

# OPTIMIZING SMB Payments

REPORT



MAY 2021

—  
**FEATURE STORY** - PAGE 9

## How SMBs Can Leverage Payment Experiences To Stand Out From The eCommerce Crowd

**NEWS AND TRENDS** - PAGE 13

85 percent of B2B firms expect their sales representatives to operate across multiple channels in the future

**DEEP DIVE** - PAGE 19

How automation can help manufacturing firms meet B2B buyers' payment expectations



04

## What's Inside

A look at the most recent developments in the SMB payments space, including how B2C experiences are influencing B2B firms' payment approaches

09

## Feature Story

An interview with Chad Jaben, director of strategic business development at BigCommerce, on why small businesses must offer the right payment options to make transactions seamless and secure

13

## News & Trends

Notable headlines from the space, including how 90 percent of restaurant owners and operators want access to numerous digital payment options and why 57 percent of SMBs received late payments in 2020

19

## Deep Dive

A comprehensive examination of how changing B2C payment preferences are impacting B2B payment innovation trends and how automation can help businesses meet these shifting expectations

23

## About

Information on PYMNTS.com and American Express

## Acknowledgment

The Optimizing SMB Payments Report is done in collaboration with American Express, and PYMNTS is grateful for the company's support and insight. [PYMNTS.com](https://pymnts.com) retains full editorial control over the following findings, methodology and data analysis.



**WHAT'S  
INSIDE**

**T**he business-to-consumer (B2C) space has been no stranger to digital innovation, particularly over the past year. eCommerce [represented](#) 19 percent of global retail sales by the end of 2020, a year-over-year increase of 3 percentage points. This shift has revealed the extent to which consumers have taken their shopping — and, by extension, their payments — online. Consumers are now comfortable [paying](#) digitally for everything from groceries to utility bills, and B2C merchants have rushed to meet their needs with payment solutions to make the process more smooth and secure.

The payment trends making waves in the B2C space have not gone unnoticed by business-to-business (B2B) firms, either. B2B companies are likewise taking to digital channels to manage numerous business functions, including establishing buyer or vendor relationships or handling critical payment functions. Driving this B2B shift is the experience of seamless B2C payment processes in B2B professionals' personal lives. One [study](#) found that at least 40 percent of millennial B2B buyers have a say in each step of the process, and these consumers hail from a generation that values digital ease and convenience — which likely explains why they are so eager for the

same payments convenience and security in their professional lives.

Transitioning to digital-first payment processes is not automatic, however. Firms must confront several hurdles, including challenges with legacy infrastructure and a lack of automation in their accounts receivable (AR) departments. The issue is especially prevalent among small to mid-sized businesses (SMBs) in the B2B space, as many have less cash and fewer employees to spare as they ponder taking more of their payment processes digital. It will thus be necessary for these small businesses to determine which technologies and processes represent worthwhile investments in the years ahead.

### **AROUND THE SMB PAYMENTS SPACE**

Restaurants are fixtures in the SMB space, with the United States Small Business Administration's (SBA's) Office of Advocacy [estimating](#) that 64 percent of the nation's more than 1 million food and drinking establishments qualify as small businesses. Despite their size, many of these small eateries are beginning to realize that there are undeniable benefits to working with vendors that offer ample payment options. A recent [survey](#) found that 90 percent of restaurant owners and managers would value the availability of numerous



digital payment options — and they are not averse to shopping around for different suppliers if their current partners cannot meet their needs.

Investments in automation and other advanced technologies are also growing more appealing to B2B firms, and SMBs stand to reap benefits from adopting such tools. Artificial intelligence (AI) has come to the fore as a particularly promising technology, with recent research [examining](#) its usefulness for both front-end and back-end applications. AI-powered chatbots, for example, can be used to help B2B SMBs manage clients' payment-related queries, allowing firms to accurately respond to requests while freeing up employees and resources. Businesses' AR and accounts payable (AP) departments can also benefit, as AI can support their fraud prevention efforts as well as render fast lending decisions.

One reason SMBs in the B2B space are eager to access faster digital purchasing options is that many are facing cash flow disruptions caused in part by their old-school manual

methods. Fifty-seven percent of small businesses in the U.S. [collected](#) late payments last year, with 17 percent of these payments arriving more than a month after being due. Many of these issues are the result of cumbersome manual payment processes, leading firms to [seek out](#) automation technology to mitigate their AR pain points and gain much-needed visibility into their cash flows.

