



WHITE PAPER

PIM MATURITY

How the maturity level of your PIM system determines
the success of your product content strategy



HOW THE MATURITY LEVEL OF YOUR PIM SYSTEM DETERMINES YOUR BUSINESS SUCCESS

»PIM as a central data hub is the engine of many business-critical processes.«

The importance of PIM for a successful business cannot be overstated. As a central data hub, PIM controls essential processes for product management, marketing, sales, and customer service and provides the data foundation for data & analytics to generate strategically relevant business insights. Modern PIM systems are increasingly evolving into platforms for Product Experience Management (PXM), which not only manage product data but also enable channel- and target group-specific product experiences along the entire customer journey. Accordingly, a high level of PIM maturity is extremely relevant for business objectives. PIM maturity depends in particular on the selection of the right system as well as its requirements-based configuration and integration into the

company's digital ecosystem. In modern commerce architectures, PIM is often part of a so-called composable commerce stack, in which specialised systems are flexibly connected via APIs. However, even an ideal technical setup will not deliver the desired added value if processes are not properly set up or users do not enjoy working with the system. In this white paper, we describe the five signs of a highly developed PIM system and explain which measures can be taken to optimise your PIM maturity. We also provide a checklist that you can use to test whether there is a need for action in your organisation.

Enjoy reading!

Yours sincerely,

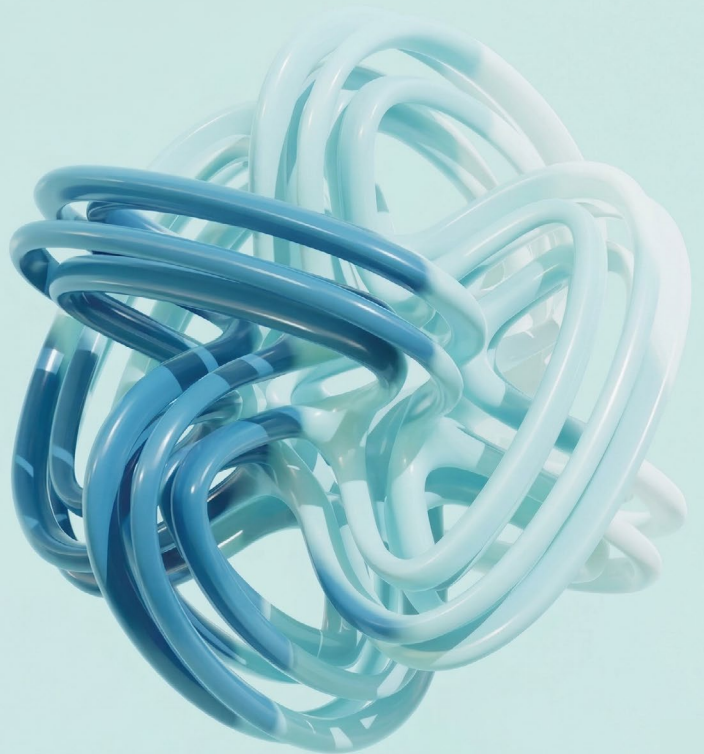
BJÖRN BAYARD

CEO | BAYARD GmbH



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ZERO WORKAROUNDS

»NO DETOURS, NO EXCEL, NO COMPROMISES.«

What is the first thing that happens when a software solution cannot optimally cover a specific use case? Workarounds are built around it – custom applications are created and certain validation or maintenance processes as well as imports and exports are simply outsourced and usually handled via Excel files. This quickly leads to a complex application environment with local files and unclear versioning.

With a highly mature PIM system, workarounds are excluded from the outset and avoided in the long term:



Suitable system selection

Finding the right PIM system is not easy in today's confusing technology market. This is all the more true as the market is currently characterised by increasing consolidation, new cloud-native providers, and the transition to composable commerce architectures. Many established providers are being acquired, merging, or no longer developing their legacy systems. This dynamic is currently causing a high level of uncertainty and companies are struggling to identify PIM systems that optimally cover their current and future requirements. This makes it all the more important to choose a suitable solution early on that **grows with requirements**, is scalable, and features a **future-proof tech stack**. These are the best prerequisites for sustainably high PIM maturity.



Use case-specific implementation

While the right system is important, optimal implementation is at least equally relevant. Based on the **most important use cases** in product management, marketing, sales, and customer service, the PIM solution must be adapted as closely as possible to existing workflows, requirements, and industry-specific rules. This requires not only the provision of internal resources but also a high level of professional expertise, project competence, and deep industry knowledge on the part of the implementation partner.



Continuous process optimisation

Once implemented, a PIM system must be continuously optimised in order to properly **incorporate changes in the system and process landscape** as well as new requirements from data recipients and regulators into its further development. Only in this way can a high level of PIM maturity be ensured in the long term.



