

## ***Introduction***

INTERSHOP wants to contribute to your awareness about the numerous eCommerce solutions on the market today. We have compiled a competitive analysis and comparison outlining our interpretation of the features and functionality of solutions considered to be competing in the same arena as INTERSHOP. The information presented here can also be extracted from the respective websites and solution evaluations, however INTERSHOP has condensed the data to save you time in researching each product on an individual basis.

**The following companies and their products are reviewed in this document:**

- Mercantec [[SoftCart](#)]
- iCat [[eCommerce Suite](#)]
- OpenMarket [[LiveCommerce](#)]
- Open Market [[ShopSite TX](#)]
- Microsoft [[Site Server, Commerce Edition](#)]
- BroadVision [[One-to-One Commerce](#)]
- IBM [[Net.Commerce Hosting Server](#)]
- Oracle [[Internet Commerce Server](#)]
- Pandesic [[E-Business Solution](#)]

## ***Competitive Analysis Summaries***

### **Mercantec --- SoftCart**

Mercantec is considered as the industry's leading low-end multi-host solution but it just only provides a component of a full functional eCommerce solution - the shopping cart. The companies focuses on front-end commerce processing and integration without getting involved in the mire of distributed object platforms, catalog publishing tools and dynamic page rendering.

This product is oriented toward adding shopping cart functionality (storefront selection and check-out) to sites where product catalogs have already been published in static or dynamic form by another tool.

Mercantec is often criticized for being shelfware because it requires frequent scripting and customization and it offers minimal cataloging functionality. Mercantec is working closely with Allaire's Cold Fusion to flesh out greater functionality but such an integrated product is not yet available.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Only a way to incrementally add order taking/payment processing to existing electronic catalog
2. Requires another tool to populate the catalog
3. Does not provide users with real-time, distributed transaction processing environment
4. No business user interface built-in; CGI interface only
5. No analysis reports built-in; no remote administration; no merchandising capabilities; weak database integration; does not apply dynamic page generation

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**iCat --- E-Commerce Suite**


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Recently bought by Intel, it seems that the company couldn't justify its strategic within the investor community. iCat's move into the commerce hosting market as a service provider not a product provider turned out to be a bad decision because the market for these kind of service was too demanding and sophisticated. That's why iCat couldn't keep up with competitors such as Yahoo. So far iCat's claims to have over 1,000 stores on the Internet built with its products but this lags behind the deployment of Yahoo stores (1,500 -2,000) and the license sold by INTERSHOP (8,500).

The product architecture is CSP-insufficient and iCat risks losing its developer base. The lack of technical grace and odd programming requirements will be a barrier to a forceful CSP entry.

The bottom line: iCat offers CSPs a pathetic technology strategy for effectively promoting and managing a merchant services business. The majority of the company's stronger features are supplied by partners and the true degree of integration is suspect.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. the catalog is limited to only a few product variations and options per SKU
2. iCat's decision support is generally weak; the reports are poor, they are not integrated to aid with promotional activity
3. doesn't support any business-to-business functions
4. iCat has some fundamental back-up dilemmas
5. The iCat scripting support is weak, proprietary, and contrary to the market's scarce programming talent - the software's biggest limitation
6. their proprietary language CARBO may not perform well for high-traffic sites
7. no inventory management built-in; no customer service built-in; weak database support (only via ODBC)

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**Microsoft --- Site Server, Commerce Edition**


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Microsoft SiteServer and IIS offer the essential ingredients for ISVs to develop Internet commerce applications. The essential elements are all strung together with Active Server Pages and COM.

