PATH TO

COMPOSABLE

YOUR JOURNEY TO
MODERN ARCHITECTURE

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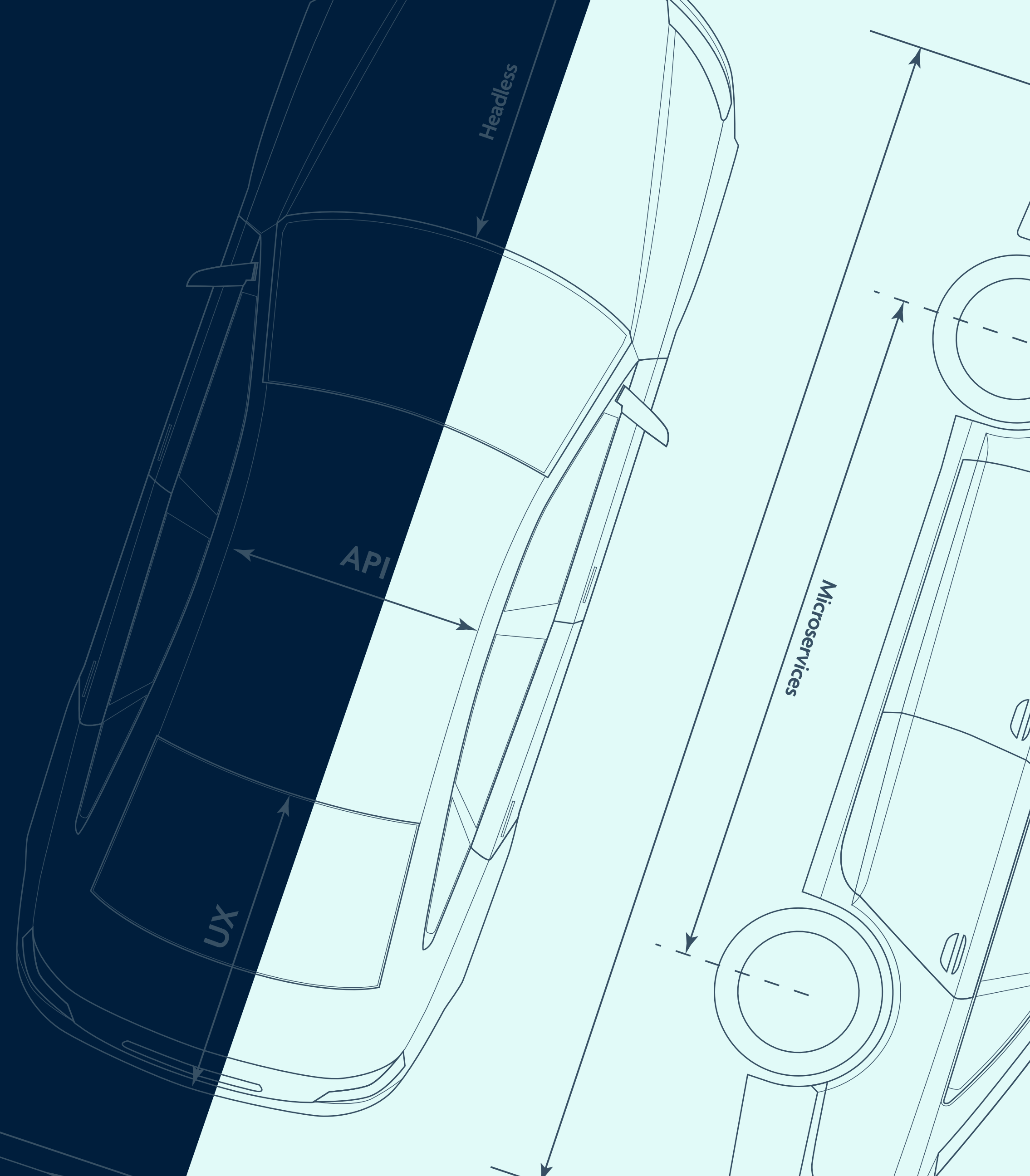
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Introduction

Think about the last change your business made to its eCommerce platform. How long did it take? And how much did it cost? Did you achieve the results you wanted, or were you forced to make compromises because of an inflexible tech stack?

Now is the time to begin your enterprise's transformation into a business that can enjoy product and service development measured in hours and days, not weeks or months, a **composable approach** allows your enterprise to react quickly to market and technology changes.

