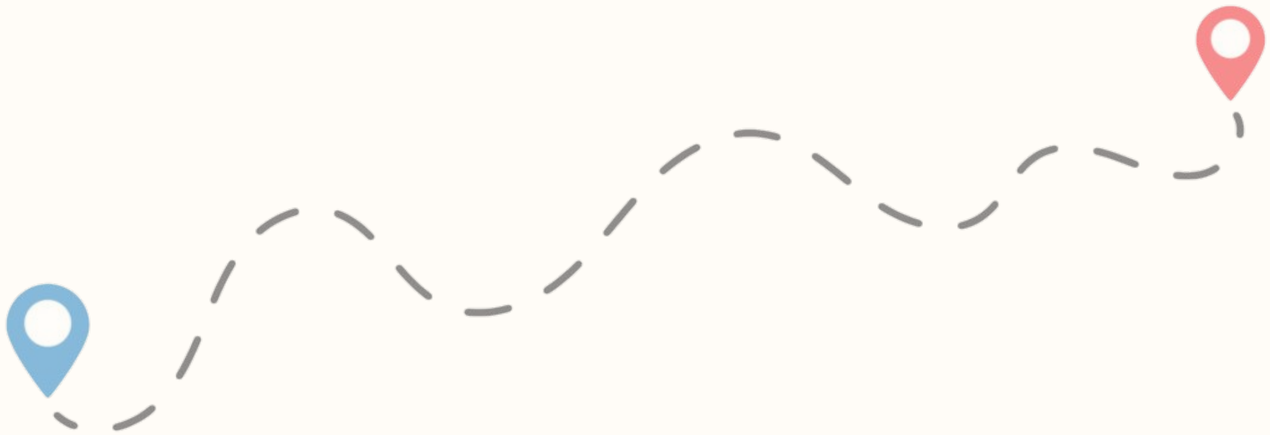
shopware-united
@ShopwareUnited

Launching a Project on Shopware 6 with Zero Experience

- Our Journey -



Introduction

Radu Barbu

Technical Lead

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- over 20 years experience in the web development industry
- 14 years Magento 1 and 2 both as certified developer
- 3 years Symfony development experience
- no experience with Shopware

Any Shopware Experience 6 months ago?

