



Winning Back Parts Revenue in the Age of Real-Time Commerce

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Sana Commerce and
Copperberg Whitepaper

About Sana

Sana Commerce is built on a simple conviction: B2B commerce should strengthen relationships, not stand in the way of them. In manufacturing, the distance between what you know and what your buyer sees has often been too wide. We are closing that gap by creating a new future of connected commerce.

We believe that when your business expertise and your customer's experience work in total sync, commerce becomes a conversation rather than a manual task. It's about more than just moving transactions online; it's about making the buyer-seller connection tangible and effortless. By removing the friction that slows you down, we help you focus on the trust and reliability that actually drive your business forward.

About Copperberg

Copperberg is an expert original content creation company specialising in the manufacturing sector.

With years of experience, we have cultivated a robust global business network, supported by continuous research and relationships with key stakeholders in the manufacturing industry. Our reputation for reliability and success is built on delivering outstanding platforms that provide key insights into industry challenges, future trends, and market developments. Our business platforms serve as catalysts for growth and global relationship-building within the industry.

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Executive Summary & Action Plan

This white paper explores how manufacturers and service leaders can turn challenges into a competitive advantage by:

01

Winning back revenue lost to third-party and grey market sellers.

02

Building stronger customer relationships through accurate, reliable data across the buying journey.

03

Delivering a modern, self-service buying experience that matches how customers want to work.

Introduction

A Shifting Aftermarket Landscape

The aftermarket has sustained manufacturers for many years. It's the dependable part of the business, steady, repeatable, and often more resilient than new equipment sales. Now, that stability is out of balance as a new generation of B2B buyers is reshaping how parts are found, evaluated, and purchased. According to recent research, 71% of today's industrial buyers are Millennials or Gen Z, and nearly three-quarters prefer to order online through a supplier's website or portal.

They expect the same seamlessness and speed in their professional purchases that they experience in their personal lives, with real-time stock visibility, accurate delivery dates, and straightforward self-service tools. At the same time, grey market competition is growing. Independent resellers and online distributors are stepping in where OEMs fall short, offering faster access to parts and simpler digital experiences. When buyers can't find what they need or trust the information they see, they don't wait. They look elsewhere.

These changes are here to stay. Buyers now prioritize responsiveness, accuracy, and digital convenience. For manufacturers, this means that product knowledge and personal relationships are no longer enough on their own. Providing a fast, transparent, and reliable digital experience is equally important.

With real-time data and ERP-integrated systems, manufacturers can close the information gap that drives customers away, and transform the aftermarket from a reactive sales channel into a proactive source of growth.



Independent resellers and online distributors are stepping in where OEMs fall short, offering faster access to parts and simpler digital experiences.





Create the future of
connected commerce

01

The Grey Market Wake-Up Call, And Why It's a Solvable Problem

Chapter 01

Every year, OEMs lose a significant share of their parts revenue to unauthorized resellers and third-party distributors. The grey market erodes profit margins, but it also impacts buyers, who often struggle to find accurate product information or reliable delivery from any source.

The Cost of Off-Channel Buying

Each time a customer buys outside the official network, the manufacturer loses visibility into product performance, parts demand, and the long-term service history of its equipment.

Meanwhile, buyers risk delays, incorrect parts, or incompatible solutions. Unauthorized sellers may also compromise part quality or shorten equipment lifespan, whereas OEM portals ensure authentic, verified components that protect performance and longevity.

Customers turn to alternative sources when the OEM does not have a web

store/customer portal or if the OEM's system is inconsistent regarding stock availability or pricing, or part compatibility is difficult to verify. Once that buyer loses confidence, it is easy for third-party resellers to become the default.

According to the B2B Buyer Report 2025, 73% of buyers now prefer to order online, and many will switch suppliers if the digital experience falls short. When an OEM cannot provide quick, reliable information, it creates an opening that competitors and grey market sellers are more than ready to fill.

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Every year, OEMs lose a significant share of their parts revenue to unauthorized resellers and third-party distributors.