> " Giles Smith, Selfridge's Head of Digital Technology, speaking when he was at Burberry "If we had to choose a monolith that was a solid nine out of ten on commerce, but a seven out of ten on search and content, we would have been limiting ourselves. We wanted to be able to pick the best platform for each of those capabilities. We didn't have to compromise by going for a single platform that locked us into some strengths and some weaknesses."
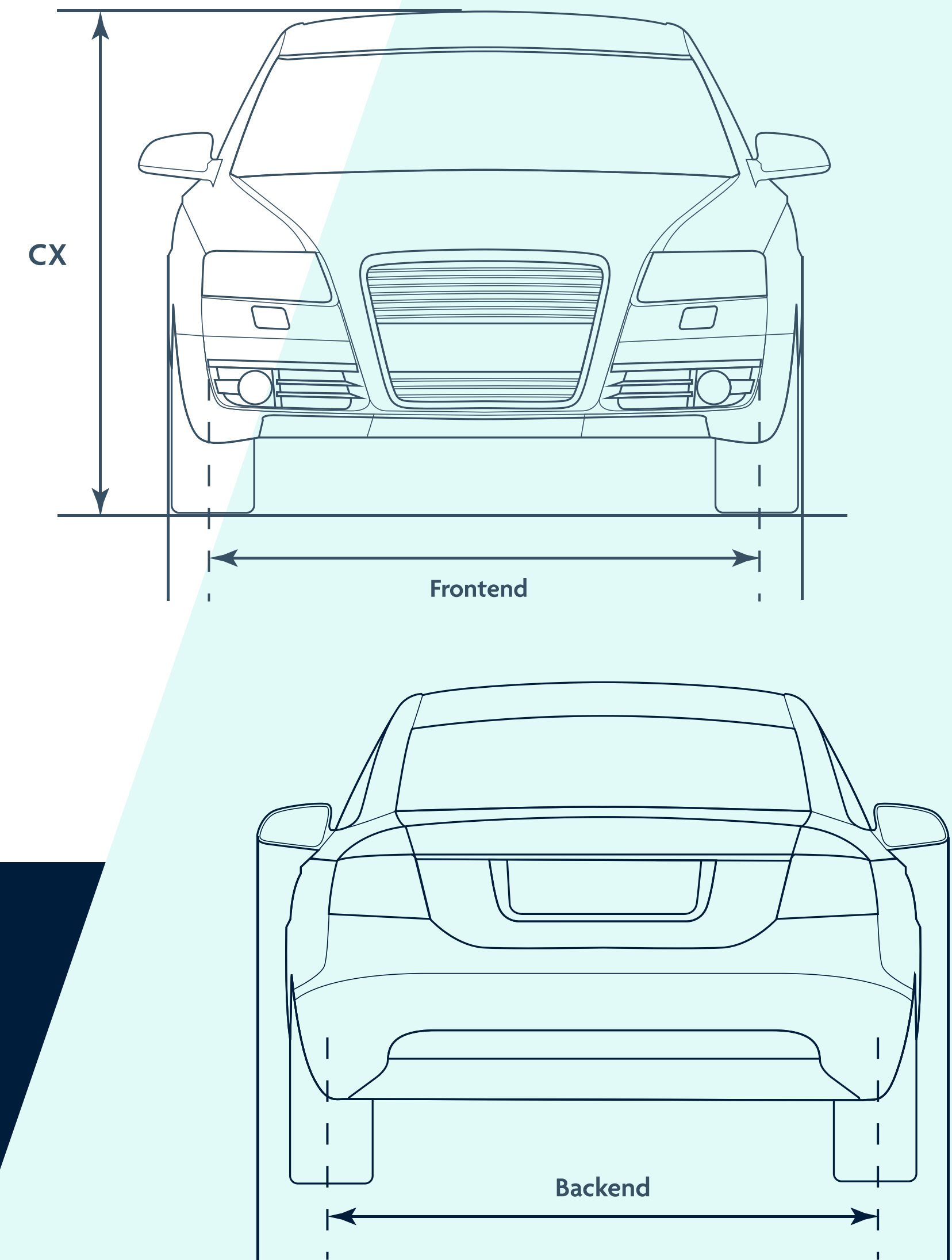
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The future of digital commerce is composable architecture.

In the same way that you can spec a car to suit your specific needs, composable architecture gives you the ability to utilise modular, flexible, integrated technologies that can be easily added, replaced, or removed as your business needs grow or change. Your business can innovate and evolve by connecting several services and technologies together quickly, securely, and reliably to deliver the new digital experiences consumer's demand.

Becoming a composable business can be a challenging journey. How cloud-native your business already is will influence how quickly your enterprise can adopt composable principles and, what it will cost your company to make the transition. The journey, though, is essential.

CX

Frontend

/ What if you didn't have to throw everything away whilst still moving forward on a composable journey?

Whether you want to completely rework your engine or just add some new features, KPS can show you how to embrace a composable approach whilst preserving the investments that have already been made.

Backend

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All Excitement and Noise?

If you've been anywhere in the ecomms space recently then you have probably heard of **The MACH Alliance** - the first organisation to define the technology ecosystem needed to create the new digital experiences consumer's demand. But what is MACH?

Gartner coined the phrase **'composable commerce'** to explain the MACH (**M**icroservices based, **A**PI-first, **C**loud-native SaaS and **H**eadless) approach to experience design. The central philosophy is to build digital experiences using components (the Lego analogy is often used) that can be fitted together to create whatever new digital service is needed.