FULLY INTEGRATED DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM

»MAXIMUM LEVEL OF INTEGRATION FOR SEAMLESS DATA PROCESSES.«

Another important aspect when assessing PIM maturity is the level of software integration. In an increasingly connected corporate world, fragmented **technology solutions** and **data silos** are a key reason why companies fail to realise their business potential. Especially in modern omnichannel and marketplace strategies, the complexity of product data processes increases significantly. Product information must be provided consistently across shop systems, marketplaces, retailer portals, apps, social commerce, and print channels. Inefficiencies, high internal effort, and avoidable sources of error have a negative impact on business success and organisational development.



To implement the target vision of a perfectly integrated digital ecosystem, the following measures must be taken:

Initial situation of the process landscape

A suitable integration strategy requires **clearly documented data processes**. Which data is needed where, in what form, and for what purpose? Which user roles are relevant for which tasks and what permissions do they require? Which surrounding systems and applications need to be integrated into end-to-end data processes? Are there native interfaces or do new interfaces need to be developed? Are data flows bilateral or do they move in only one direction? All these questions are necessary to develop a detailed and tailored integration plan step by step.

Optimisation of the infrastructure

Such an **integration plan** may also raise further questions – for example, system incompatibilities may indicate that additional system changes will be necessary in the medium to long term. Based

on the process and system landscape, further areas for action can also be identified, such as the evaluation of specific services to **optimise individual process steps** and use cases such as onboarding, syndication, GDSN integration, or enhanced content.

Perfectly designed data pipelines

Finally, the **design and implementation of individual data processes** are also crucial. They are responsible for the efficiency, flexibility, and scalability of future workflows, which is why this step is so important. An experienced and technically proficient implementation partner with a holistic overall view of digital value creation is the perfect support for achieving a high level of PIM maturity and a low-risk, cost-efficient integration project.





STATE-OF-THE-ART TECH

»FUTURE-PROOF BUSINESS REQUIRES INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY.«

The requirements for providing product content are continuously increasing. Omnichannel commerce, marketplace economies, and digital sales channels significantly increase the demands on the timeliness, completeness, and relevance of product data. Consumers expect hyper-personalised and impactful content at the right time and in the right place. At the same time, retail partners require up-to-date product content in specific formats, and regulators are increasing the pressure even further with ever stricter rules regarding the scope, transparency, and completeness of product data. In addition, regulatory requirements, for example in the context of sustainability information or the EU Digital Product Passport, are becoming ever more important. In order to be able to respond as agilely as possible to all these requirements and changes, companies need flexible and scalable product data management.



Revenue in European digital commerce is growing and, according to current figures from ECDB, is estimated to reach €901 billion by 2028.*

To achieve maximum PIM maturity, the system must therefore meet certain requirements:

Modern tech stack

Sustainable PIM maturity requires a **modern technology solution**. Cloud-native software with a powerful and flexibly extendable data model that can easily map new product content requirements is now an absolute must for manufacturers and retailers.

AI and automation

AI and process automation have become indispensable in product data management. In addition to the generation of product texts, AI technologies are now also used for automated attribute extraction, translation, classification, image analysis, and the **identification of data quality issues**. Whether in data quality assurance or in the **creation of product texts**, highly developed product information management maximises efficiency gains and ensures perfect data quality at all times.

Personalised product messaging

Modern AI technologies also support the provision of **personalised product content** – a system capability that is becoming increasingly important in dynamic digital commerce. Consumers expect targeted communication with relevant content, tailored to **the tone of the respective digital touchpoint**. Generative AI helps manufacturers address this challenge particularly efficiently and in a brand-compliant manner.



*Source: »E-Commerce in Europe 2026«, www.ecdb.com, 2026

PERFECT DATA QUALITY

»WHY ENSURING DATA QUALITY MUST BE SYSTEM-CONTROLLED.«

Data quality is probably one of the most important indicators of the maturity level of a PIM system. At the same time, it is increasingly becoming a strategic competitive factor in digital commerce, as high-quality product data has a direct impact on visibility, conversion, and customer satisfaction. It clearly reveals problems that originate at specific points along the digital value chain. These may be the import, data creation, maintenance, and transformation processes or the output of product content. However, they may also be due to the data model not being able to meet all the requirements of data recipients – a common issue between industry and retail, where data exchange can be very complex and often takes place via different channels such as supplier portals and global data pools.





This complexity cannot be managed manually. Therefore, a highly mature PIM system has several key prerequisites:

Flexible data model

As described above, a data structure is required that can be flexibly adapted to new requirements and quality rules. Ideally, you should opt for a PIM system that already includes relevant industry-specific classification structures and rules such as GDSN criteria as standard. This saves a great deal of time during implementation and data modelling and avoids increased future effort in mapping, maintenance, and transformation.

Automated data validation

Another fundamental prerequisite for a PIM with the highest level of maturity is automated validation processes during data entry and maintenance. Permissible value ranges and correct spellings are thus ensured from the outset and a basic level of data quality is guaranteed. It is also important that these quality rules can be defined easily and contextually and that the user experience during data entry is as intuitive as possible. Completely clearing the entire input form and forcing the user to start over due to invalid information in one field is certainly no longer up to date.