For more on these stories and other SMB payments headlines, read the Report's News and Trends section (p. 13).

### **HOW SMBs CAN BUILD TRUST THROUGH SECURE PAYMENT EXPERIENCES**

Business owners — particularly those of SMBs — have to offer diverse, secure payment options to stay competitive with their larger counterparts. Consumers have to trust that an unfamiliar small business will keep their payment information secure when they are buying with it for the first time. Building this trust is key, and seeing preferred payment methods at checkout can give consumers the

confidence not to abandon their carts. In this month's Feature Story (p. 9), PYMNTS spoke with Chad Jaben, director of strategic business development for software-as-a-service (SaaS) eCommerce platform BigCommerce, on why choosing the right payment providers to fuel a seamless, secure checkout experience can help SMBs stand out in a crowded eCommerce landscape.

### **DEEP DIVE: HOW AUTOMATION CAN HELP FIRMS MATCH B2B PAYMENTS TO BUYERS' B2C-LIKE EXPECTATIONS**

Online shopping has steadily increased over the past decade and surged in the last year, with consumers heading online to do everything from paying their bills to making retail purchases — a habit they are carrying into working life. Many employees are now expecting to see the same seamless, digital payment experiences that characterize their B2C transactions when they make B2B purchases at their firms — and many are more than happy to switch to new vendors if these expectations are not met. This month's Deep Dive (p. 19) analyzes how emerging payment trends in the B2C space are impacting B2B payment innovation and explores what this means for the future of B2B commerce. It also analyzes which tools and technologies could prove most beneficial to firms — especially smaller buyers in industries such as manufacturing — as they look to bring their B2B processes closer to the B2C experiences many buyers already enjoy as consumers.

## Industry INSIGHT

### **How can offering small buyers innovative payment experiences help them improve cash flow and the bottom line?**

"Easy-to-use payment experiences can help SMBs in a ton of ways. For example, one area where we're focused is offering automated accounts payable and accounts receivable solutions. These are easily integrated in the businesses' accounting systems, making it more straightforward to manage supplier payments and cash flow; increasing visibility into up-to-date information on accounts, invoices and payments; and reducing manual reconciliation and errors. These types of payment improvements are invaluable when it comes to both the day-to-day and the big-picture management of financials for SMBs."

#### **DEAN HENRY**

Executive vice president, global  
commercial payments

[American Express](#)

# FIVE FAST FACTS

## 34%

Share of smaller businesses that are prioritizing investment in automated receivables over the next three years



## 52%

Portion of businesses generating less than \$50 million in sales annually that say fraud and theft are top cross-border pain points



## 38%

Share of mid-sized firms that are prioritizing investment in spend management and expense control tools over the next three years



## 46%

Portion of mid-sized businesses that are prioritizing the automation of invoice payments to accelerate payments receipt



## 71%

Share of SMBs interested in getting third-party assistance for their innovation efforts





The background is a solid blue color with various semi-transparent geometric shapes, including rectangles and a large, stylized number '5' in the lower half. The shapes are in different shades of blue, creating a layered, abstract effect.

# **FEATURE** STORY



## How SMBs Can Leverage Payment Experiences To Stand Out From The eCommerce Crowd

---

The past year changed the payment landscape by forcing businesses of all sizes to accelerate their digital transformations. Replacing or updating legacy systems was no longer a luxury but a necessity, as businesses — particularly SMBs — needed to adapt quickly to retain and grow their customer bases.

Not all eCommerce payments are alike, however, and choosing the right payment providers can propel business growth by earning consumers' trust and convincing them to buy from firms' sites. This means that business owners looking to stay competitive must keep a close

eye on payments — especially the trendsetting payment habits of millennial and Generation Z consumers — to pivot their platforms accordingly.

Businesses seeking the right payments mix can tap SaaS eCommerce platforms such as U.S.-based [BigCommerce](#) to help build online stores. The technology company assists startups and other companies with tools to grow their online sales and offers an array of options so that businesses of all sizes and types have the ability to work with a solution that best fits their needs.

“Our CEO always says, ‘You can’t conduct eCommerce unless you can accept the payment,’” Chad Jaben, BigCommerce’s director of strategic business development, recently told PYMNTS. “Anyone can have a website with attractive products, but the differentiator is: Can you accept the payment [and] can you ship the product to them? The payment is the bottom line.”