MACH principles are defining how digital experiences should be built with a group of best of breed components that are infinitely flexible and can bring major benefits.

With so much noise surrounding how digital channels will evolve and the technical architectures needed to deliver next-generation digital experiences, **it's important to partner with a company like KPS that can help your business cut through the noise and identify where your path to composability should start** and, if this is the right approach for your business.
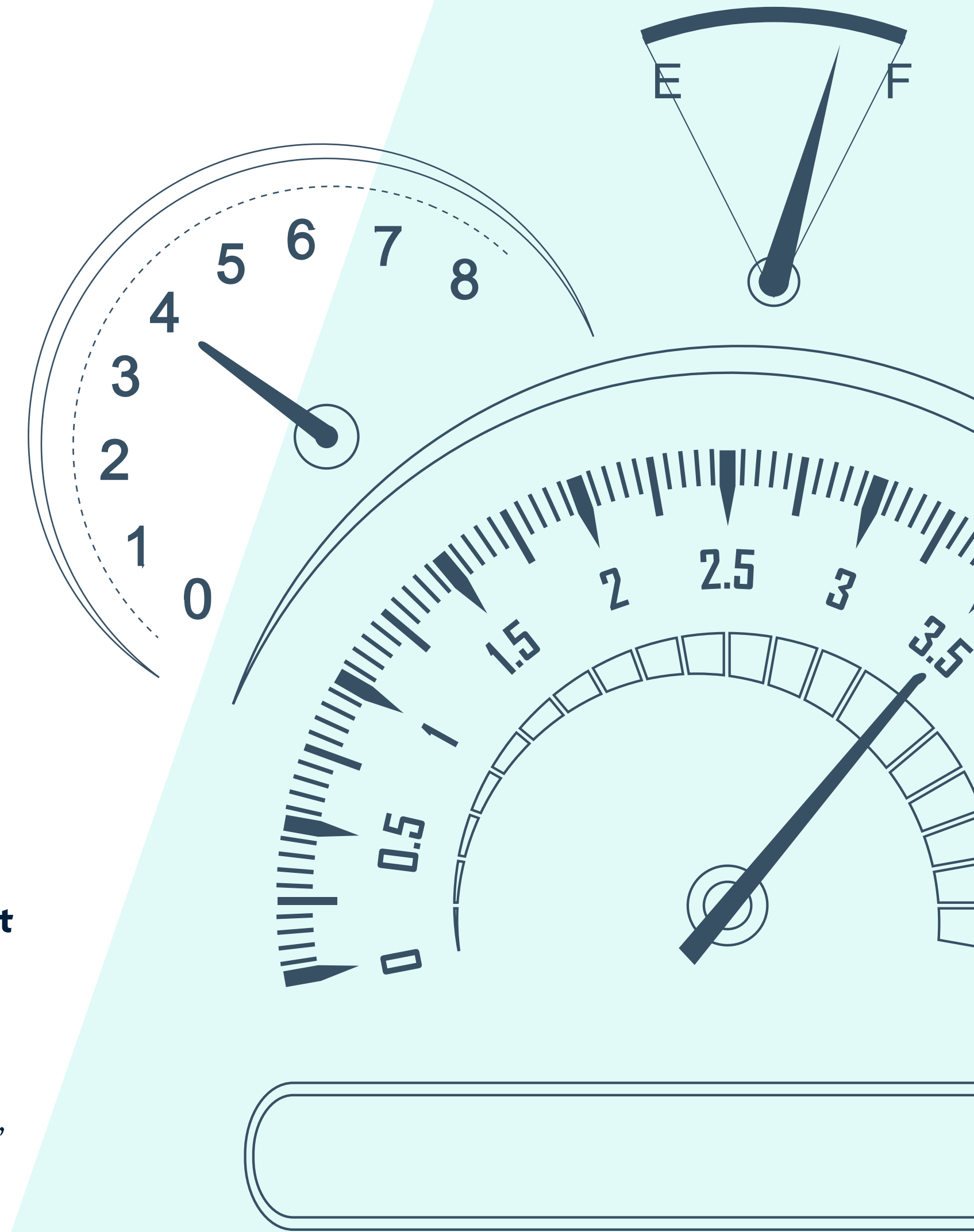
Your Business's Composable Future

> " "The creation, adoption and integration of packaged business capabilities enables assembly of custom application experiences and is a foundation of a composable enterprise." *Gartner*

Implementing composable commerce isn't necessarily a fast fix or a bolt on to legacy infrastructure, however, **with the right approach and the right partners, your business is likely to experience a revelation.** Adopting a best-of-breed approach will result in a new ,dynamic and vibrant ecosystem of technologies. **Making the shift to composable architectures frees developers to become more creative.** Being able to quickly innovate and reuse components for new digital experiences is how your business becomes more agile and dynamic.

How far and how fast your business can become composable will depend on your company's level of digital maturity. Decoupling from the frontend is one option.

