How To Choose a Composable DXP

Content

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Digital Transformation is a continuous process that requires constant change and innovation from all levels of an organization, but it is difficult when you lack the tools your team needs.

Choosing the right CMS may be a complex task, but it's necessary to keep up with the changing times. It can be even more challenging when you're using a suite CMS like Drupal or WordPress.

In this whitepaper, we take a deep dive into the composable architecture DXP, a new product that helps teams work together more efficiently by giving them access to the latest innovations in digital technology anytime they're needed.

What is a
Composable DXP?

According to Gartner, a composable DXP follows the principles of a composable business which is,"an organization that delivers business outcomes and adapts to the pace of business change through the assembly and combination (composition) of packaged business capabilities."

Today, most products marketed as digital experience platforms (DXPs) are monolithic in architecture. This means that they offer a tightly knit web of interconnected services that are built as a single unit. Monolithic platforms are usually hard to integrate with third-party software and slow to implement new software paradigms.

In contrast, composable DXPs are built on an interconnected web of independent services orchestrated from a CMS. Composable DXPs are API-based, enabling them to connect with other API-based software to enhance the DXP's core capabilities with other tools, building a best-of-breed tech stack.

A composable DXP has the role of an orchestra director. It acts as a customer and business-facing orchestrator and UI that connects multiple third-party software and turns the uncoordinated pieces into a complete suite without the reduced business agility of an actual suite.

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The Four Legs of
The Composable Approach

Composability goes beyond technology. It spans different parts of your business and processes in a way that can even be considered a mindset.

Let's take a closer look at composability from different angles.

Composable Architecture

The composable architecture combines a collection of small, autonomous services self-contained and working as a packaged business capability (PCB). Each PCB or microservice provides a separate feature to the DXP like a shopping cart, checkout option, or an ERP or DAM. The architecture enables the best-of-breed approach, a software stack building method that focuses on building a modular platform using the best product of each category.

Composable Content

When it comes to content, composability makes things faster and easier for every stakeholder involved. In a composable DXP, content works as lego blocks that content editors and marketers can mix and match to ensure that websites and digital experiences look as planned. Plus,, the architecture ensures that DXPs can create content once and publish it anywhere with ease and in real-time.

Composable Infrastructure

Composable infrastructure is another part of the composable architecture where resources such as cloud infrastructure, storage, and computing power are separated and treated as services, allowing enterprises to leverage the cloud provider of their choosing with the aim of reducing the time it takes them to deploy a new website or application.

Composable Mindset

At Zesty.io we believe that compostability goes beyond microservices. For us, it's a mindset that drives how we build our platform. The keyword here is mindset. Many companies have begun working towards being composable, but without a mindset, their efforts will fail. They won't have a platform whose APIs and interfaces are fully open and allow them to scale. Without the right platform, being composable isn't possible.

That being said, to ensure that the DXP you choose has a composable mindset, ask it about their roadmap for the following five years to find out where they're going and where they're coming from.

All in all, to be truly composable, a DXP needs to tick these four boxes or eventually, sooner than later, you'll realize that you bought a monolithic platform disguised as a composable DXP.

Why Choose a
Composable Platform

At their core, the three main components of a DXP are omnichannel content management and delivery, decoupled presentation, and granular personalization. If you look closely at all the analyst and vendor news, you'll see that there's a move toward modularity and composability. The trend won't likely change as DXPs are ditching the suite approach for a modular architecture with the hopes of bringing greater agility to both the business and development processes.

 Also, the emergence of Content-as-a-Service (CaaS) and Frontend-as-a-Service (FaaS) supported by the headless CMS architecture has driven the composable architecture in a more marketer-friendly direction. Similarly, the composable architecture is bringing massive gains in the UX departments as now interfaces and digital experiences can be assembled by non-technical business users. From that perspective, DXPs have the potential to create a composite platform capable of building unified experiences that don't need hand-holding from developers to work.

This latter aspect is something that we like about composability. By requiring less hand-holding from developers after implementation, a composable platform empowers non-technical people to build digital experiences, reducing over-reliance on IT teams and building a future of democratic software building.

Benefits of a
Composable DXP

Now that you know the 'why' behind the composable architecture, let's discuss the potential benefits of building a composable DXP on both the business and technology sides.

Business Benefits of Composable Architecture

The composable architecture brings organizational gains that go beyond agility.
Check them out.

