



# ARE YOU IN CONTROL OF YOUR CUSTOMER JOURNEY?

How to convince at every touchpoint

BYRD – The Product Content Lifecycle Management Technology

# THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY OVER THE COURSE OF TIME

»Flexibility is the key to successful brands.«

The concept of the **customer journey** is certainly not new. Nevertheless, it has in recent years increasingly become the focus of marketing and e-commerce managers. The main reason for this is the **growing complexity of product communication**: more and more sales channels are opening up, which on the one hand significantly increases sales potential, but on the other hand poses completely **new challenges for product content management** – and this applies to both brand manufacturers and retailers. **In this paper, we look at how the individual players can successfully master these challenges and what prerequisites need to be created to do so.**

We hope you enjoy reading it!



Yours sincerely

**BJÖRN BAYARD**

CEO | BAYARD GmbH



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## THE 3 ELEMENTS OF A PERFECT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

### »Convince on all levels.«

One of the most important goals of any communication measure in digital commerce is to attract attention, arouse genuine interest, and increase conversion. This is not so easy, as it is becoming increasingly difficult to stand out with your own product message in the fast-moving and colourful internet world. Competition in global trade is constantly growing, and with that comes consumer distraction. Of course, this primarily applies to **third-party platforms** – but it is often precisely these channels where the customer journey begins. Brands are well advised **to be present on all relevant platforms**, as this is where consumers naturally interact with their own offers as well as with those of their direct competitors. These platforms include, in particular, the **online shops and marketplaces of retail partners**.

**A customer journey can be organised in many different ways and this also depends very much on the type of product.** Consumer goods such as cosmetics or household products are often the subject of impulse purchases due to their typically low prices. For these types of products, it is important to be present on all channels on which the target groups are active. With intuitive

checkout functions, social media channels such as Instagram and TikTok have also developed into important sales channels in recent years.

Other offers, such as higher-priced electronic items, are less likely to be bought on impulse. Consumers usually research these types of products on different channels, comparing products, platform offers, and prices before deciding to make a purchase.

It is therefore important for brand manufacturers to first understand **what the typical purchasing process for their product looks like, which different channels are used, and what information and criteria consumers are looking for.** Only when the expectations of the target groups are clear can the product messages be formulated and optimised accordingly. The aim is to create a convincing and positive experience for prospective customers with the product offering. **All levels of expectation must be addressed as far as possible**, and this includes the purely informative and fact-based perspective as well as the emotional, often brand-dependent perspective.



**In general, there are three important rules for an optimal customer experience:**

### **1. Contextualised customer approach**

A product message is only effective if it is perceived as natural and relevant. To achieve this, it must not come across as strange and must adapt to the **tonality of the respective communication channel**. At the same time, it must also address the interests of the target group and thus **describe a relevant offer**. If these aspects are fulfilled, the chances of initial interest are good.

### **2. Convincing product presentation**

Attracting attention is only the first step. The next step is to build on this initial interest. This includes on the one hand **product data** to cover the factual need for knowledge and, on the other, **suitable media such as images and videos** to create a visually convincing product presentation. The target groups should engage with the product and, if possible, be enticed to continue their customer journey.

### **3. Consistent brand communication**

Today's customer journey frequently encompasses several channels and is often characterised by media and time breaks, and this poses a particular challenge for manufacturers. While **product communication must be individually tailored** to each sales platform, **content and branding must be consistent across all channels**. Uncertainty is one of the main reasons why purchase decisions are cancelled.