Taking a structured approach as your business embraces a composable methodology can also be highly effective. *"Our journey to composable started by setting up milestones that translated into some critical action steps,"* Adeel Younas, Head of Engineering, Flaconi. **Think about the last time you tasked your development team to enhance personalisation, for example, only to be told that this change would take months and potentially cost more than the gains your company could expect? If you are nodding your head, you're not alone.**

Whilst there may be nothing that's technically on fire, the "if it ain't broke don't fix it" approach will leave brands behind in an increasingly feisty market.
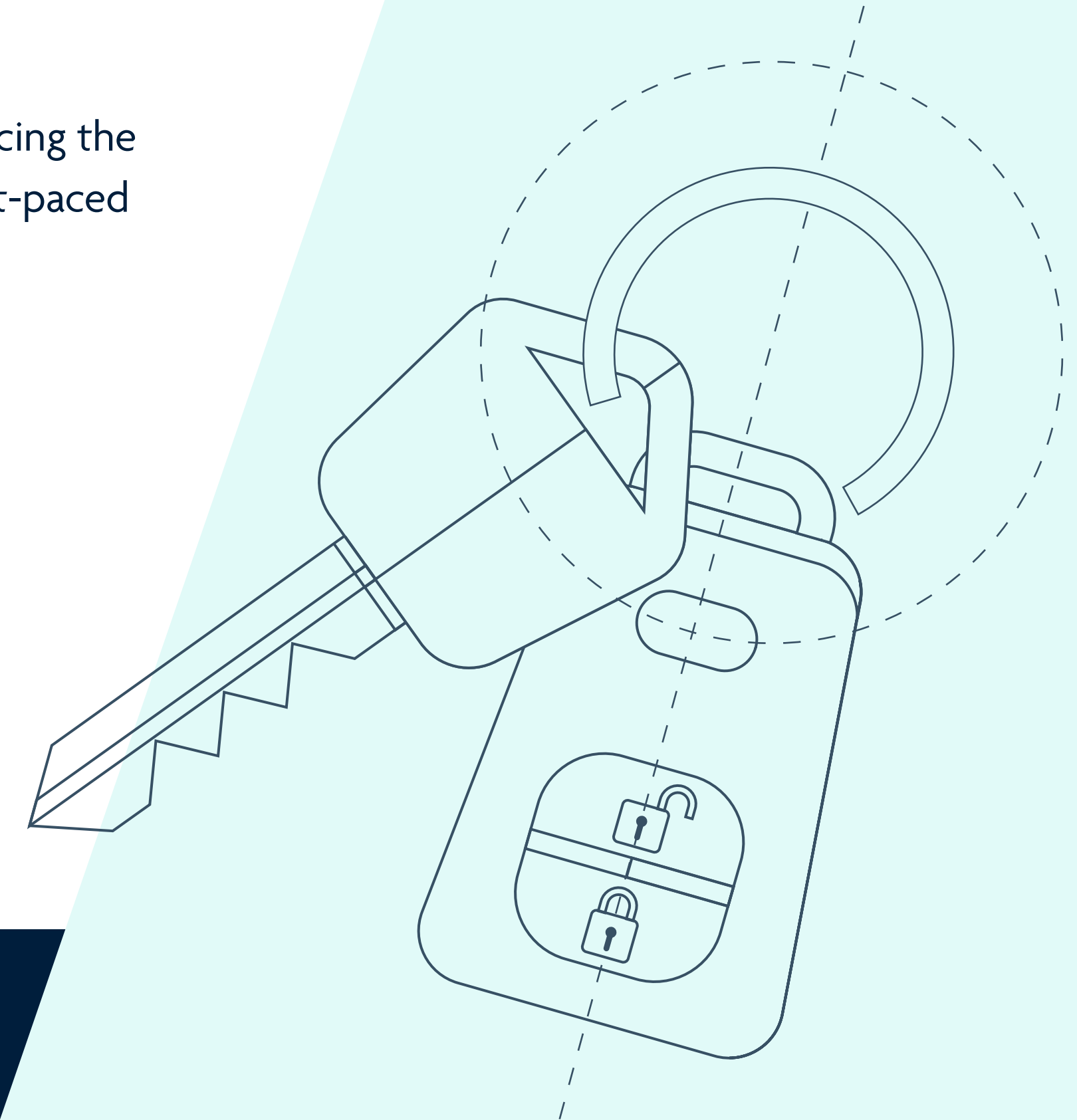
Decoupling the Monoliths

Established business across the eCommerce space have built their tech architectures over the last decade, embracing the each new 'big thing' as it appeared. That's fine. After all, how else would you react to customer demand and a fast-paced ever-changing environment?

The issue with the monolith approach is the level of lock-in and the inability to choose best-in-class, limits your enterprise's ability to innovate.

Some business leaders react when reading about composable commerce by asking: 'isn't it just cutting off the head of our monolith? We've already done that, so why do we need MACH?"

It's a fair point; for many businesses, this will be their first step to fully embracing what composable commerce can offer over the medium and longer term.