Jaben explained how payments play a strong role in giving businesses a smooth, simple and secure way to process their funds and also helping to boost sales while reducing cart abandonment.

### **CHOOSING THE RIGHT PAYMENT PROVIDER**

All businesses face the same issue when it comes to breaking through the crowded online atmosphere: figuring out how to survive given fierce competition. Small businesses have to work even harder to stand out from the noise, and lesser-known or unfamiliar SMBs can benefit from leveraging payment experiences to prevent consumers from abandoning checkout.

“I ask them, ‘What’s your business model? What are the main things you focus on and you need to enable?’” Jaben said. “Based on that business model, what are the kinds of customers you are trying to attract and how do you think they want to pay based on where they live [and] what their demographics are? ... What are the prevalent payment methods for the kinds

of consumers you want to attract? Last, how does that fit into your operations?”

Payment systems have to support the back-end functionalities of the particular operation, whether a subscription provider, international eTailer or SMB. BigCommerce offers support for numerous payment providers to help satisfy all merchant business models and give merchants the freedom of choice to select a provider that works best for their specific needs. The company then negotiates special rates for their merchants so that merchants do not have to negotiate with the provider independently.

“We talk to the providers,” Jaben said, “and recommend they put themselves in the shoes of those small businesses, pointing out that they want to make transactions quick, seamless and reliable ... for consumers to trust their sites and transact with them.”

Businesses also want payment features that convince consumers that the businesses will keep their payment information secure when they are buying with them for the first time. They also want flexibility in their payment options and expect to see their preferred methods.

### **THE NEW PAYMENT EXPERIENCE**

The best payment experiences have to integrate the four business “pillars” to succeed, including designing an attractive product catalog with clear descriptions, keeping track of finances for tax purposes and setting up



shipping strategies. A seamless and frictionless payment system is the final pillar and arguably the most important, according to Jaben, as it addresses the bottom line.

“[Fueling sales] really all boils down to convenience and trust,” he said. “Ultimately, merchants have to offer consumers a convenient way to pay how they want to pay with a seamless, fast checkout.”

The convenience factor may be one part of the purchasing process, but consumers want to know that their data is protected and the process is secure. Jaben also suggested that small businesses could benefit from more analytics tools.

“Anything that makes payment processes more seamless and faster, that reduces cart abandonment and makes people feel protected when paying ... that’s where a lot of the innovation will be,” he said.

There is a lot of room for growth and opportunity in eCommerce, and businesses will have to stay on top of payment trends to flourish. SMBs that tune in to consumers’ payment preferences and offer diverse, secure options will have a better chance of cutting through the noise and catching their attention.



