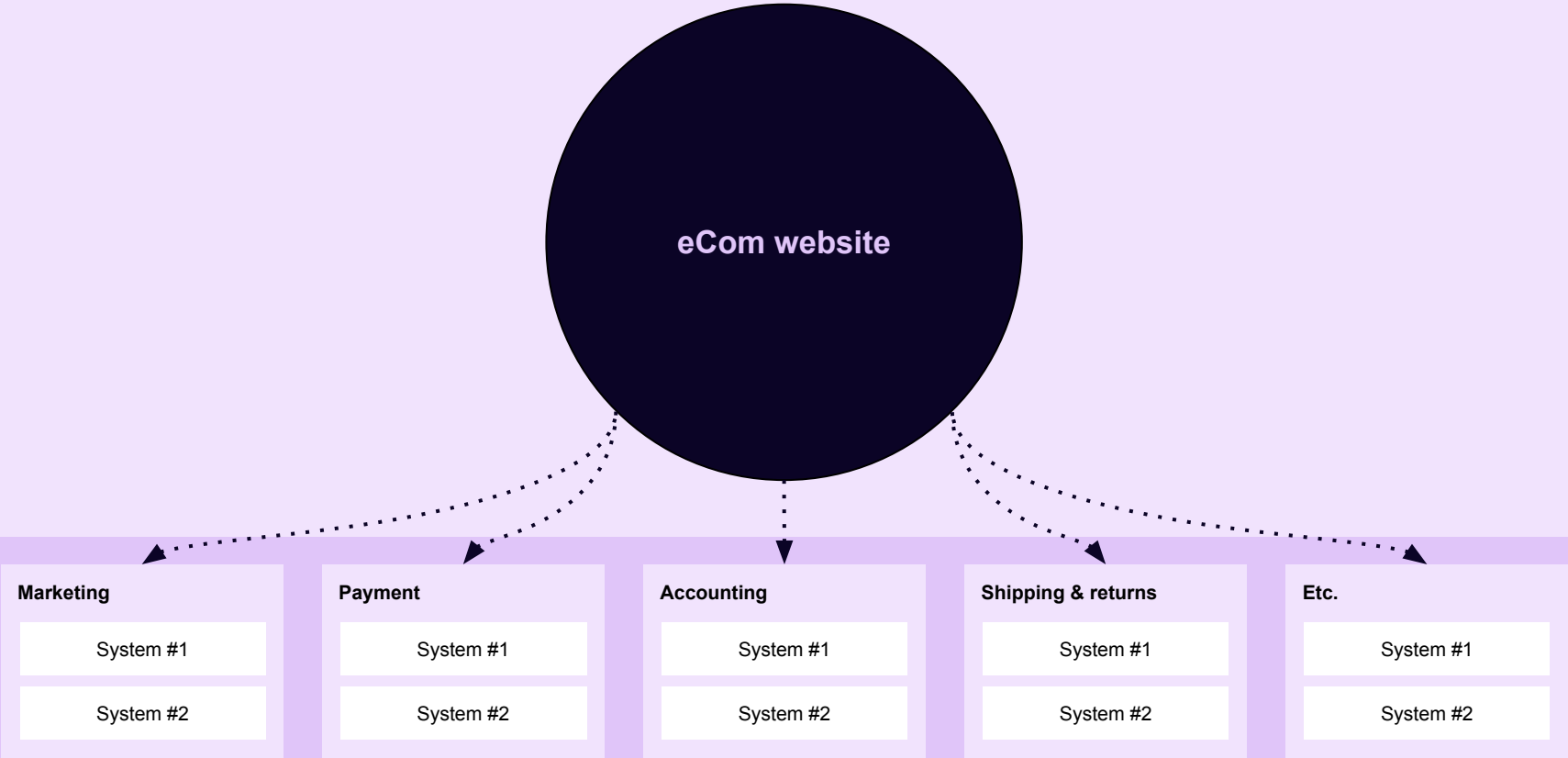


Headless

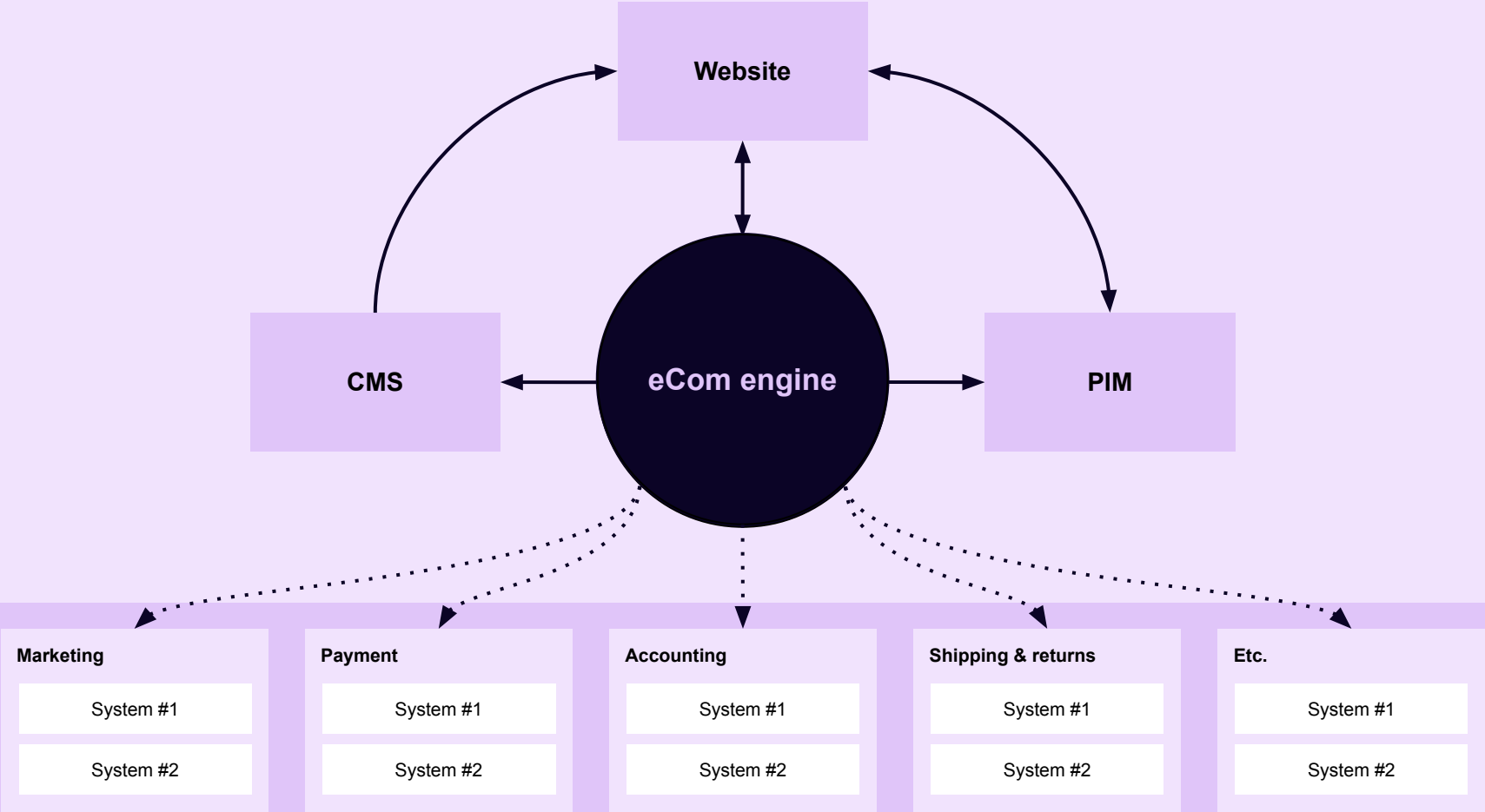
Monolithic approach



Composable - But still monolithic



Headless



WIX



commercetools



SAP Hybris Commerce



Magento®

ORACLE®
Commerce Cloud

.centra

WOO COMMERCE



shopify

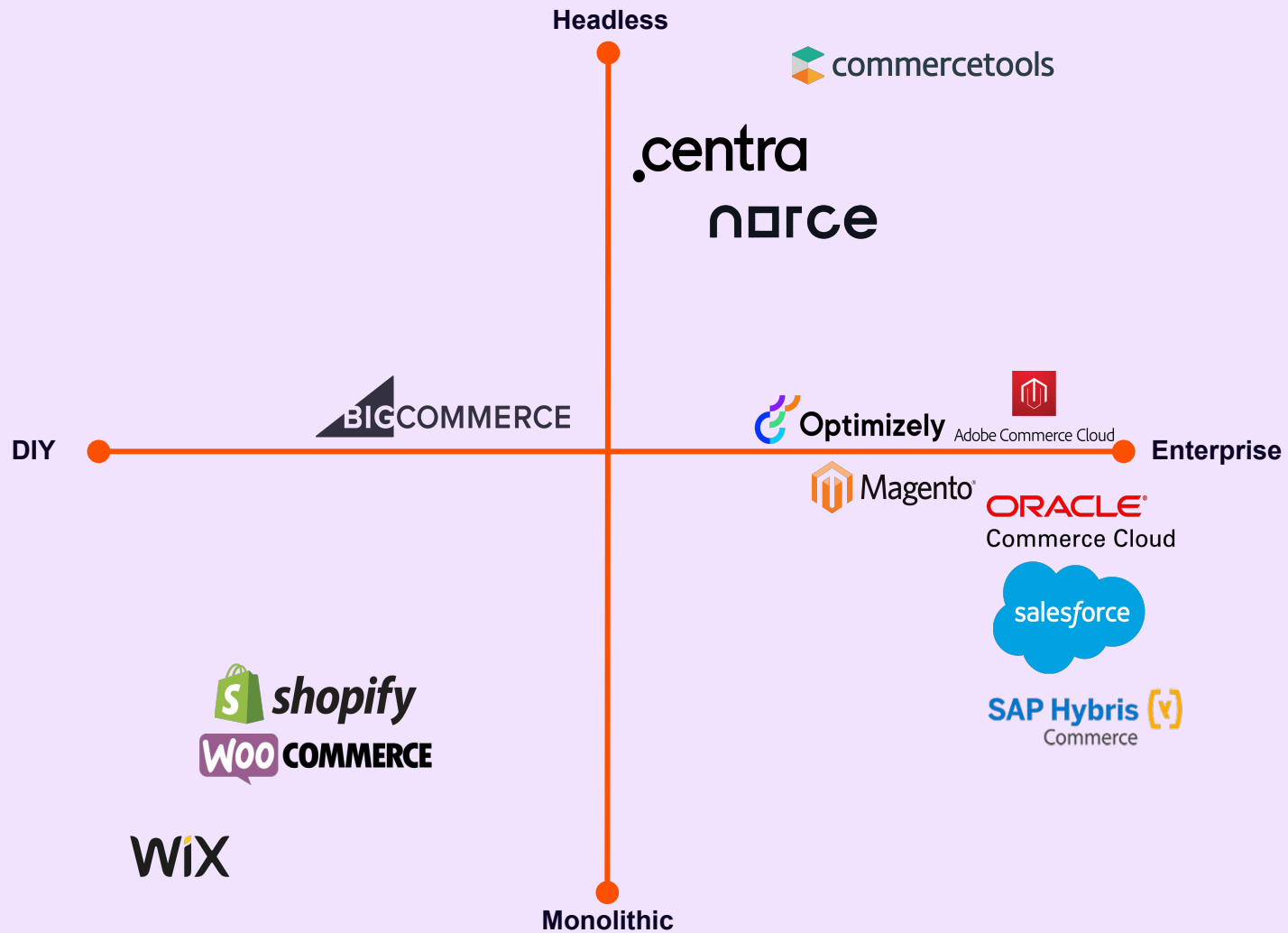


Optimizely

norice



Adobe Commerce Cloud



Holzweiler

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Considerations & challenges

Headless as a growth strategy

10 insights

Flexibility vs. Simplicity

Speed of Innovation

**Technical/Management Expertise
or a good partner**

Growth Ambitions and Scale

Integration and Customization

Customer Experience Control

Investment vs. Long-term Value

Performance and SEO Advantages

Future-proofing & Adaptability

Strategic Fit and Realistic Assessment

10 insights

Flexibility vs. Simplicity

Traditional monolithic platforms offer simplicity and easy setup out-of-the-box, whereas headless architectures provide greater flexibility but require more careful planning and technical expertise.

Speed of Innovation