However, a sprawl of tightly coupled integrated technologies runs the risk of collapsing under their own weight without a microservices approach.

Consisting of small critical services with their own codebase, microservices are ideal for enterprises that need to innovate quickly. If your business is already cloud-centric and has gone headless, microservices will accelerate your journey to fully embracing composable.

Why is Composable Cool?

Composable is more than just a buzz word, it puts brands in the driver's seat and allows them to continuously evolve, improve and innovate at speed. Innovations previously measured in years now take place in months, with MVPs available in weeks.

Composable architecture can deliver several key benefits:

- Decoupling from the monolith delivers **instant innovation** opportunities.

- Shifts your business to become **cloud native.**

- **Headless** also removes some of the development hurdles your enterprise may have had to contend with in the past.

- Offers a **faster time to market** and increased **delivery efficiency.**

- **Future-proofs** your tech stack and ultimately your business.

- Means you're **not locked in** with vendors and tied into lengthy contracts.

- But above all, MACH is **scalable and modular allowing a flexible approach to digital experience design** that is simply not possible with a purely monolith approach.

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Why is Composable Cool?

What all enterprises now appreciate is that they can't stand still.

The pace of change across all digital channels is accelerating.

It's critical your business can keep up and turn these changes to your advantage. Competition in the digital ecosystem is fierce. Composable enables your company to stay ahead of your competitors.

Composability for many enterprises is a chance to reinvent their tech architectures, radically altering how they develop their commerce ecosystems.

But above all else, a composable approach to problem solving allows creative and unconstrained thinking.
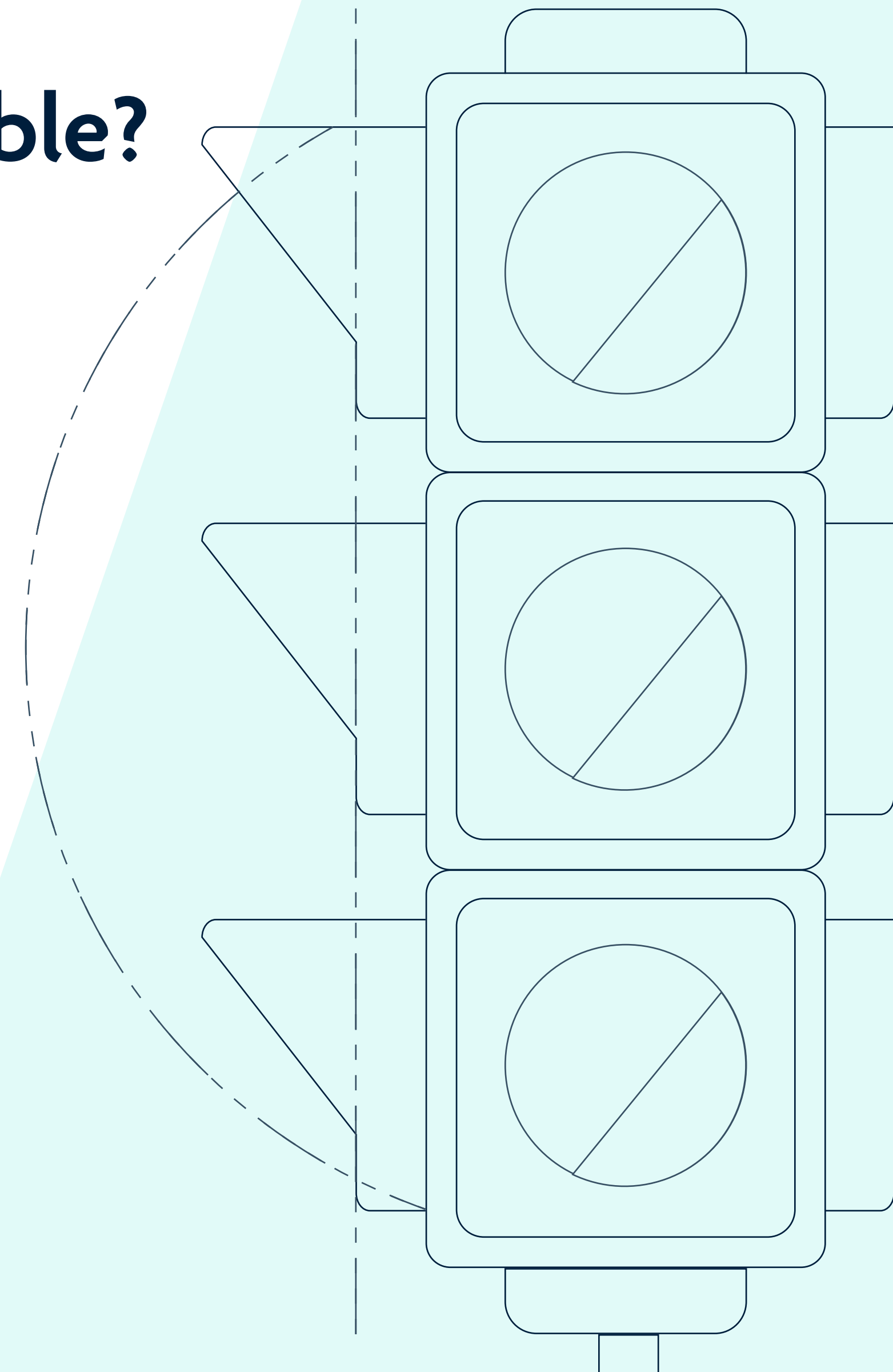
A Reality Check: Are you ready for Composable?