The Task

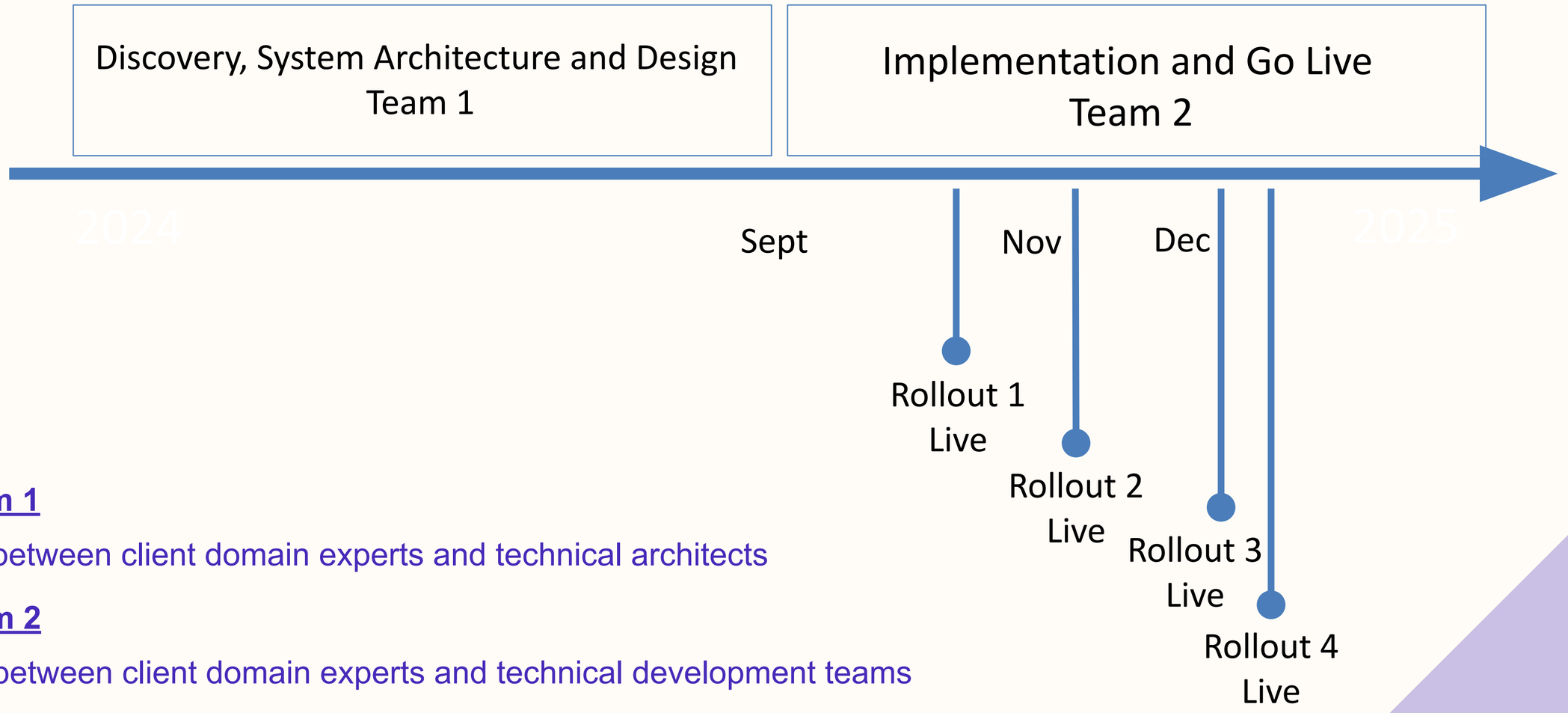
Migrating a legacy, highly customized eCommerce platform to a modern ecosystem with multiple integration points to SaaS solutions.

The Challenge

Zero Shopware Experience

Integrations with various SaaS platforms (PIM, CRM, WMS) using an IPAAS solution.

The Project Team and Timeline



Team 1

Mix between client domain experts and technical architects

Team 2

Mix between client domain experts and technical development teams

Why Shopware?

	shopware	
UI/UX and Frontend Product management Pricing flexibility Product customization	✅	❌
Extensions on the market	❌	✅
Cost of Ownership, Hosting, Support	✅	❌
Scalability, Internal knowledge	❌	✅
Client fitting within the Ideal Customer Profile Long term maintenance and support	✅	❌

Why Shopware?

UI/UX and Frontend, Product management, Pricing flexibility

- ✔ Customizable Frontend → Faster development & lower costs
- ✔ Streamlined Backend → Improved team productivity & easier learning curve
- ✔ Efficient Product Management → Simplifies operations & inventory handling
- ✔ Flexible Pricing & Customization → Ideal for Client's diverse product range
- ✔ No-Code Tools → Empower teams with self-sufficiency
- ✔ Shopping Experiences, Flowbuilder & Rulebuilder → Simplify customization and automation
- ✔ Marketing & Content Teams Independence → Update pages and launch campaigns without IT
- ✔ Faster Execution → Reduce reliance on developers for routine changes

Why Shopware?

Extensions on the market: resources, integrations, community

- ✔ Higher Adoption Rate → 88K+ users vs. 16K for Shopware, ensuring broader support
- ✔ Global Community → More diverse input and wider accessibility compared to Shopware's mainly German community
- ✔ Stronger Integrations → Ready-made compatibility with required SaaS integrations
- ✔ Extensive English Resources → More documentation, forums and support available in English
- ✔ More Pre-Built Solutions → Higher chances that existing features cover business needs, reducing custom development
- ✔ Larger Developer Pool → Easier to find skilled Magento developers compared to Shopware
- ✔ Greater Market Adaptability → Designed for a global audience with required features readily available

Why Shopware?

