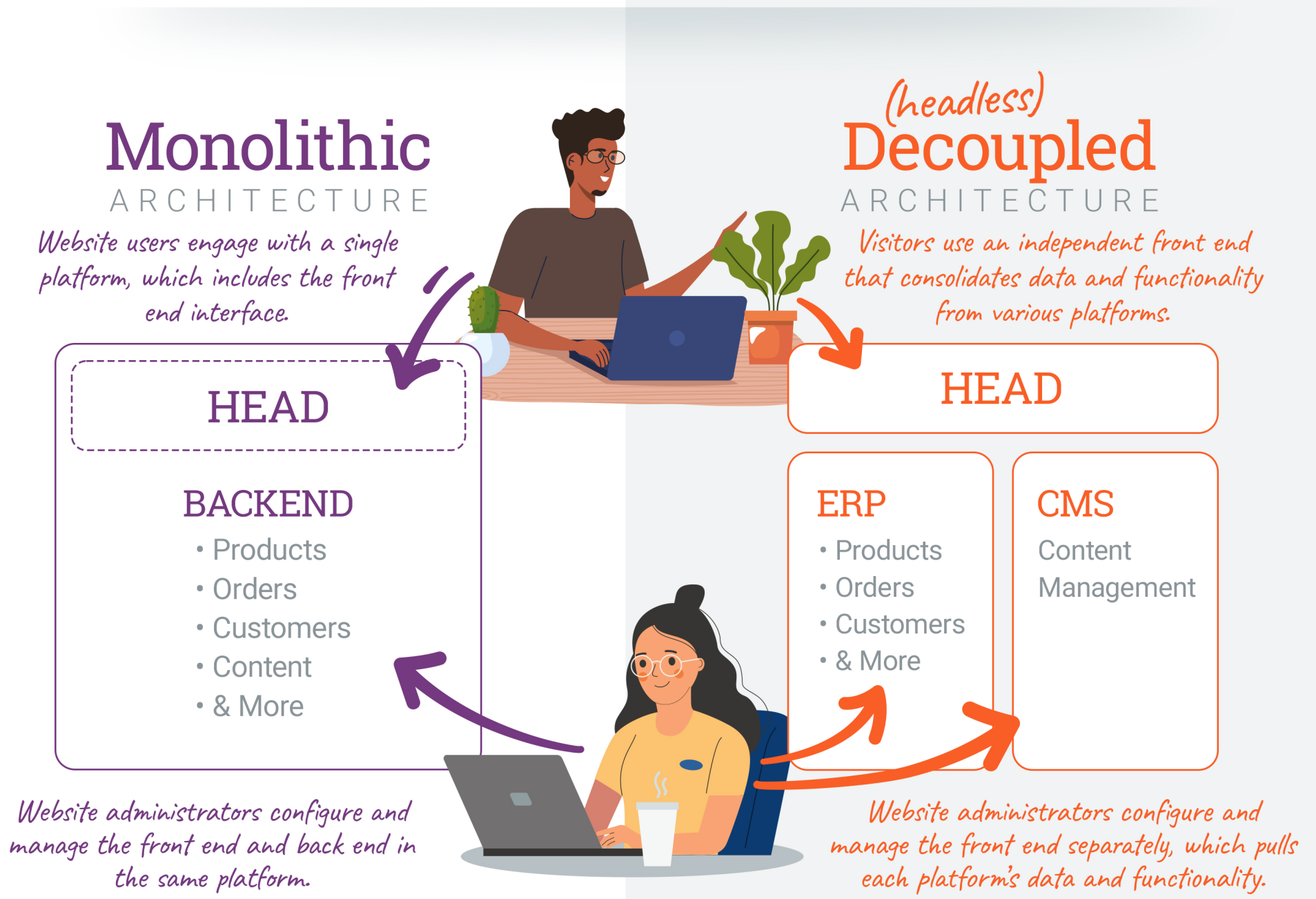


Monolithic or Headless?

Choosing the right architecture for your ecommerce website

What's a "head" anyway?

The **head** is the part of a website that the end-user interacts with. A **"headless"** setup doesn't mean there is no head; it refers to a type of architecture whereby the head is separate (or, more accurately, **decoupled**) from the back-end functionality (e.g., the add-to-cart function and checkout process). Separating the head from the functionality has many advantages.



When to use it

- > If a single platform has all the features you need.
- > If you are able to adapt your business operations to work within the configuration options of those features.
- > If cost or complexity is a concern for your solution.
- > If the system can scale and grow to meet your future needs.

Considerations

- > A monolithic system is built to be a jack-of-all-trades, and each function is often built to meet the minimum industry standard so that it can be added to a feature list for sales and marketing.
- > Customization can be slow, costly, or not possible.
- > A defect can take down the entire system.
- > Outgrowing a platform's capabilities means replacing the entire system.
- > Integrating other systems or adding new functionality can be difficult, if not impossible.

When to use it

- > If you want full control of your customer experience.
- > If you want to be able to leverage a number of best-in-class platforms that meet your specific business requirements.
- > If you need a future-proof, scalable and flexible setup that will allow you to swap, remove, or add any platform or service that you've outgrown.
- > If you need to connect to any of your legacy systems.
- > If website speed and performance are high priorities.
- > If you want to provide multiple front-end website instances sharing the same backend infrastructure.

Considerations

- > The investment and management may be greater than a basic monolithic setup.
- > Depending on the platforms being used, time to market can be slowed.
- > Depending on the number of platforms in your tech stack, there will be increased complexities in system management.

How the Head is Created in a decoupled setup

Product & Cart

Product details are pulled from the ecommerce platform.

The commerce platform also serves the cart and checkout functionality.

Inventory

Stock status or inventory quantity can be pulled directly from an ERP.

Reviews

Leverage a best-in-class review tool to handle customer ratings and reviews.

Content

Use a powerful Content Management System (CMS) to handle non-product related content.

This is a sample of how different systems can be used together, with a well-designed head that provides a seamless customer experience.