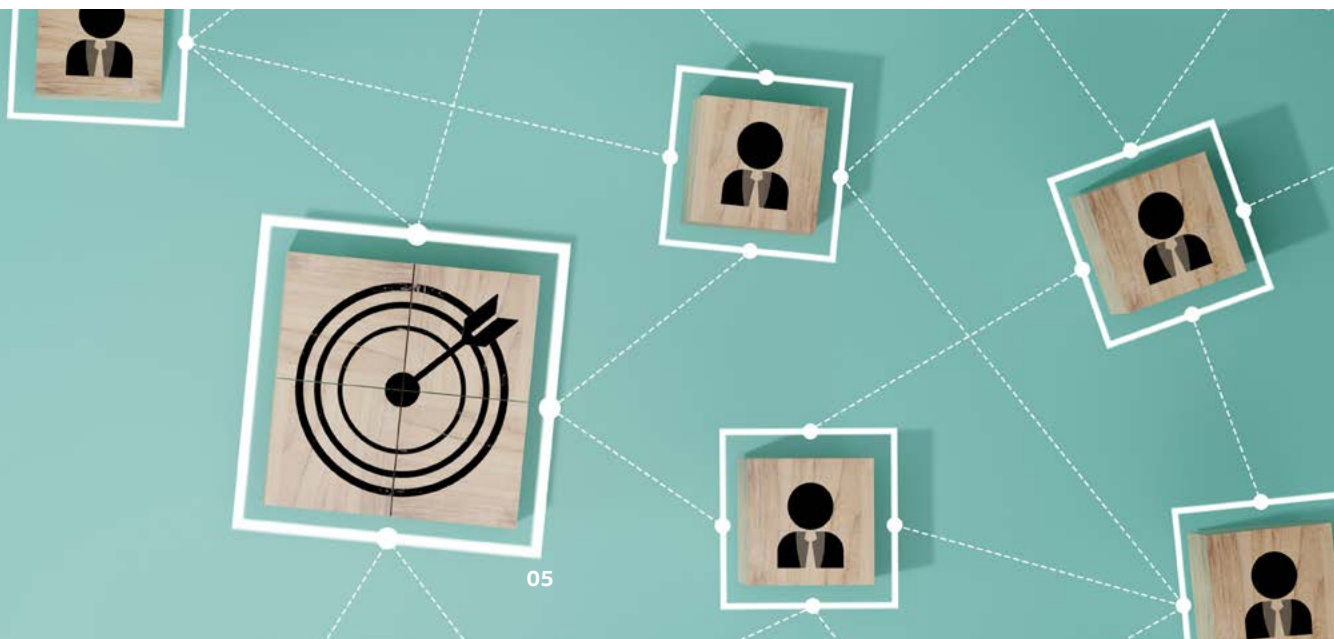
## CHALLENGES FOR BRAND MANUFACTURERS

»Providing optimal product content is becoming increasingly difficult.«

This also presents the biggest challenges for manufacturers. Their task is to provide product content – and that content must be optimised for every point in time, every target group, and every channel. In order to achieve this, they need **strategic expertise** as well as the **right technological infrastructure in order to offer the necessary differentiation and flexibility**.

The first step is to list the current sales channels and define a suitable communication strategy for each platform. It must be clear **which exact target group or persona is being addressed and which messages they are most likely to respond to**. On this basis, rules can be derived that govern how the product content is created for each individual channel. The **strategy** also includes go-to-market planning, analysis of the competition, and continuous monitoring and optimisation of product content and customer feedback. It is important not only to focus on your own 'owned' channels but also to include the retail platforms in your considerations.

In order to give marketing enough time for all these important strategic tasks, it must be freed from operational processes as far as possible. This is where the right technology comes into play. We will go into the individual building blocks of product content life cycle management that are necessary to bring the customer journey to life later on. **At this point, it is important to emphasise that it is not only the individual technology areas that are needed but also close networking between them**. Only in this way can information flows and data processes be effectively implemented and – where it makes sense – automated. **Product Content Lifecycle Platforms** that cover the entire digital value chain of product communication offer the ideal basis for this, as there are no system breaks that need to be overcome through complex integration work.





## HOW RETAILERS ARE MANIFESTING THEIR ROLE AS MULTIPLIERS IN DIGITAL COMMERCE

»The importance of retail media is growing.«

Retailers are aware of their role as multipliers for brands and are currently offering their manufacturers more and more **opportunities to make their product range more attractive**. In fact, consumers are now increasingly searching for products on trusted retailers' online platforms instead of using search engines. This in turn has brought the optimisation of product searches in retail into the focus of manufacturers, and retailers are increasingly offering payment options in the form of advertisements and sponsored rankings in order to place products as high up as possible in searches or on category pages.

**Enhanced content** offers another option for optimised product communication. This gives manufacturers the opportunity to customise their product detail pages in retailers' shop or on the online marketplace to a large extent. They can integrate image galleries or product videos, long marketing texts, or even branding elements such as logos, CI colours, and image films.