The Root Causes

Several underlying factors continue to feed this problem for both buyers and OEMs.

01

Fragmented processes

Too many manufacturers still rely on email-based quoting, manual order entry, and other legacy workflows that slow the process down. Customers have to spend extra time double-checking information, which can often lead to errors and revenue loss for the manufacturer.

02

Disconnected systems

Key information often exists in separate silos. ERP, CRM, PIM, and data from other tools and platforms don't update in real time, leading to discrepancies in pricing, inventory, and lead times. The moment a buyer spots conflicting data, confidence takes a hit.

03

Outdated digital experiences

Many OEM web stores attempt to support complex parts identification, but the execution is challenging. Incomplete search logic, poorly structured product data, and unclear or inconsistent pricing often leave buyers frustrated and more willing to turn to third-party alternatives.



Customers lose trust. And in B2B, trust is everything. It is built through accuracy, consistency, and follow-through. Once a buyer doubts the delivery promise or stock information, the manufacturer is no longer their first call.

People want the right part, the right price, from a source they trust, because every order is an investment in uptime.



Confidence Over Speed

While resellers may offer alternative pricing and delivery times, and while manufacturers can gain a competitive edge by speeding up order processing, the real customer driver is confidence. B2B buyers care most about getting the right part, at the right price, from a source they can trust. When customers place an order, they are investing in uptime. A late or incorrect shipment can mean hours of lost production and reputational risk for the team responsible. Buyers invest in reliability, and they need assurance that the part will work and arrive as promised.

When an OEM's digital channel feels slow, unreliable, or non-functional, buyers look elsewhere out of necessity. Yet, OEMs that provide accurate, real-time information about availability, pricing, and compatibility can restore trust. Buyers can order confidently, knowing their choice is correct and supported. In turn, OEMs benefit from fewer returns, more repeat business, and stronger customer relationships.

A Solvable Problem

Unlike many market shifts, this one is entirely reversible. OEMs already have the most critical assets buyers value, including expert product knowledge, strong customer relationships, and reliable data stored in their ERP systems. The challenge is connecting these assets in real time and making them visible to the buyer.

When an OEM's online experience reflects the same data that drives their ERP (pricing, inventory, lead times), trust naturally returns. Customers stop

second-guessing, order confidence rises, and loyalty begins to rebuild itself with every accurate transaction.

The grey market is not an unstoppable force. Rather, it is a symptom of digital gaps that can be closed. Buyers reward the trustworthy suppliers. By unifying systems, removing friction, and giving buyers the accurate information they need, manufacturers can prevent revenue leakage and create a stronger, more reliable aftermarket business.

73%

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02

The B2B Buyer Has Changed And Their Expectations Are Non-Negotiable

Chapter 02

The new generation of B2B buyers dominating the industrial marketplace has distinct digital expectations. With 71% being Millennials or Gen Z, they've grown up with instant information and effortless online purchasing, and they see no reason why ordering parts for multimillion-dollar equipment should be any harder than ordering from a consumer retailer.



Digital-first service and procurement buyers demand fast, reliable, and transparent self-service, because every minute counts.

The New Buyer Reality

Today's service and procurement professionals are digital-first decision makers. They are technical, data-literate, and impatient with inefficiency. Above all, they value speed, reliability, and transparency. They expect:

Real-time visibility

Up-to-the-minute stock levels, accurate pricing, and confirmed delivery timelines, all before an order is placed.

Personalized experiences

Catalogs and recommendations that reflect their installed base, service contracts, and purchasing history.

Frictionless self-service

The ability to identify, configure, and buy parts easily, without losing the complexity or accuracy required in

B2B transactions. For these buyers, time is a valuable asset. When a production line stops, every minute counts. The digital experience must reflect that urgency, not through product selling, but by offering clear information and confidence at every click.

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Research shows that most B2B buyers feel frustrated when ordering online, and many are willing to switch suppliers for a better experience.