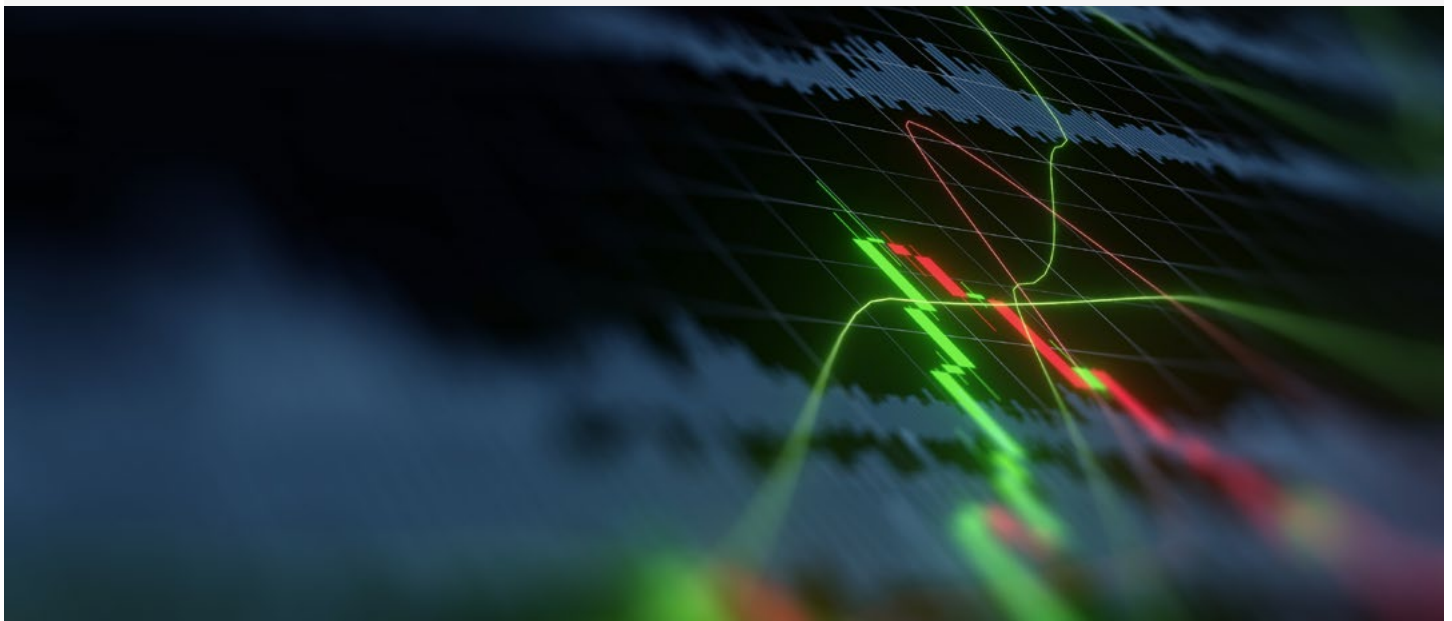
**NEWS &  
TRENDS**

## B2B businesses' shifting payment and purchasing needs

### OMNICHANNEL SALES STRATEGIES CAN BOOST B2B SALES BY 83 PERCENT, STUDY FINDS

Many B2B firms are taking a page from their B2C counterparts by incorporating the ordering and payment methods their partners prefer. This has meant that a growing share are moving toward omnichannel solutions, with one [study](#) finding that such strategies can boost B2B sales effectiveness by 83 percent. The study also determined that each B2B client taps six channels on average when deciding whether to make a purchase, illustrating that providing an array of payment and ordering options is becoming very important to prospective partners.

The growth of omnichannel practices is also providing more opportunities for hybrid B2B sales professionals, according to the survey, and 85 percent of B2B organizations expect their sales representatives to split their time between operating remotely and in person by 2024. Companies do have a few wrinkles to iron out as they their representatives transition to hybrid roles, however. The report stated that two-thirds of B2B sales professionals have experienced friction that resulted from their cross-channel approaches — namely lost commissions after clients ultimately made purchases via the web. This highlights the need for businesses to incentivize eCommerce and to address other pain points that could arise if they wish for their sales departments to transition to hybrid models.



## 90 PERCENT OF RESTAURANT OPERATORS WANT ACCESS TO MORE PAYMENT OPTIONS

An overwhelming share of American restaurants are SMBs, as the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy [stated](#) that 64 percent of food services and drinking establishments are classified as such. Restaurants large and small have big plans when it comes to digitizing their operations, however, and they are not necessarily averse to trying new suppliers when they do. One recent [study](#) found that restaurant owners and managers are beginning to focus more on price rather than loyalty to specific vendors as they invest in purchasing equipment, furniture and supplies digitally. Ninety percent of respondents said they would welcome various payment options, for example, and more than half are interested in buy now, pay later (BNPL) plans. Most of those favoring BNPL solutions sought payment terms of six months (cited by 46 percent), with the remainder nearly equally split between terms of 90 days (28 percent) and one year (26 percent).

Restaurant buyers' and owners' new purchasing preferences are likely linked to the hardships they have faced over the past year. Eighty percent said they were concerned that the pandemic's aftereffects could impact their businesses in the future, for example, and 92 percent said they plan to buy equipment online

# 90%

of restaurant operators want access to more payment options.

more often. This indicates that vendors would do well to offer a comprehensive assortment of digital payment tools for their restaurant clients, as failing to do so could lead these restaurants to other suppliers.

## SMB payment challenges and solutions

### STUDY FINDS THAT 57 PERCENT OF B2B SMBs RECEIVED LATE PAYMENTS LAST YEAR

Small businesses are eager to tap into omni-channel solutions to boost their sales, but there are other operational areas that could also benefit from digital streamlining. One recent [report](#)

found that 57 percent of B2B SMBs in the U.S. collected late payments in 2020, and 17 percent of payments were received more than a month late. The study also revealed that SMBs' collection processes flagged more in 2019 than they did last year, most likely because the relative stability during the previous year prompted firms to be less stringent about collecting their payments on time.