Alone, the basic elements of the Microsoft solution are not the best of their class. But when combined, the Microsoft components from their ad server, session management, indexing, targeting, order processing pipeline, commerce interchange pipeline, operating system, web server, and analysis tools are good.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Few pre-designed templates are offered to assist merchants with their storefront design and maintenance.
2. The Microsoft staging does not offer a strong CSP solution on either the client or the server side.
3. Basic Wizards and other merchant tools are absent from Site Server.
4. Site Server does not support OpenMarket Secure Link and only supports basic CyberCash payment options.
5. No configurator, rules-based pricing, or shipping status are offered by Site Server to help automate typical business-to-business sales automation.
6. The NT/COM/Site Server security model is poor because of underlying problems with COM and its authentication.
7. No interface is provided for CSPs to run merchant back-ups and merchant can not

administer their own store back-ups
8. Site Server is available on NT only and heavily relies on MS's Web server and databases

**BroadVision --- One-to-One Commerce**

BroadVision is more and more pursuing different markets than INTERSHOP such as vertical markets, financial companies. It's approach of one-to-one marketing, relationship management and eCommerce clearly distinguish this company from other vendors in the market and contributes to their differentiation to companies such as InterWorld, Open Market, etc.

One-to-One Commerce is an application provided by BroadVision that was written on top of their One-to-One Server platform and is one instantiation of using their unique user profiling and content management technology.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Very high costs of total ownership (installation, customization, etc.) - high barriers of entry
2. Suits more the requirements of vertical markets like financial services which have projects of such scale
3. Requires a high amount of customization and programming with costs for developer and/or systems integrators
4. Doesn't provide an hosted environment for Commerce Service Providers (CSP)

**IBM --- Net.Commerce Hosting Server**

Currently IBM's Net.Commerce is our toughest competitor in the enterprise (Pro version by IBM) and in the hosting market (Hosting server by IBM). With its global advertising campaign promoting several reference customers such REI, Macy's, and Nordstrom, IBM is building a huge mind share with in the industry. We assume a high awareness of IBM's products in the market and expect therefore more fights with IBM for eCommerce customers.

So far IBM had less success to penetrate the eCommerce software market. With 1,000 licenses sold, it is more or less playing in the lower middlefield in terms of deployed on-line stores. According to INTERSHOP internal source, INTERSHOP has over 8,000 licenses sold, which is a clearly sign of the acceptance and success in the market.

Net.Commerce is a suite of tools for building, maintaining, and deploying demand-side commercial applications. It is sold as a stand-alone product with connectivity to key IBM transactional middleware such as IBM's Transaction Server (formerly CICS), MQ Series, and major ERP systems.

Net.Commerce lacks many of the out-of-the -box storefront management features of Intershop or iCat. But more important for large sites, Net.Commerce is tool-oriented, and requires IS and system integrators to combine it with other transactional software and demand-side applications to build an EC solution.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Net.Commerce offers limited templates for rapid storefront creation and management
2. It fails miserably in the decision support arena - limited sales/traffic reporting and analysis tools.
3. Despite the avatars and metadata, the site personalization and targeting is extremely limited.
4. With on over-reliance on the market-absent SET, the Net.Commerce payment

options are weak also
5. Database support remains limited; supports IBM's DB2 right out of the box, but ODBC support is restricted to Oracle
6. International tax is not supported by Net.Commerce.
7. Net.Commerce will not run on Apache, O'Riley, or Microsoft Web servers.

**OpenMarket --- LiveCommerce**

OpenMarket is clearly positioning the solution as a complete enterprise application with the newest release of LiveCommerce (January 19<sup>th</sup> '99). New features such as ERP Integration APIs and the Sun Solaris availability could help OpenMarket to enter the enterprise market and gain its piece of the cake.

The majority of the storefront management tools and features of the OpenMarket product line are supported by LiveCommerce. However, Live Commerce is not intended for deployment by CSPs nor to small and medium sized merchants in multi-hosted configurations. Rather, it is a sales and marketing automation solution that accompanies OM-Transact implemented as a Business to Business, and/ or singular, targeted solution for larger businesses that are selling office supplies and ORM-type purchases.