Headless eCommerce allows rapid testing, iteration, and deployment of new ideas without backend constraints, unlike traditional systems, which may slow innovation due to their rigid nature.

Technical/Management Expertise or a good partner

Headless approaches depend significantly on technical skills, making it essential to partner with capable developers or technical agencies. In contrast, monolithic solutions often require less specialized expertise at the start.

Growth Ambitions and Scale

Headless is most beneficial for brands with ambitious growth plans and aspirations to scale rapidly. Smaller brands or those with slower growth trajectories might initially prefer traditional platforms due to lower upfront costs and complexity.

Integration and Customization

Composable commerce offers seamless integration with best-of-breed solutions tailored specifically to a brand's needs, whereas monolithic solutions limit integration capabilities due to their tightly-coupled structures.

Customer Experience Control

Headless enables personalized, optimized customer experiences across multiple platforms (mobile apps, web, retail), something difficult to achieve consistently on traditional monolithic platforms.

Investment vs. Long-term Value

While monolithic solutions typically have lower initial setup costs, the rigidity often leads to higher maintenance and innovation expenses over time. Headless requires greater initial investment but often delivers greater long-term value through flexibility.

Performance and SEO Advantages

Headless solutions typically offer improved site speed and optimized user experiences beneficial for SEO and conversions. Traditional platforms may require additional effort to achieve similar performance.

Future-proofing & Adaptability

Headless architectures are inherently future-oriented, enabling brands to rapidly adapt to emerging trends and technologies. Monolithic platforms can limit or complicate future innovation.

Strategic Fit and Realistic Assessment

Brands must carefully assess their internal resources, technical capabilities, and strategic ambitions. Headless eCommerce can offer significant competitive advantages—but only for brands committed to investing in technology and strategic growth.