Sluggish collection processes represent a massive stumbling block for SMB growth, as failure to procure timely payments and establish smooth cash flow can cause these businesses to delay investments, hiring and myriad other plans. The report noted that small business owners can correct course on late payments by consistently sticking to established payment terms, clearly stipulating when payments are expected, following up with reminders when funds are late and keeping tabs on buyers' accounts. AR automation can also be beneficial in helping B2B firms reduce late payments. PYMNTS' [B2B Payments Innovation Readiness Report](#) noted that firms prioritizing their collections using manual processes take 30 percent longer on average to follow up on late payments than those that do so automatically. Investing in automation could therefore be essential to helping firms access much-needed funding.

## **HOW AI IS HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES STREAMLINE THEIR PAYMENT PROCESSES**

Advanced learning technologies like artificial intelligence are becoming increasingly compelling as firms make more of their operations digital, and SMBs are recognizing the benefits of deploying the technology across all departments. Many small businesses are [tapping](#) AI to power chatbots, for example, which automate a greater share of customer communications to help free up employees for additional tasks, introduce more flexibility, save time for consumers and reduce errors. Chatbots can also be designed to handle payment and transaction queries, providing correct and timely details and compensation as well as minimizing paper invoices. The back-end benefits of AI utilization can also help businesses streamline their operations, with the technology being especially useful in standardizing AP processes, rendering faster decisions on lending SMBs credit and helping businesses prevent fraud by encrypting data or parsing details for suspicious behavior or activities.

## **OPEN BANKING OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR UK SMBs TO KEEP ON TOP OF CASH FLOW**

B2C businesses in the United Kingdom have begun offering consumers personalized experiences made possible by the nation's open banking regulations, but B2B firms — especially SMBs — are still stuck. This lack of innovation



is most noticeable when it comes to payments, with as many as 50,000 small businesses in the U.K. [shuttering](#) each year due to slow payments. Supporting these businesses with scalable solutions to meet their needs is crucial in the U.K., however, as SMBs account for more than 99 percent of the nation's business population, according to reports.

Tapping into open banking-powered solutions can help the U.K.'s small businesses mitigate many of these issues, however. AI and machine learning, for example, can help even the smallest businesses gain access to instant payments without forcing buyers to expedite their processes. These technologies can also be used to identify invoices at risk of going unpaid or being paid late, giving SMBs critical visibility into their receivables.

## Digital B2B innovations and developments

### WHY BUSINESSES MUST KEEP KICKING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INTO OVERDRIVE IN THE YEARS AHEAD

The past year's events prompted many firms to pick up the pace on digital innovation. Business executives said before last spring that they had [expected](#) their firms to take 585 days to meet customers' growing demands for online purchasing options. Once they were forced to innovate, however, these processes took only 21.9 days on average to implement,

meaning they occurred a staggering 27 times faster than business leaders anticipated.

B2B firms have also begun to reimagine their relationships with their business partners amid the influx of digital purchasing methods, with roughly three-quarters of B2B decision-makers favoring self-service or remote buying options. The digital new normal is making it imperative for firms to continue accelerating their digital plans even as they begin to resume their brick-and-mortar operations. Companies must keep their customers' preferences top-of-mind as they invest in new purchasing channels and methods, and this means digital is here to stay.

### WELL-DESIGNED WEBSITES FACTOR INTO BUSINESSES' SUCCESS STRATEGIES

Providing compelling digital purchasing options is a key consideration for B2B firms cultivating buyer relationships, but even



the most innovative services will miss the mark if businesses' websites are not engaging enough. Research [shows](#) that 70 percent of B2B purchasers visit a prospective vendor's site to consume content before deciding whether to buy products, underscoring the importance of providing an online experience that is user-friendly and visually appealing. Approximately two-thirds of B2B buyers want suppliers to use research-driven findings to bolster their web content, which also demonstrates that purchasers seek out content that can inform them and offer new insights rather than merely pitching for sales.