How your business transforms into a composable enterprise will depend on how far down the tech development road your company already is. If you have already embraced cloud and become headless, and microservices are already a must, you're probably further along than you realise.

If headless is giving you a headache, or if you've stalled at the start line, how can you jump start your composable enterprise?

Your first step is assessing how your current architecture structure compares to the basic MACH principles and where core composable approach will help your business most.

We can help with this by performing a digital maturity assessment your digital business and benchmark you against your main competitors. Once the assessment is complete, we will work with you to create a plan that works for you.

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The Best of Both Worlds

With composable commerce your business is always in the driving seat. You decide which elements of MACH architecture your company embraces, and when.

We've pioneered the "Best of Both" approach to composable.

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The Best of Both Worlds

The monolith your business is using can still have an active and important place on your enterprise's development roadmap. You may, for example, have legacy systems that are still mission critical. You don't have to abandon them when you take on a composable mindset.

The bottom line for a composable approach is using best of breed, and that can be combining the old and the new to deliver exactly what your business needs.
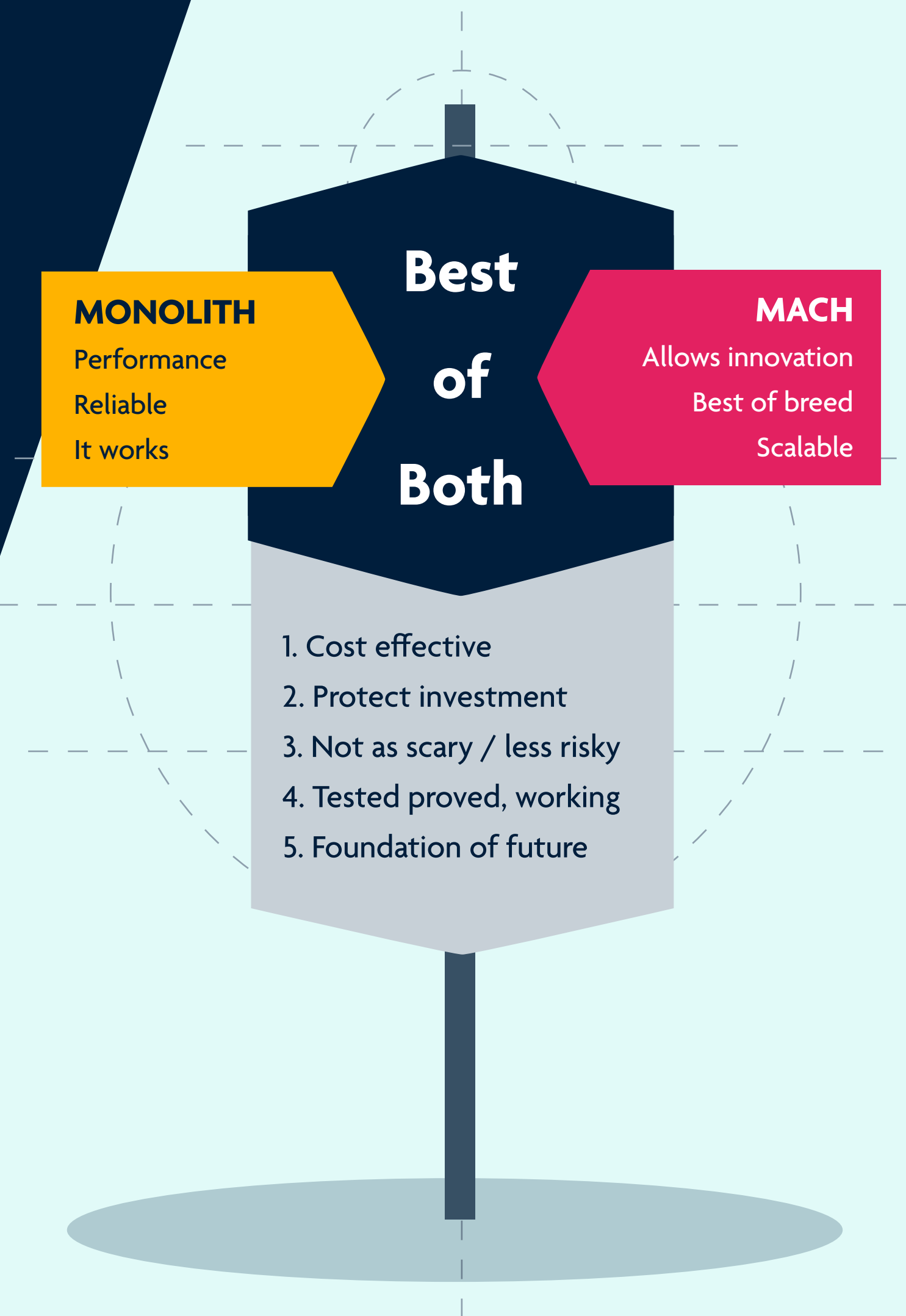
Connecting existing monolith-based services with new ways of building applications and services is often the best course of action for eCommerce businesses looking to innovate at speed.