The Experience Gap

Despite heavy investment in e-commerce, many manufacturers are still falling short of these expectations. The data shows that 85% of B2B buyers report frustration when ordering online, and 75% say they would switch suppliers for a better experience. Too many portals are little more than digitized versions of slow, disjointed, and error-prone manual processes.

Common pain points include

- 01 Search tools that fail to surface the correct part numbers.

- 02 Inconsistent pricing between quotes, portals, and invoices.

- 03 Delivery estimates that are generic or outdated.

- 04 Limited support when something goes wrong.

Each of these issues chips away at trust because the digital experience has become the new measure of credibility. Buyers now compare OEM web stores not to other manufacturers, but to the best consumer-grade experiences available. They expect intuitive navigation, real-time precision, and the ability to manage their orders independently.

By connecting their web store directly to ERP, manufacturers get real-time visibility that shapes everything from pricing and delivery timelines to logistics and supply.



Closing the Gap

When manufacturers connect their web stores directly to ERP systems, accurate inventory, pricing, and delivery information becomes visible in real time. This transforms the experience for both buyers and OEMs, creating a sense of trust and clarity at every step in the customer journey.

Buyers Experience

01 Confidence in every order

They feel certain that they are selecting the right part, at the correct price, from a trusted source. Mistakes, backorders, and conflicting information become less of a concern.

02 Clarity and transparency

Real-time visibility into stock levels and delivery timelines helps buyers plan maintenance and operations with more certainty.

03 Ease of use without compromise

Guided search tools and machine-specific catalogs allow buyers to self-serve efficiently while still feeling in control of accuracy and compatibility.

Manufacturers Experience

01 Stronger customer relationships

When buyers feel assured and informed, trust deepens, reducing reliance on third-party sellers and encouraging repeat business.

02 Operational efficiency & predictability

Fewer errors and support requests free internal teams to focus on proactive service or strategic growth initiatives.

03 Revenue growth through smarter engagement

It's easier for buyers to find & purchase the right part naturally increases upsell and cross-sell opportunities, while shortening sales cycles.

Key
Takeaways

85%

85% of B2B buyers report frustration when ordering online.

75%

75% say they would switch suppliers for a better experience.



Real-time data and connected systems are fundamental for a buying experience that feels effortless, reliable, and trusted.



03

Real-Time Commerce, The Foundation for Winning Back Revenue

Chapter 03

Disconnected systems impact both speed and trust. When buyers see conflicting prices, outdated inventory, or unclear delivery timelines, they are forced to question the reliability of the information and, by extension, the OEM behind it.

Modern aftermarket portals address this by connecting ERP, CRM, PIM, and other systems in real time, ensuring that the data stays aligned across every touchpoint. OEM self-service portals deliver this real-time data directly to buyers, providing trustworthy product information and a reliable digital experience that reinforces confidence.

From Transactional to Trust-Based

Real-time commerce changes the dynamic between OEMs and buyers. Instead of reacting to errors or spending too much time reconciling mismatched information, both sides operate from a shared source of truth.

When buyers trust what they see, they no longer need to double-check data, call for confirmation, and second-guess their decisions. Their confidence drives loyalty.



Real-time commerce changes the dynamic between OEMs and buyers.

Why Real-Time Works

The benefits of a fully connected architecture are immediate and measurable:

01 Assured decisions

Buyers know they are choosing the right part, for the right machine, at the right price, reducing the uncertainty that slows down mission-critical work.

02 Transparent insights

Real-time availability and delivery timelines give buyers clarity to plan jobs, schedule maintenance, and manage downtime efficiently.

03 Simplified complexity

Machine-specific catalogs, guided navigation, and visual aids help buyers decode complex assemblies without relying on guesswork.

04 Strengthened relationships

Consistent, accurate information reinforces reliability, preventing customers from drifting to third-party sellers.

05 Predictable growth

When buyers trust the portal, adoption increases, & OEMs gain clearer visibility into demand patterns and future needs.

06 Strategic opportunity

With trust driving engagement, OEMs can offer relevant recommendations and proactive service.