B2B firms eager to reconfigure their sites to drive traffic must keep in mind what prospective buyers wish to see or learn. Online learning seminars and other classes tend to be particularly intriguing, and guest blogging is also proving to be an effective tool in helping B2B merchants boost their brand visibility. Above all, research indicates that buyers value authenticity, meaning that vendors must strive to establish themselves as authorities in their respective spaces and demonstrate the value behind their products or services. Getting the web experience right is high stakes: B2B eCommerce sales are [projected](#) to total \$1.2 trillion this year in the U.S. alone, and 93 percent of B2B buyers prefer to go online to make their purchases after they have determined what to buy. This signals a sizable sales opportunity for B2B firms of all sizes — if they manage to

pair compelling website designs with emerging digital features and payment tools

### **WHY TAPPING DIGITAL EXPERIENCE PLATFORMS CAN STREAMLINE B2B FIRMS' PRICING, PAYMENTS**

Many B2B firms that would be otherwise willing to take the plunge into automating their payments processes and workflows are reluctant due to pricing concerns. The differing payment terms across industries, clients and geographies can [complicate](#) pricing in the B2B space. The average payment term for firms in the chemical sector is 42 days, whereas the same term is just 21 days for those in construction, for example. The hesitation this creates ultimately keeps more firms stuck with manual processes, with recent research finding that only one-third of B2B spending worldwide is being conducted digitally.

B2B firms can solve many of these issues by tapping a digital experience platform (DXP) that streamlines payment terms and pricing for different types of customers and channels. Businesses must integrate their DXPs with their customer resource management and enterprise resource planning solutions to localize their payment approaches across markets, however, and paying attention to various geographies' unique payment habits and taxation requirements is also key. For many, this adaptability will likely be worth the investment in the long run, as it will allow them to handle complex payments and invoicing needs digitally with minimal friction.

**DEEP**  
**DIVE**

## How Automation Can Help Manufacturing Firms Meet B2B Buyers' Payment Expectations

---

Online shopping has boomed over the past year, with consumers paying bills, buying necessities like groceries and making retail purchases digitally in higher figures. Forty million U.S. consumers [reported](#) shopping for groceries online in April 2020 alone, for example. eCommerce's total retail shares expanded globally from 16 percent in 2019 to 19 percent by the end of 2020, according to a [study](#) released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

This preference for digital shopping and payments appears to be expanding outside of the B2C world — notably, more companies are heading online to begin their sales relationships with new vendors or suppliers and to manage their payments. One of the key factors that appears to be helping to drive this growth forward is that many of those making B2B purchasing decisions at their firms are already used to making seamless digital transactions in other areas of their lives. A 2020 [study](#) found that more than 40 percent of millennial B2B buyers have a say in each step of the purchasing process, for example. As these digital-native buyers seek out new vendors or business partners, they are bringing their digital expectations with them.

Some challenges remain for companies looking to make the switch to digital-first B2B processes, however. The following Deep Dive examines how emerging trends and shifting preferences for B2C payments are influencing B2B payment approaches for businesses, focusing specifically on logistics and manufacturing firms — especially the smaller buyers. It also analyzes how automation as well as flexible payment tools and technologies can help these small buyers enhance their B2B payment processes to improve cash flow and the bottom line.

### **B2C DEVELOPMENTS FUEL B2B INNOVATION**

Many businesses have viewed digital payments as necessary for their continued survival. A recent [study](#) found that 98 percent of B2B manufacturers have already incorporated an eCommerce channel or plan to do so, with 45 percent of firms noting that boosting their sales was their main reason for doing so. The events of the past year pushed many of these entities to move much of their B2B processes online, with B2B eCommerce actually [growing](#) 200 percent faster than B2C eCommerce in 2020 as businesses across industries abandoned paper processes in favor of less cumbersome digital solutions. Many companies are now utilizing multiple sales channels



to maintain their business relationships and conduct B2B payments, with digital sales becoming increasingly popular. Fifty-four percent of companies in the U.S. now [place](#) B2B orders via self-service websites, while 22 percent now do so through an online marketplace, for example. Only 16 percent of firms continue to place orders through brick-and-mortar locations.

This adoption of online B2B sales tools follows the path already laid out by B2C companies, with more consumers than ever now turning to digital channels first and foremost to make convenient routine purchases. The top 13 global B2C eCommerce companies [reported](#) that their collective gross merchandise volume (GMV) reached a value of \$2.9 trillion in 2020, a nearly 21 percent increase from 2019 levels. These habits – which about one-quarter of consumers plan to retain for the foreseeable future, according to recent PYMNTS [data](#) – are beginning to filter into the ways many of them approach processes and payments as employees. Sixty-seven percent of all B2B buyers report having switched to purchasing from vendors that offer a “more consumer-like” experience, for example. This share is even higher among millennials, of whom 74 percent stated they had swapped vendors because the new company offered B2B experiences more similar to consumer payments.