Despite the success of OpenMarket's direct sales force, OpenMarket customers (Large Telcos and ISPs) have had extreme difficulty deploying merchant solutions due to hard-to-use and often non-existent merchant tools that present a barrier to deployment as well as high support costs.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Offers only minimal dynamic customer interaction
2. Search capabilities, simple text and parametric, are limited for smaller merchants.
3. Merchant storefront solutions do not adequately support clustered server farms or database servers and may difficult for ISOs to extend the benefits of db-driven site to smaller companies at an acceptable price point.
4. OpenMarket's products do not sufficiently integrate merchant storefront processes and will have difficulty operating in a multi-hosted environment.
5. OpenMarket's products do not sufficiently integrate merchant storefront behavioral data and sales data for optimized merchant decision support and marketing.
6. Does not support CyberCash and many other popular payment "plug-ins".
7. Storefront back-up is insufficient
8. Live Commerce is only available on NT
9. Expensive, doesn't provide the full scope of functionality

**OpenMarket --- Shop Site TX**

In October '99 OpenMarket announced its newest version of ShopSite, ShopSite TX, a solution which combines quick, easy, and inexpensive storefront creation with the Internet commerce infrastructure of Open Market's Transact. The main target market for this product are ISPs or Telcos who are already using OM's Transact Server as foundation for the eCommerce systems.

Open Market's ShopSite has still a weak market position but it might increase its market share in the low-end market through OpenMarket's sales and partner channels. According to Dataquest, OpenMarket already sold 8,500 licenses to merchants through ISPs.

Although Open Market's ShopSite can support thousands of SKUs, the product is extremely low-end. It has virtually no targeting capabilities, minimal systems integration, limited order processing, payment, and CSP configuration options.

**Continued: OpenMarket**

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. No ODBC compatibility for integration with existing databases; internal proprietary for storing product information
2. Doesn't provide support for most of the popular payment processing solution like CyberCash
3. Unlike many other catalog servers, ShopSite Pro doesn't generate the web pages on the fly - doesn't support dynamic web page generation.
4. Site analysis and reporting tools are limited; doesn't provide catalog search; no sophisticated marketing and merchandising tools available
5. Poor overall scalability; allows only a limited number of products in the database; supports only Apache and Netscape as web server

**Oracle --- Internet Commerce Server**

Oracle's Internet Commerce Server is loosing importance in the market. The company hasn't released any new product updates for months. Its importance for eCommerce is on back-end where Oracle is the major provider of database for eCommerce systems.

Oracle's Internet Commerce Server (ICS) delivers most of the core features for demand-side commerce application platforms. Oracle will leverage core database technology, a new object framework (the Oracle Network Computing Architecture), and its strong professional services organization to serve high-end commercial web sites.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Oracle's ICS relies exclusively on the Oracle database.
2. ICS lacks Wizards and other features to ease the catalog creation and design.
3. Personalization and promotional features for merchants have also been absent from the product.
4. Because of Oracle's Cartridge model for the providing of specific features, it requires the purchase of additional third-party solutions for tax and shipping calculation and payment processing.
5. Very few merchant templates come with ICS.
6. ICS does not support any ASP or other easy-to-use, Microsoft-based Web development tools.

**Pandesic --- E-Business Solution**

On the January 18<sup>th</sup> '99 Pandesic announced the availability of Version 3.0 of Pandesic's eBusiness Solution. New features include use of Microsoft's ASP technology, Developer Kit for third-party integration, new marketing and merchandising tools, customer service application, etc. Some of the new customers mentioned are GrocerOnline, DVD Express, and Wild Oats.

Although the solution (hardware, software, services) comes at a reasonable price and good deployment time, it is still lacking behind other vendors in terms of deployment. So far Pandesic cannot name any big brand who was willing to go with their eCommerce solution. Most of the stores deployed are smaller ones that, in my opinion, only have a bad shopping experience.

Short of inventory management and potentially irrelevant accounting system resources via SAP, the Pandesic solution is still in its infancy. It lacks genuine storefront management tools, personalization, basic cataloging functionality, and systems integration.

The market reality would suggest that the low end neither demands, nor requires, complete integration with high-end systems. Further, the architecture will not suit larger companies that often have a parallel ERP, accounting, and inventory system (requiring custom integration, not a shrink-wrapped applications) and it may not scale well in CSP configurations in order to meet their pricing and support requirements.

