broadleaf
commerce

Commerce Platform Interview Guide 2026

Hard Questions to Ask Before Signing a Multi-Year Commitment

For the DIY “Architectural Purist”

If you are leaning toward building it yourself, ask your internal team or consultants these questions

The “Janitor” Ratio

In Year 3, what percentage of our engineering headcount will be dedicated to maintaining ‘commodity’ commerce features (security patches, PCI compliance, indexing) vs. building new revenue-driving features?

🚩 **Red Flag:** *Any answer under 40% is usually unrealistic for a full custom build.*

The “Bus Factor”

If our two lead backend engineers leave, how long will it take for a new hire to understand our custom-built domain logic?

The “Standard” Test

Are we building this on a proprietary internal framework, or are we using an industry-standard foundation like Spring Boot that allows for easy hiring?

For Simple SaaS (Shopify, BigCommerce)

Ask these questions to expose the "Functional Ceiling"

The "App Hell" Audit

Based on our requirements, how many 3rd-party apps will we need to install? How do you guarantee the performance and security of those external developers?

🚩 **Red Flag:** *Relying on 15 different apps to run your business creates a brittle Frankenstein architecture.*

The "Core" Modification

We have a unique rule that requires modifying core logic. Can we do this directly in your domain, or are we limited to external webhooks and 'App' workarounds?

The Success Tax

Are we building this on a proprietary internal framework, or are we using an industry-standard foundation like Spring Boot that allows for easy hiring?

For the Legacy Monolith (SAP, Oracle, HCL)

Ask these to the big-box legacy vendors to expose their "Agility Gap"

Deployment Velocity

What is the average time it takes for a developer to go from 'code complete' to 'live in production' for a minor business logic change?

🚩 **Red Flag:** *If they answer in "weeks" or talk about "maintenance windows," they are a bottleneck.*

The Upgrade Path

When you release a new version, how much of our custom business logic will need to be manually refactored or rewritten?

The "Strangler" Capability

Can we migrate just our 'Promotions Engine' to your platform while keeping our legacy cart, or is this a 'Big Bang' replatform?

For Enterprise SaaS / Composable (commercetools, VTEX)

Ask these to expose the "Implementation Fatigue"

The "Admin Gap"

Does your platform come with a fully functional, customizable back-office UI for our marketing and merch teams, or are we responsible for building the Admin Console via API?

🚩 **Red Flag:** *"We have a basic one, but most clients build their own" = 6 months of extra dev work*

The "Glue Code" Burden

As a headless provider, who is responsible for the orchestration and 'glue code' between the commerce services, the CMS, and the Search engine?

The B2B Native Test

Are Account Hierarchies and Contract Pricing native 'Out of the Box' objects, or do we need to model those ourselves using custom attributes?

Why Broadleaf

We asked those same questions,
and that's why we built Broadleaf differently.

We give you the ***Source Access*** of DIY,
the ***Power*** of Legacy,
the ***Speed*** of SaaS,
and the ***API-First*** nature of Composable

—without the 'Red Flags' you just identified.