The draw of consumer-like payments experiences for many companies appears to be the overall speed, convenience and personalization they grant shoppers. More B2B buyers are expecting to be able to browse through

vendors’ products online without fuss, checking product reviews and other details before completing transactions. Companies have been moving steadily to nudge their B2B payment and sales processes to be more in line with B2C experiences for several years, but some – especially those in industries where such processes have traditionally been manual, such as manufacturing firms – are still facing challenges in doing so. Implementing automation, flexible payment tools and other key technologies into these processes is one way these firms, especially smaller manufacturing companies, may be able to cross that B2C-to-B2B gap.

### **OVERCOMING MANUFACTURING FIRMS’ B2B INNOVATION CHALLENGES**

Many manufacturing companies are still experiencing struggles when enhancing B2B processes to meet the current B2C-adjacent expectations of their buyers and partners. The U.S. steel and metals industry reported that 39 percent of total invoices were overdue at the time of the survey, for example. Smaller businesses in particular are still having difficulties collecting payments as they adjust their processes to digital channels, with over 60 percent of SMBs [reporting](#) that they routinely have their invoices paid late and 16 percent stating it can take more than a month for them to receive these payments. This can detrimentally impact cash flow, as 29 percent of these SMBs reported having to wait to finally gain access to their funds. One way to address these issues is by integrating automation into

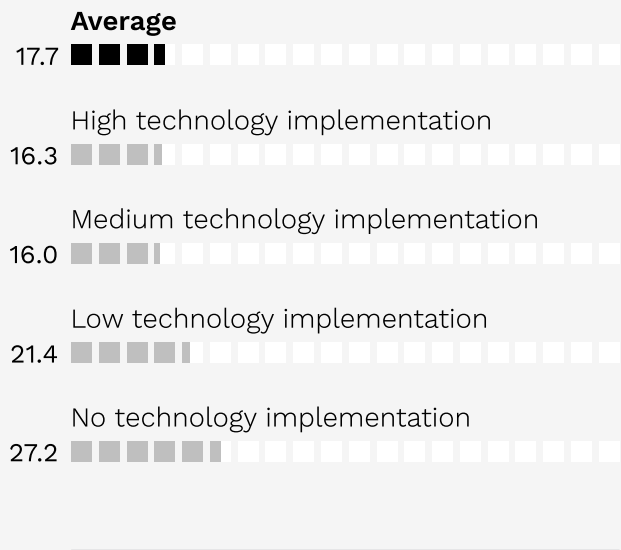
payments processes in a way that allows collections to be managed instantly.

Recent PYMNTS [data](#) found that firms with a high degree of automation integrated into their AR processes typically take 16 days to follow up on late payments, far less time than the 27 days it takes those with no automation in these processes.

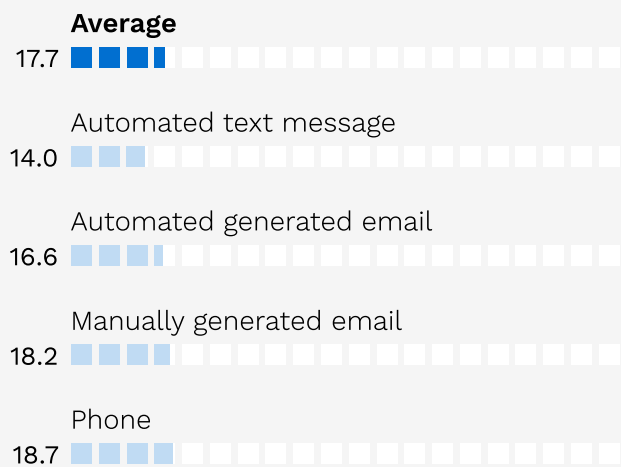
B2B firms of all stripes are also beginning to comprehend the importance of [accepting](#) credit card payments, which can help them flexibly adjust to the payment challenges they have encountered recently. Some B2B businesses have held out on accepting credit cards in attempt to avoid the modest fees they charge, but many are beginning to change their tune because doing so could cost them sales in the era of eCommerce. Credit card acceptance can [allow](#) buyers to access one of their preferred payment methods as well as help their businesses expand. Sellers, on the other hand, get a better handle on their cash flows by gaining faster access to their payments.