Brand first business with rich CX and content expectations need a composable approach to deliver not only a seamless frontend customer experience, whilst still being technically stable.

As an example, **KPS worked with our partners at The Body Shop to preserve critical legacy systems whilst still transitioning to headless**, allowing the business to seamlessly integrate the front and backend of their architecture and deliver a new and dynamic space to create the rich digital experiences their customer's demand.

This 'best of both worlds' approach ultimately becomes how your organisations future proofs its architecture.

MONOLITH
Performance
Reliable
It works

Best of Both

MACH
Allows innovation
Best of breed
Scalable

1. Cost effective
2. Protect investment
3. Not as scary / less risky
4. Tested proved, working
5. Foundation of future

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Reliability Meets Agility

> " "While intentions are high and 82% of IT leaders say infrastructure keeps up with customer demands, less than half are satisfied with their ability to deliver customer experience (CX) improvements at speed." *MACH Alliance*

The main aim of composable is to increase agility and improve reliability.

A pure MACH approach can be correct for brands that have time, budget, and commitment, but it's not a perfect fit for every scenario.

Businesses need to take a sensible and well thought out approach to how changes will impact the wider business, such as fulfilment, stock, and distribution.

Many enterprises step toward composable, changing small areas of their business before moving on to the

next to avoid disrupting essential services. Look at your digital transformation roadmap. How could composable help you to your end goals?

Not sure yet, don't worry we can help you!

KPS will ensure that a composable modular approach will allow your organisation to leverage critical components like CMS and PIM, but also push your business architecture to deliver a platform needed to constantly innovate.

A Headless Future

Existing monolithic approaches to content management and deployment can no longer deliver the integrated, agile, dynamic, and secure environments consumers now demand from the brands they buy from.

There are practical applications for keeping your eCommerce engine running. Customer data, financial transactions, real time stock, all need a dependable core powering them from the first interaction to the last. You don't have to reinvent the wheel when embracing composable.

For some businesses, cutting the head of a monolith is the easiest, and fastest way to begin their adoption of composable commerce. Shifting to a headless platform also instantly delivers high levels of agility.

Without the constraints of the monolith, new features can be developed and deployed quickly and reliably in response to new or changing demands.
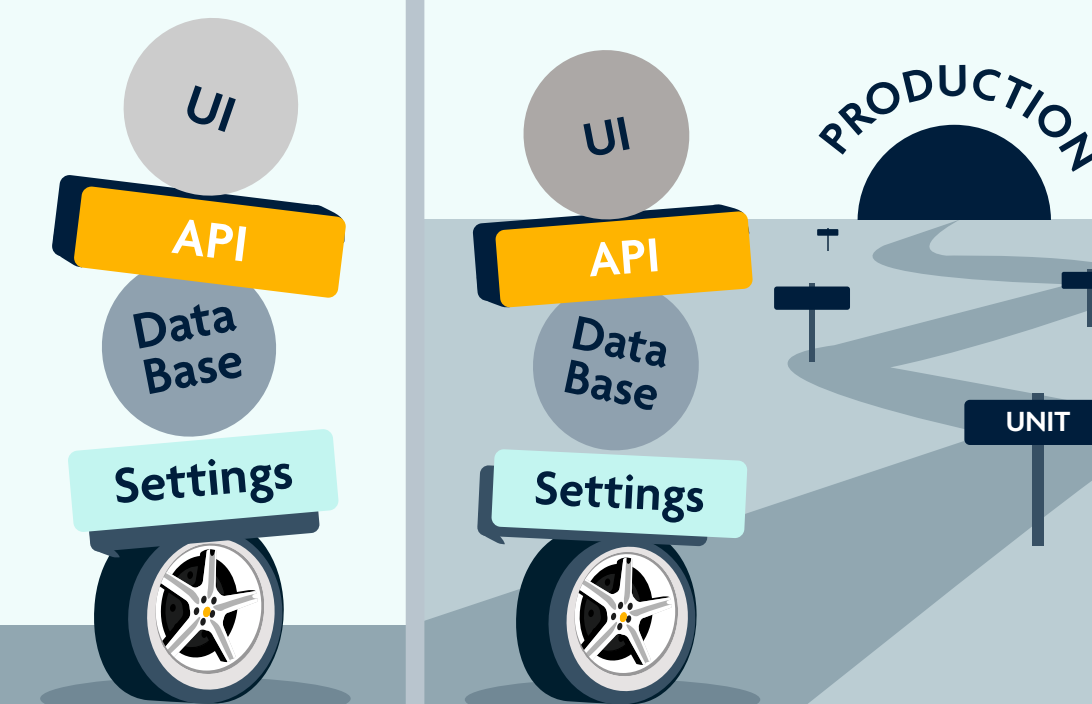
Going headless delivers massive levels of freedom. Where you might spend your time and resources on workarounds for an inflexible monolith-based environment, Headless provides the space to be creative with few restraints.