<b>Product Shortcomings</b>
1. Essential store templates are dramatically lacking from the solution.
2. Lop-based scripting and other sophisticated targeting capabilities are absent from the product.
3. Pandesic does not allow ISPs to cross-promote merchant environments
4. Decision support is restricted to basic Web server log file decision support.
5. Order processing relies almost exclusively on CyberCash.
6. No complex pricing, authorization can be processed with the product
7. The Pandesic caching is limited and offers no interface to manage cache.
8. Programmatic customization is limited with the product.
9. Pandesic is a Microsoft-only solution.

Competitive Comparison

Rating: + = Key strength | ✓ = Feature available | N = Feature not available | W = Key weakness

Company Product	Intershop Intershop Hosting Edition	Mercantec SoftCart	iCat E-Commerce Suite	Open Market Shop Site TX	Microsoft SiteServer, Commerce Edition	BroadVision One-to-One Commerce	IBM Net.Commerce Hosting Server	OpenMarket LiveCommerce	Oracle Internet Commerce Server	Pandestic EBusiness Solution
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Product version	3.0	3.2	3.1	1.0	3.0	2.1	3.1	1.0	1.1	2.1
Pricing	\$12,500	\$1,500	\$9,999	\$5,000	\$4,609	\$125,000	\$12,499	\$45,000	\$20,000	\$25,000
<b>CPU, OS, Remote Admin<sup>1</sup></b>										
Windows NT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Solaris	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
HP/UX	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	N	N	N	N
AIX	✓	N	N	N	N	N	✓	N	N	N
SGI IRIX	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	N	N	N	N
Digital UNIX	✓	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Remote Administration for storefront	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Browser-based administration	✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
Requires heavy programming	N	✓	W	N	W	✓	W	✓		✓
Supports standard languages like Java, Perl, and ASP	✓	N	W	✓	✓	✓	W	W	✓	✓
Proprietary Scripting Language <sup>2</sup>	N	N	W	N	N	N	W	W	N	N
<b>Payment Service Support</b>										
Globeset support	✓	✓	N	N	N	N	N		N	N
Worldpay support	✓	✓	N	N	N	N	N		N	N
CyberCash	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Verifone vPOS	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	N		✓	N
CyberSource	✓	N	N	N	N	✓	N		N	N
ICVerify	✓	✓	N	N	N	N	N		N	N
<b>Tax Capabilities</b>										
User Defined Tax Matrix	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	4	Requires OpenMarket's Transact server <sup>3</sup>	W	✓
Tax Exemptions Permitted	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	✓		N	✓
Integration with Third-Party Tax Tables	✓	W	✓	W	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Security</b>										
Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
SET protocol support	✓	✓	N	N	N	✓	✓		N	N