Cutting down on payments time frames can help inch small buyers' B2B experiences closer to the B2C-like interactions many are now expecting, allowing them to better compete. Failing to do so raises the potential for these companies to fall far behind other entities, especially as digital becomes the norm not only for consumer transactions but also for all types of commerce.

**FIGURE 1: AVERAGE TIME IT TAKES COMPANIES TO FOLLOW UP ON LATE PAYMENTS, BY DEGREE OF AUTOMATION**



Average number of days to follow up on overdue receivables, by payment reminder delivery method



Source: PYMNTS.com

# ABOUT

## PYMNTS.com

[PYMNTS.com](https://pymnts.com) is where the best minds and the best content meet on the web to learn about “What’s Next” in payments and commerce. Our interactive platform is reinventing the way companies in payments share relevant information about the initiatives that make news and shape the future of this dynamic sector. Our data and analytics team includes economists, data scientists and industry analysts who work with companies to measure and quantify the innovations at the cutting edge of this new world.



American Express is a globally integrated payments company, providing customers with access to products, insights and experiences that enrich lives and build business success. Learn more at [americanexpress.com](https://americanexpress.com), and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

Key links to products, services and corporate responsibility information: [charge and credit cards](#), [B2B supplier center](#), [business credit cards](#), [travel services](#), [gift cards](#), [prepaid cards](#), [merchant services](#), [Accertify](#), [InAuth](#), [corporate card](#), [business travel](#), and [corporate responsibility](#).

We are interested in your feedback on this report. If you have questions, comments or would like to subscribe to this report, please email us at [feedback@pymnts.com](mailto:feedback@pymnts.com).

# DISCLAIMER

The Optimizing SMB Payments Report may be updated periodically. While reasonable efforts are made to keep the content accurate and up to date, PYMNTS.COM: MAKES NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, REGARDING THE CORRECTNESS, ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS, ADEQUACY, OR RELIABILITY OF OR THE USE OF OR RESULTS THAT MAY BE GENERATED FROM THE USE OF THE INFORMATION OR THAT THE CONTENT WILL SATISFY YOUR REQUIREMENTS OR EXPECTATIONS. THE CONTENT IS PROVIDED "AS IS" AND ON AN "AS AVAILABLE" BASIS. YOU EXPRESSLY AGREE THAT YOUR USE OF THE CONTENT IS AT YOUR SOLE RISK. PYMNTS.COM SHALL HAVE NO LIABILITY FOR ANY INTERRUPTIONS IN THE CONTENT THAT IS PROVIDED AND DISCLAIMS ALL WARRANTIES WITH REGARD TO THE CONTENT, INCLUDING THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT AND TITLE. SOME JURISDICTIONS DO NOT ALLOW THE EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN WARRANTIES, AND, IN SUCH CASES, THE STATED EXCLUSIONS DO NOT APPLY. PYMNTS.COM RESERVES THE RIGHT AND SHOULD NOT BE LIABLE SHOULD IT EXERCISE ITS RIGHT TO MODIFY, INTERRUPT, OR DISCONTINUE THE AVAILABILITY OF THE CONTENT OR ANY COMPONENT OF IT WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.

PYMNTS.COM SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES WHATSOEVER, AND, IN PARTICULAR, SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY SPECIAL, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES, OR DAMAGES FOR LOST PROFITS, LOSS OF REVENUE, OR LOSS OF USE, ARISING OUT OF OR RELATED TO THE CONTENT, WHETHER SUCH DAMAGES ARISE IN CONTRACT, NEGLIGENCE, TORT, UNDER STATUTE, IN EQUITY, AT LAW, OR OTHERWISE, EVEN IF PYMNTS.COM HAS BEEN ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

SOME JURISDICTIONS DO NOT ALLOW FOR THE LIMITATION OR EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY FOR INCIDENTAL OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES, AND IN SUCH CASES SOME OF THE ABOVE LIMITATIONS DO NOT APPLY. THE ABOVE DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATION'S ARE PROVIDED BY PYMNTS.COM AND ITS PARENTS, AFFILIATED AND RELATED COMPANIES, CONTRACTORS, AND SPONSORS, AND EACH OF ITS RESPECTIVE DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, CONTENT COMPONENT PROVIDERS, LICENSORS, AND ADVISERS.

Components of the content original to and the compilation produced by PYMNTS.COM is the property of PYMNTS.COM and cannot be reproduced without its prior written permission.