

Tom's Agentic Commerce Trend Watch - April 2026

Trend	What's Happening	Some Examples	Why it's Working
The pivot from remote checkout to Merchant Referral (at scale)	AI platforms retreating from owning the transaction to a product discovery and referral model. Merchants regain ownership of the checkout and customer relationship. Conversion is higher.	OpenAI <u>Pivoted Away</u> Instant Checkout in March 2026. ChatGPT now drives 20% of Walmart's referral traffic. ChatGPT dominates but Claude/Perplexity convert higher. (ziptie.dev)	AI-referred visitors can convert well! Up to 5 to 23 times higher than organic search users. The first priority for merchants continues to be discoverability: catalog data quality, <u>GEO</u> and <u>Answer Engine Optimization (AEO)</u> .
Merchant's investing in their own AI Advisors (at scale)	Merchants deploying sovereign AI assistants to deepen customer relationships, offer useful capabilities and own the checkout flow.	Home Depot's <u>Magic Apron</u> generates project specs and gives inventory location guidance. Lowe's <u>Mylow</u> and Mylow Companion provide customer advice and associate enablement. Amazon <u>Rufus</u> had a mixed initial reaction, but has started to find functional niches like Auto Buy that matches and executes a purchase when a target price is reached.	The killer app here is not just chatbot It's agents that can do stuff (take actions, generate personalizations and navigate on behalf of customer). customer benefit "don't make me learn how your whole app or website works, understand what I'm trying to ask for, then just do it for me" merchant benefit "turn AI from eroding gross margins and loyalty to delighting and deepening customer relationship"
B2B > Consumer for highest value usecases (at scale)	Businesses purchase with much large scale, complexity and overhead than consumers creating immediately opportunities in <u>Autonomous Sourcing</u> , <u>Automated Procurement</u> , <u>Dynamic Pricing & Negotiation</u> and <u>AP/AR</u>	Enterprise platforms like SAP <u>Joule</u> migrating to full service agentic commerce workflows. Horizontal Vendors like <u>Ivalua</u> specialising AI procurement. Vertical SaaS platforms like <u>Toast IQ</u> rolling out agentic back-office tooling. Platforms like <u>Pactum AI</u> <u>Keelvar</u> run negotiation as a service.	B2B sales, purchasing and accounting/finance workflows are rife with for automation opportunities, a trend tha AI is only accelerating. Nobody loves invoicing, POs and filing expenses reports. Agentic AI is also unlocing whole new value in vendor discovery, evaluation, negotiation, policy enforcement, spend tracking, contract renewal, financing and more.
Agent-Ready Interfaces (emerging)	Skills and CLIs are the new MCPs Anthropic's <u>Skill.md</u> ecosystem for adding capabilities to Claude Code or other agentic harnesses <u>CLIs</u> (command line interfaces) give agents an efficient standardized, text only interface. Like surfing the internet before Tim Berners Lee.	Ramp launched its CLI last week, it's <u>really cool</u> . Their CLI covers "50+ tools across cards, bills, expenses, travel, and approvals. Use fewer tokens than MCP, and comes with pre-built skills like receipt compliance and agentic purchasing" <u>Lobster.cash</u> is a skill for OpenClaw lets you give your own agent controlled access to a Visa Card or Stablecoin wallet to pay for whatever it needs	A 'developer' audience is not a niche audience anymore. The key differentiator of the agentic age is how good AIs are getting at calling on tools, writing custom code as well as taking on longer running tasks and whole projects of ever larger scope. If step one was solving AI discoverability/ GEO of your website, step 2 is your plan for the <i>usability</i> by AI of all the valuable services and data behind your website. Early mover benefit: become default preference for agents needing skills/ services/products in your category.
Native A2A Commerce (nascent)	<u>OpenClaw</u> enthusiasm kickstarted this one new marketplaces for agents to hire to other agents, acquire data, purchase compute, GPU time or access additional LLM models. Main users: developers, traders/analysts, marketing automation	Clawlancer, ClawGig, Clawwork for hiring other agents. ClawRouter for autonomously routing LLM prompts to the best/cheapest LLM X402 protocol enabling high frequency, micropayments and innovative billing models. Pay-as-you go per API call vs overhead of human operator having to set up accounts and API keys across every provider in advance	The OpenClaw marketsize itself is nothing to get excited about, but gives us actionable signals to learn from. There's clearly opportunity gaps between how API/SaaS services today are onboarded, billed and sold vs what makes sense for autonomous agents and their operators. But just how the agent economy gets monetized may depend on if we see a more open or more walled-garden future for AI.