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<b>Security (Cont.)</b>										
S-HTTP support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supports Kline	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Supports Payline/Brokat	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Supports OpenMarket	+	N	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>Database Management</b>										
Database server software included	+	W	✓ <sub>5</sub>	✓	W	+	✓	W	+	✓
Native drivers for Sybase/Oracle/Informix	+	W	W	W	W	✓	W	W	✓	W
ODBC support	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓
Import database files	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Export database files	✓	N	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supports SQL	✓	W	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
Administration via web browser	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
<b>Web Publishing</b>										
Web server software included	N	N	N	N	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓
Supports third-party web servers	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	W <sub>7</sub>	✓	✓	W
Store Design Wizard	+	W	W	W	✓	W	✓	W	W	W
Catalog Creation Wizard	+	W	W	W	✓	W	✓	W	W	W
Support for HTML frames, tables, template language extension	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WYSIWYG HTML design	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Incorporate text, graphics, audio, video and PDF support files	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
View store/catalog hierarchy	N	N	✓	N	✓	N	N	N	N	N
Support for GIF and JPG graphic files	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dynamic page generation <sup>8</sup>	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caching	+			✓			✓			
Server Side Scripting for developer	✓	N	N	N	✓	✓	N	N	N	N
Number of storefront functionality templates <sup>9</sup>	70	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of storefront design templates <sup>10</sup>	100	0	20	6	4	✓	✓	N	N	N
<b>Shopping aids</b>										
Virtual shopping cart	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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Shopping aids (Cont.)										
Email/Fax order verification for customer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Requires OM Transact	✓	✓
Email/Fax order verification for merchant	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Price calculator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Regional sales tax calculator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W <sup>11</sup>	✓
Shipping cost calculator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		W <sup>12</sup>	✓
<b>Business Management</b>										
Mall/storefront/catalog creation	+	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	W
Invoices	✓	W	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
Orders	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
Shipment tracking	✓	W	W	W	✓	✓	W	W	W	✓
Purchasing manager	+	W	W	W	W	N	W	W	W	W
Inventory manager	+	W	W	W	W	N	W	W	W	+
Customer manager	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	+	W	W	✓	W
Mall administrator	+	W	W	W	✓	W	✓	W	W	W
Statistics & Preferences manager	+	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
<b>Shipping Calculations</b>										
Factor-based calculation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Requires OM Transact	W	✓
Calculation based on weight	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		N	N
Calculation based on quantity	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓		N	N
Separate customer and shipping address	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Inventory Manager</b>										
Automatic Inventory Adjustments	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+
Specify Minimum Inventory Level	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	+
Automatic Stock-Order Suggestions	+	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>Sales Management</b>										
User-created promotions	+	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Dynamic promotions (automated based on database information)	✓	N	N	N	✓	✓	N	N	N	N
Time/promotion-based discounts	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	N	N	N	✓
Sales reports (static/customizable)	+	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓
Report on Storefront Processes	+	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Activity since Last Log-On	+	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	✓
Support for third-party reporting tools	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	W

**Rating:** + = Key strength | ✓ = Feature available | N = Feature not available | W = Key weakness

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Miscellaneous features										
Distribute via CD-ROM	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
Documentation, Help, Tutorial	✓	W	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Free trial available	✓	✓	N	N	✓	N	N	N	N	N
Supports Java, ActiveX, Perl, Visual Basic, and CGI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multilingual support <sup>13</sup>	+	W	W	W	W	✓	W	W	W	W
Links to legacy accounting systems	✓	✓	✓	W	✓	+	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integration with billing systems	✓	N	N	N	✓	+	N	✓	N	✓

<sup>1</sup> INTERSHOP 3.0 is the only solution what supports the broadest range of operating systems.  
<sup>2</sup> Proprietary Language: Only iCat and OpenMarket are using a proprietary language for their e-Commerce solution which requires the acquirement of skills in this language.  
<sup>3</sup> OpenMarket's LiveCommerce: To leverage the full e-Commerce functionality of OpenMarket's LiveCommerce customer has to deploy OpenMarket's Transact  
<sup>4</sup> Doesn't support international tax.  
<sup>5</sup> iCat comes with a proprietary database for storage of product information which requires knowledge in the use of this database.  
<sup>6</sup> ODBC support only for Oracle databases  
<sup>7</sup> supports only Netscape, Lotus and IBM web server  
<sup>8</sup> Hybrid HTML: Only INTERSHOP's solution provides this feature which allows the separation between sites which can be static and sites which has to be dynamic.  
<sup>9</sup> Used checks if the number are not known  
<sup>10</sup> Used checks if the number are not known  
<sup>11</sup> Oracle's Internet Commerce Server requires the purchase of additional cartridges to leverage the full functionality for e-Commerce, especially for tax and shipping calculations.  
<sup>12</sup> Oracle's Internet Commerce Server requires the purchase of additional cartridges to leverage the full functionality for e-Commerce, especially for tax and shipping calculations.  
<sup>13</sup> Only INTERSHOP 3 supports more than one language. It exactly offers versions in German, English, Norwegian, and French. There are also versions in Spanish and Japanese under development.

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