Redefining the B2B Customer Experience

When the digital channel reflects the same precision and reliability customers expect from the equipment itself, trust increases naturally. Modern portals support that experience by helping buyers:

01 Reorder parts directly from equipment tags, QR codes, barcodes, serial numbers.

Real-time visibility into compatibility, availability, and usage patterns enables customers to prepare for repairs and prevent unplanned downtime.

02 View only parts and pricing that apply to their machines, contracts, and locations.

For OEMs, this connected experience closes the long-standing gap between how buyers want to work and what legacy systems make possible. Instead of a disjointed set of tools, the portal becomes a single, accurate, and trustworthy operational resource.

03 Receive proactive notifications about upcoming needs, expiring warranties, or predicted wear.

Aligning systems around trusted data removes friction for buyers, simplifies operations for manufacturers, and brings stability to the aftermarket.



The Measurable Impact

When systems are aligned and buyers trust the information they see, incremental improvements amount to meaningful long-term gains for both sides of the relationship.

Fewer errors and disputes, thanks to shared, accurate data.

Less uncertainty, because data is reliable and consistent.

More consistent portal usage, driven by confidence rather than obligation.

Smoother operations, with fewer interruptions and easier planning.

Higher satisfaction, because buyers feel supported, rather than frustrated.

A sense of partnership, knowing OEMs reply them make informed decisions.

Better visibility, helping teams forecast, plan, and respond more effectively.

An intuitive experience, where systems work with instead of against them.

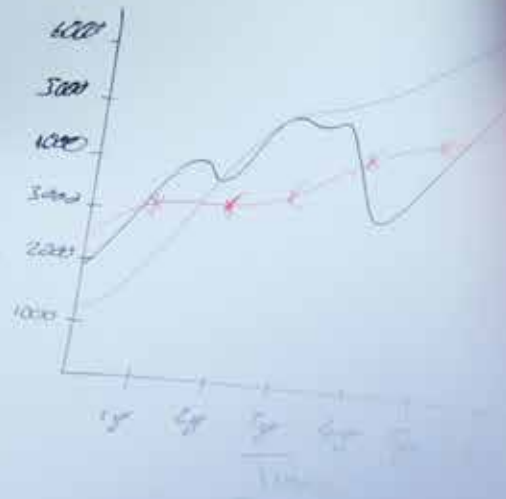
Over time, these outcomes help build a more predictable, more collaborative, and more sustainable aftermarket business.

100%

Buyers know they are choosing the right part, for the right machine, at the right price, reducing the uncertainty that slows down mission-critical work.



Over time, these outcomes help build a more predictable, more collaborative, and more sustainable aftermarket business.



04

Turning the Portal Into a Growth Engine

Chapter 04

For many manufacturers, the aftermarket portal began as a simple efficiency project, a way to reduce manual orders, improve accuracy, and cut administrative costs. But in practice, its potential reaches far beyond efficiency. When built on real-time data and designed around the way buyers work, the digital portal becomes a strategic growth engine that strengthens relationships, unlocks new revenue, and positions the OEM as a trusted partner across the entire equipment lifecycle.

Beyond Efficiency **From Channel to** **Catalyst**

A modern aftermarket portal is an operational ecosystem. When ERP data, analytics, and customer behavior come together, the portal becomes an active driver of growth rather than a passive order entry point. Real-time visibility enables manufacturers to see emerging trends, anticipate needs, and respond before the customer reaches out.

Instead of waiting for a buyer to reorder, predictive insights can identify when a machine is due for maintenance, when consumables are running low, or when a warranty is approaching expiration. This transforms aftermarket sales from a reactive process into a proactive one, creating a continuous cycle of value creation and customer engagement.



Personalized recommendations, dynamic assortments, and predictive replenishment help OEMs reclaim high-margin parts sales and expand share of wallet.

Business Outcomes That Matter

Manufacturers that activate their portals in this way consistently see results across three key areas:

01

Revenue growth

Personalized recommendations, dynamic assortments, and predictive replenishment help OEMs reclaim high-margin parts sales and expand share of wallet. When buyers see only relevant parts and pricing, they purchase more confidently and more often.