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Flexibility

The market is constantly evolving to match the expectations of consumers. A composable DXP enables enterprises to build flexible platforms without fearing being locked in into a platform that no longer scales with them. The API-based nature of the composable DXP makes it superbly flexible, allowing it to connect with other platforms to deliver content across different touchpoints without fearing becoming entrapped in a single platform.

Better Understanding of Your Audience

A composable DXP aids enterprises in integrating with marketing and analytics third-party tools, enabling you to create reports from every channel and aspect of your operations. This helps you understand how your customers interact with your digital experiences so that you can adapt to their needs.

Customer-centric

One of the better things about composability is that it enables enterprises to put customers first. Instead of forcing users to follow your customer journey, the composable architecture enables a centralized hub where you can fulfill the life-long dream of writing once and delivering content everywhere for truly customer-centric experiences.

Omnichannel Content Delivery

The ability to deliver different digital experiences to customers using different devices is no longer a must-have for forward-thinking companies. Gone are the days of companies only delivering content to a website and hoping for the best. Nowadays, cutting-edge businesses need to reach people where they are, be it an IoT device, a smartwatch, or even in their vehicles.

Technology Benefits of Composable Architecture

Technology freedom

If there's one drawback of the monolithic architecture it is that once you choose a platform, you're married to the tech stack of that particular DXP and you can't choose other third parties. A composable DXP enables you to build using the technologies, frameworks, and libraries you want to build digital experiences the way your company knows best.

Best-of-breed architecture

The best-of-breed architecture is a subset of the technology freedom composability brings. The best-of-breed or modular architecture refers to building technology of many different lego blocks that you can swap around to build a completely tailored platform.

Future-proof

Enterprises following a composable approach will be better suited than those who don't to face the changing demands of both consumers. Composability enables companies to select new technologies and tools and implement them on the go, never losing agility.

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First Considerations when Choosing a Composable DXP

Ask yourself: Is a composable DXP right for me?

This is fundamental. The truth is that while every enterprise can benefit from becoming composable, not every company needs or is prepared to be composable. To reap the benefits of composability, the company has to undergo a digital transformation and has to adopt an agile mindset and practices. Otherwise, the increased agility of the composable architecture won't bring gains.

Identify your business goals:

When thinking of the right DXP, you need to have a clear idea of what are the goals behind that choice. Without clear business goals, you risk losing sight of what you want to accomplish with this particular platform and will end up choosing one that doesn't support your business case.

Identify the marketing channels that will support those goals:

While a composable DXP enables you to publish content to a myriad of digital channels and devices, it's true that not every channel works for every company. By identifying the marketing channels that really move the needle, enterprises ensure that the digital experiences they create reach the right audience.

Design your dream technology stack:

This is one of the best parts of the process. Here you should get together with the rest of the stakeholders and create a tech stack that supports your operations, from marketing to sales to personalization to the frontend frameworks and libraries that you will use to power your website and apps.

Your Roadmap to a Composable Future

Become digitally agile:

To reap the benefits of the composable DXP, your company needs to transform itself. Undergoing a digital transformation ensures that the company has not only the muscle but also the framework to be able to implement a composable solution.

Create a list of DXP vendors and platforms:

Once you've designed your dream stack, it's time to start listing vendors and platforms. Write a list of maximum three vendors per category and send an RFP to assess their interest in helping you.

Book product demos:

By now, you should have a handful of interested vendors ready to give you a demo. Start booking them and during the meeting ask questions related to your particular use case and try to steer the demo toward actionable features that could support your enterprise.

Ask the DXP vendor for relevant case studies:

Maybe you found the right composable platform, but if it doesn't have relevant case studies where they have supported a company the shape and size of yours, you risk choosing a platform that looks good on paper and on a demo only to find out that it's not gold everything that shines.

Create an implementation timeline:

Enterprises have limited time to make decisions and enterprise executives often have a shorter time span. An implementation timeline ensures that every person in the company knows how much time they have to implement the DXP and their responsibilities in making that possible.

Close the deal:

Now that you've ironed out the details, it's time to close the deal and start the migration and implementation process. If you're going from a monolith to a composable DXP your adventure is only starting, but if you choose the right platform, it should be easy and intuitive to go from your old CMS to your new DXP.

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Going from Monolithic to Composable With Zesty.io

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