/ **Going headless is just the start. When you add APIs and microservices independent of any core code, the creative space that results is a revelation for many businesses that have been struggling to innovate.**
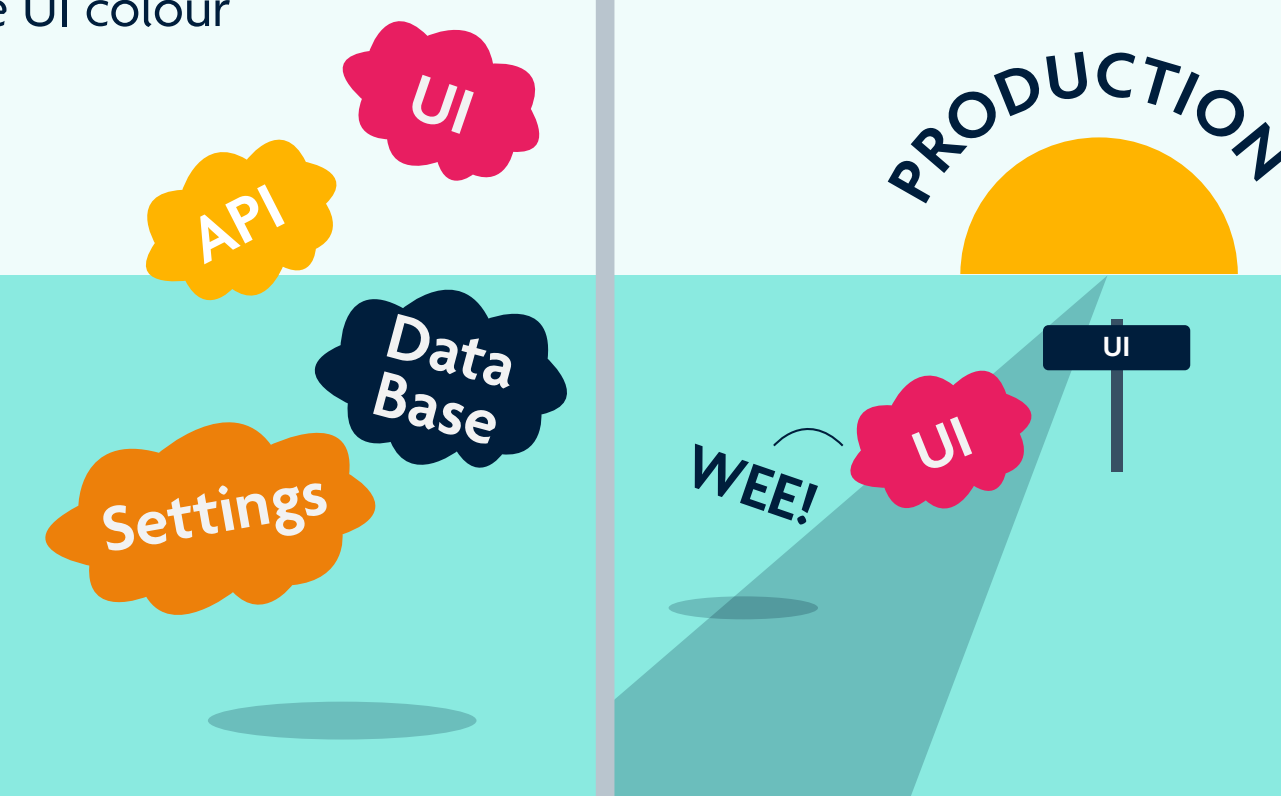
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Wrap Up

No one can predict how the eCommerce space will change in the future, all that we can say for certain is that it WILL change.

Adopting a composable mindset will allow your business to evolve and grow in a state of reliable yet constant innovation, able react and pivot as you need to.

Adopting a composable mindset can require a significant, and a potentially disruptive transition period.

How can we help?

Our clients are already on the path to composability.

KPS understands these pressures and can help make the shift to composable efficient, cost-effective, and transformative for the enterprises that embark on this journey. Whether your enterprise is taking its first steps to embrace a composable mindset or needs help, support, and expertise to accelerate your existing implementation, KPS has the experience to ensure that your transition to becoming composable enterprise is thriving.

We have been helping our clients tackle real business problems by putting the right solutions in place and we can help you do the same.

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Get in touch

Interested in finding out more about how to create meaningful customer experiences that deliver brand loyalty? Say hello today! We'd love to chat.

Get in touch to find out more!

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