02

Customer retention

Trust grows when buyers get accurate information every time. Real-time pricing, reliable delivery tracking, and machine-specific compatibility keep customers from seeking alternatives. The best defense against grey market competition is dependability rather than discounting.

03

Strategic advantage

Transparency has become a differentiator. By publishing verifiable product and sustainability data, OEMs can meet growing expectations around traceability and environmental responsibility, values that increasingly shape purchasing decisions.



A modern aftermarket portal is an operational ecosystem.

The smarter the technology, the easier people's jobs get.



How Real-Time Commerce Powers the Portal

Real-time commerce gives the aftermarket portal its backbone. When connected directly to ERP systems, it eliminates the lag between data updates and customer visibility. This makes the portal react instantly and accurately, driving business performance as well as operational efficiency.

01

Intelligent dashboards

Give customers insight into order history, machine uptime, and consumption trends.

02

Predictive, AI-driven recommendations

Flag replacements or upgrades before breakdowns occur.

03

Dynamic pricing

Adjusts to account terms, volumes, and regional factors.

04

Automated logistics integration

Provides live delivery tracking and error-free invoicing.

These capabilities elevate the portal from a transactional tool into a strategic differentiator that helps both sides of the buyer-supplier relationship operate with greater confidence and clarity.

Real-World Impact

Contiweb: From Time-Zone Delays to Always-On Clarity
From Time-Zone Delays to Always-On Clarity Contiweb supports 3,000 machines globally. Time zones previously caused delays, but an ERP-integrated portal now offers real-time pricing and availability. Updates in SAP appear instantly online to minimize errors. Now 23% of spare parts orders happen via the webshop. Customers who use the portal see the value and keep coming back.

Mitsubishi Turbocharger & Engine Europe (MTEE): Modernizing the Customer Experience
Modernizing the Customer Experience MTEE replaced an outdated system with smarter tools. AI and machine learning now spot usage patterns to automate reorders and trigger preventive maintenance. This tech anticipates needs and prevents downtime. When data supports decisions in the background, it creates space for better connections between OEMs and their customers.

What These Stories Reveal

Manufacturers adopting real-time commerce experience similar patterns.

01

Order processing becomes faster because customers no longer wait for internal confirmation.

02

Portal adoption steadily increases as buyers grow confident in the accuracy of self-service tools.

03

Errors and support tickets drop because the data buyers rely on is consistent across systems.

Manufacturers moving to real-time commerce see smoother operations emerge across ordering, self-service, and support.



The Future of Predictive Aftermarket Commerce

Predictive intelligence or portals that anticipate buyer needs and act before the request even comes in is the next step in aftermarket evolution. Artificial intelligence and machine learning are spotting patterns in usage, wear rates, and order frequency. They can trigger preventive maintenance reminders, schedule reorders automatically, or suggest component upgrades that improve uptime.

The smarter the technology, the easier people's jobs get. When data works in the background to anticipate needs, prevent downtime, and support decisions, it creates space for a deeper connection between OEMs and their customers.

Predictive aftermarket commerce leverages intelligence to eliminate friction, uncertainty, and manual guesswork, enabling people to focus less on fighting their systems and more on collaborating with each other.

Predictive tools surface what buyers need before they have to look for it. Instead of wasting resources on diagnosing issues or digging through catalogs, they have clear information available to help them plan, budget, and operate efficiently.

Internally, predictive insights help teams stay proactive. Service reps can reach out on time, parts teams can stock more intelligently, and sales can identify needs based on machine usage.

When both sides see the same predictive insights, the conversation changes from a dialogue based on disconnected transactions to one based on partnership. Trust built through transparency is harder to achieve with legacy systems, but easier to maintain once predictive intelligence is part of the workflow.

Predictive amplifies the human element. The smarter the system becomes, the more interaction feels personal, relevant, and grounded in a genuine understanding of what people need to do their jobs well.



A well-designed aftermarket portal is a growth platform.