It is therefore also in the interest of retailers to optimise the exchange of product data with their manufacturers. A connection to the **Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN)** is a very good way of synchronising the product data published there by manufacturers directly in your own ERP system. However, not all manufacturers currently use the GDSN, especially in sectors outside of food retail and healthcare. It therefore makes sense to provide a separate **supplier portal** through which the manufacturer data can be imported directly, with the benefit that integrated **validation rules** can ensure that the imported data is of the desired quality.

This makes the task of manufacturers' marketing departments all the more complex. Communication managers not only have to ensure that their own channels such as online shops, apps or Instagram channels are optimally supplied with product content, they also have to make sure that the products are presented attractively on the individual retail platforms and budget any advertising expenditure in the context of retail media. In short, **you need to have the entire customer journey under control**. Without the right technological foundation, this task simply cannot be accomplished.



# 36%

Enhanced content is very effective and generates as much as a 36 per cent higher conversion rate – and both manufacturers and retailers benefit.



# PRODUCT CONTENT MANAGEMENT: THE FOUNDATION

»Only those who are in complete control can be truly agile.«



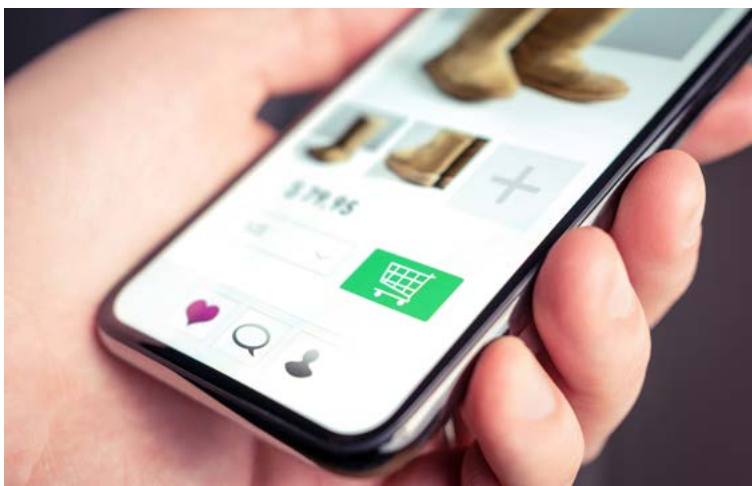


**Comprehensive product content management forms the basis** for controlling the customer journey. Companies must have their product data under control, ensure perfect data quality, and take into account the requirements of digital commerce as early as the onboarding stage or the creation of product data.

Each communication channel represents a specific information need of the respective user. While Instagram is primarily used for entertainment and inspiration, a product detail page in an online shop must be able to answer all questions about an offer. **This means that each output channel must be provided with dedicated product information, product descriptions, marketing texts, product images,**

**and videos.** In addition, certain standards and classifications have become established, particularly in the exchange of product data between industry and retail, that support industry-wide communication.

To make this complexity manageable, all these content elements must be procured, created, mapped, maintained, and optimised centrally in product content management. This is the only way to ensure, for example, that all channels are updated at once and without multiple updates. Automated workflows such as AI-supported product classifications not only relieve the burden on internal resources but also ensure a lower error rate and higher data quality.





## SYNDICATION: PRECISE CONTROL OF COMMUNICATION

»Reliable orchestration of all your touchpoints.«

The provision of product content is one thing, but the reliable delivery of content to the various output channels is another task that is no longer a challenge with the right technology. **Product content syndication ensures that the right content ends up in the right channels and platforms using automated distribution processes.** In addition to the company's own output channels, these include data exchange platforms with retailers in particular.

For example, comprehensive product content life cycle management systems have direct connections to the GDSN, enabling manufacturers to share their product master data with all their

retail partners at the same time. In addition, the retailers' supplier portals can be connected or a direct integration of the product detail page for the provision of enhanced content can be implemented.

Together with syndication, product content management ensures that communication managers can **centrally control** and largely automate **all processes** relating to the procurement, creation, management, and distribution of product content. This creates capacity for more strategic tasks and the opportunity to continuously expand the customer journey and optimise the product experience at every single touchpoint.

Benefit from the advantages of our **BYRD** technology for **PCLM**

**REQUEST A PRODUCT DEMO NOW**

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