Cost of Ownership and Support

- ✔ Lower hosting costs
- ✔ Less complex, lower ownership costs
- ✔ Easier developer training (Symfony-based)
- ✔ Faster backend user onboarding
- ✔ Simplified feature additions
- ✔ Paid support includes 2.5 days of consultancy
- ✔ Access to a dedicated support team

Why Shopware?

Scalability and Internal knowledge

- ✔ Greater scalability for market expansion and high order volumes
- ✔ Proven track record in building large-scale solutions
- ✔ Strong in-house expertise (2 Magento senior developers + 1 Magento Solutions Architect)
- ✔ Familiarity with Magento's ecosystem reduces risks and unknowns
- ✔ Less risk of delays due to existing knowledge of bugs, workarounds, and best practices
- ✔ More predictable development process with minimal technical debt

Why Shopware?

Client fitting within the Ideal Customer Profile and Long term maintenance and support

- ✔ Ideal fit for Shopware’s B2B customer profile
- ✔ Aligned with Client’s Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) range
- ✔ Supports open-source and on-prem solutions
- ✔ Ecosystem matches Client’s long-term goals
- ✔ Internal insights make it a safer near-to-mid-term choice
- ✔ Shopware 6 has long-term viability

… and the winner is ?!? …

shopware®

The Learning Curve & First Steps

Resources & Learning Methods

- ✔ Shopware Academy and Documentation
- ✔ Shopware Knowledge on Youtube
- ✔ The Codebase

First weeks

- ✔ Small successes that built confidence
  - ✔ Building the first build & deploy pipeline and deploying on the dev serve
  - ✔ Installed the custom theme
  - ✔ Business was able to play and test with the shop very fast

Development and Implementation

- ✔ **Dockware** was instrumental in streamlining local development for our developers.
- ✔ Our initial integration approach used a mix of API calls and webhooks. Thanks to Shopware's flexibility, we easily adjusted some API calls to webhooks to streamline data flow and prevent concurrency issues
- ✔ Early on, we relied on certain Shopware extensions but eventually removed them due to unresolved bugs and time constraints.
- ✔ The no-code/low-code approach presented challenges in managing a large number of extensions. To ensure only high-quality extensions were integrated into the project, we implemented a **Shopware Extension Validation Checklist** and added a dedicated Shopware Sandbox environment so we can provide access for debuging.
- ✔ We onboarded two additional developers - one with intermediate Shopware experience and another with only Symfony experience. Thanks to Shopware’s intuitive architecture, both became productive quickly.

Unexpected Lessons & Takeaways

Positives

- ✔ Previous experience with Magento and Symfony helped ease the learning curve.
- ✔ Managed to turn initial challenges around once progress became visible.
- ✔ Shopware Extension support and management provided valuable flexibility.

Not too positives

- ✔ The initial lack of Shopware experience within the team led to challenges in defining development stories, creating some business-side anxiety.
- ✔ Community documentation being primarily in German made it difficult for developers to find solutions quickly.
- ✔ Overlooked the need to streamline access for third-party extension developers, which, combined with their response times, delayed extension fixes.
- ✔ Issues updating / overwriting the Zenit theme due to it’s architecture

The Results & Future Plans

Project outcome

- ✔ Released 4 rollouts - 1 per week
- ✔ Strategy
  - ✔ Have everything deployed and configured before go live
  - ✔ Update DNS on go live day
- ✔ Orders started coming on the new platform in minutes after go live

What is next?

- ✔ If business asks for it, it would be pretty easy to launch another sales channel for a new country if they open up new business

Starting with zero experience is not a roadblock,

it’s an opportunity to learn fast.