Comprehensive quality checks

In addition to the direct validation of data quality rules, comprehensive quality reporting is required, which, in combination with an intuitive dashboard, provides an overview of the current status. An intuitive dashboard highlight problems and pending tasks at a glance, displays the proportion of quality-assured data, and shows which data is not yet ready for publication and why. This accelerates cleansing workflows and ultimately time-to-market.





EFFECTIVE SYSTEM USAGE

»WHAT USAGE DATA REVEALS ABOUT PIM MATURITY.«



Performance, scalability, flexibility, depth of functionality, implementation, data quality assurance – these are all important indicators of high PIM maturity. However, what must never be overlooked in the overall assessment is the actual **willingness to use the system**. High user acceptance is crucial to ensure that product data processes function efficiently and that the PIM system is established as the central working platform in the product content lifecycle. Only when a technology solution is used effectively and creates real added value in the various business processes does it reach its maximum level of maturity for the organisation. **User experience naturally plays a key role here** – but employees must also feel that working directly with the data delivers real benefits. Evaluations, ease of use, and intuitive workflows that leave no questions unanswered are key best practices in PIM.

There are several ways to sustainably optimise system usage and thereby effectively improve PIM maturity:

User-centric implementation

High acceptance of the solution begins with **involving users during system implementation**.

This ensures that key use cases are implemented in line with requirements and users feel that their feedback is relevant to the implementation of the technology solution – an important factor for maximum user acceptance.

Testing and user feedback

Comprehensive testing of the PIM system before go-live is essential to identify and resolve final obstacles and issues. In the long term, regular reviews of the solution and user acceptance, for example through **feedback cycles**, are also important. Only in this way can problems be resolved at an early stage and dissatisfaction among employees in dealing with the solution be effectively prevented.

Analytics and reporting

In addition to directly collecting feedback and testing data processes and workflows, PIM systems should also **provide their own analyses of user activities**. This enables PIM managers to assess how system usage evolves over time and prevent potential problems before they even arise.



SUMMARY

»PIM MATURITY AS A METRIC FOR YOUR PRODUCT CONTENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY.«

PIM is an essential core element of the end-to-end product content lifecycle. The higher the maturity level of the PIM system, the more effectively companies can manage their product content strategy and their cross-channel product experiences. **PIM maturity** is therefore a **fundamental metric for a holistic digital strategy**.

An insufficient level of maturity indicates optimisation potential – whether in infrastructure, the process landscape, or quality assurance. If you want to know where your PIM maturity stands, complete our checklist and find out whether there is a need for action in your organisation.

Take advantage of our **BYRD** technology for your product content lifecycle management.

REQUEST A PRODUCT DEMO NOW





CHECKLIST

DOES YOUR PIM HAVE A MATURITY ISSUE?



You can use this checklist to tick off the individual items to assess the maturity of your PIM system:

WORKAROUNDS

- ☐ 90 per cent or more of our product data processes run within the PIM system itself.
- ☐ No product data is exported to Excel for maintenance and/or transformation tasks.
- ☐ Stakeholders from all relevant business areas were involved in the PIM implementation.
- ☐ The PIM system is regularly adapted to new requirements, surrounding systems, and quality rules.

INTEGRATIONS

- ☐ There is a direct connection to the DAM system (if available).
- ☐ There is a direct connection to the shop system (if available).
- ☐ There is a direct connection to the print system (if available).
- ☐ There is a direct connection to all relevant online marketplaces.
- ☐ There is a direct connection to all relevant supplier portals.
- ☐ There is a direct connection to relevant data pools such as GDSN.
- ☐ There are no disruptions in cross-system PIM-relevant data processes.

TECH STACK

- ☐ The PIM system is based on cloud-native technology with an API-first approach.
- ☐ Extending the current data model is possible without major effort.
- ☐ The current solution offers AI components for all relevant tasks and processes.
- ☐ Our current PIM solution supports personalised customer communication.



DATA QUALITY

- ☐ Our current PIM system offers automated validation processes to ensure data quality.
- ☐ The rules for validation processes can be managed intuitively and contextually within the PIM system.
- ☐ Our current PIM system offers comprehensive data quality reporting with intuitive dashboards and clear, customisable workflows.
- ☐ The overall data quality in the product area is adequate to very good.

SYSTEM USAGE

- ☐ Our current PIM system offers comprehensive analysis of user data.
- ☐ User acceptance tests and surveys are conducted regularly.
- ☐ There are currently no complaints regarding the usability or user experience of the existing PIM system.
- ☐ The performance and stability of the current PIM system are satisfactory.



If you were able to tick 18–23 boxes for the criteria relevant to you, you don't need to worry about the maturity of your PIM system just yet.

If you ticked fewer boxes, it's worth taking a closer look at your current PIM system, its configuration, system integration and your data processes.