The Takeaway

01

A well-designed aftermarket portal is a growth platform. It's where data, customer experience, and brand reputation come together. In an industry defined by precision and reliability, the manufacturers that combine real-time visibility with proactive intelligence will redefine what good service looks like.

02

Every order placed online is a moment that builds or erodes trust. Real-time commerce ensures those moments always work in the favor of the OEM and the buyer, reinforcing credibility, driving repeat business, and transforming digital engagement into a long-term competitive advantage.

Key

Takeaways

25%

The platform reduces manual work, improves security, lowers the total cost of ownership by over 25% compared to alternatives, and enables the team to implement changes directly.

3k

Contiweb supports over 3,000 machines worldwide, spanning multiple time zones.



The more tech we have,
the more humanity we
need to integrate.

Prof. Henrik von Scheel
Architect of Industry 4.0

05

The Road Ahead

Manufacturers that invest in real-time data, connected systems, and a buyer-focused digital experience will reclaim lost revenue, build stronger customer relationships, and, most importantly, get back in control of their aftermarket business. At the same time, customers regain control of their operations, avoiding the risks posed by grey market sellers who may deliver counterfeit or substandard parts that compromise performance, uptime, and equipment lifecycle.

In today's aftermarket, success is measured by how consistently you deliver on your promises. When every quote, stock count, and delivery date is accurate, and every part is verified and authentic, trust grows, and trust is what keeps customers coming back. By restoring transparency, responsiveness, and confidence at every step, OEMs not only protect revenue but help buyers regain control of their buying experience, making every order predictable, reliable, and risk-free.

Executive Summary and Action Plan

Chapter 05

The future of spare parts sales is proactive, connected, and buyer-centric. Regaining revenue from the grey market and unlocking new growth starts by giving customers the information and experience they expect, when they expect it. The aftermarket has changed since a younger, more digitally fluent generation of buyers has started to drive purchasing decisions.

They expect the same speed, accuracy, and ease of interaction they experience everywhere else, but most still run into outdated systems, inconsistent pricing, and unreliable availability data. Those gaps send them searching elsewhere, often to unauthorized resellers who can respond faster.



In today's aftermarket, success is measured by how consistently you deliver on your promises.

For OEMs, this shift is both a challenge and an opportunity. By connecting ERP data directly to digital sales channels, ensuring prices, stock levels, and lead times are always up to date, manufacturers can restore confidence and win back customers. Real-time commerce turns data accuracy and reliability into competitive strengths, helping OEMs protect their brand, simplify operations, and grow aftermarket share.

A connected, ERP-native platform lays the groundwork for predictive, data-driven aftermarket management. With the right tools, OEMs can anticipate demand, trigger replenishment before downtime occurs, and offer personalized recommendations that strengthen the relationship.

Next Steps for OEMs

01

Audit where data silos create friction
Follow the flow of information between ERP, CRM, PIM, and other operational systems. Pinpoint where delays or mismatches impact buyers and slow orders.

03

Modernize your self-service portal
Build around how your customers buy. Simplify search, remove unnecessary steps, and make reordering effortless.

02

Prioritize real-time ERP integration
Ensure live synchronization for pricing, availability, and delivery data. Buyers notice accuracy, and they remember when it's missing.

04

Scale with predictive analytics and automation
Once the foundation is solid, use data and AI to forecast demand, automate reorders, and surface relevant upsell or service opportunities.

With 71% of B2B buyers being Millennials or Gen Z, they've grown up with instant information and effortless online purchasing, and they see no reason why ordering parts for multimillion-dollar equipment should be any harder than ordering from a consumer retailer.

Key
Takeaways

71%

Millennial and Gen Z buyers expect B2B parts purchasing to be as fast and effortless as consumer e-commerce.

Despite heavy investment in e-commerce, many manufacturers are still falling short of these expectations. The data shows that 85% of B2B buyers report frustration when ordering online.

Key
Takeaways

85%

The data shows that 85% of B2B buyers report frustration when ordering



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