How to succeed with PIM

Laying the foundations
for the future

bizzkit

Introduction

The PIM system can be a crucial step in your company's growth journey. It can help boost both the top and bottom line. It can reduce your time-to-market, convince customers to buy and reduce the number of returns.

In other words, PIM can be a really valuable investment that makes your work simpler, more efficient and more profitable.

However, there is no guarantee of immediate success. Successful implementation of PIM requires focus – both to integrate it in the first place, but also to get the most out of it once it's up and running.

That is why we have prepared this guide to help you get the most out of PIM. For those who are already well on their way – and those who are still considering it.

Happy reading!

[IF YOU DO NOT HAVE PIM]

How to get started with PIM

[IF YOU HAVE PIM]

Be even more successful with PIM

How to get started with PIM

Are you considering PIM?
Then you've come to
the right place!

Introduction to PIM

Are you drowning in new products to create or update? Are you finding it difficult to enter a new market? Are your customers asking for more information about your products?

If you answered yes to just one of these questions, it's a sign that you could benefit from PIM.

Basically, a PIM system helps you keep track of product information. It's in the name: Product Information Management System. Having your product information under control gives you much more than just a solid database.

It offers a shorter time-to-market because it's easier to create and maintain products. It gives you a tool for collaboration between sales, marketing and all other departments. Plus, it gives you a scalable foundation for future growth. And these benefits are really worth considering for your systems. In fact, when you view your PIM as more than a database, that's when it can truly be successful.

Five good reasons to choose a PIM system

[01] ## You want to have complete control over your product data

This is the absolute core of a PIM system. It functions as a single, unified place for your product data – regardless of whether you have a thousand products or several million item numbers. This ensures that you have complete and usable product data in one central location.

[02] ## You want to enter new markets

A PIM system makes it easy to take into account different languages, units of measurement and country-specific information. The system stores all data related to a product in one single data point. This means that you don't have to create five different products if you are in five different countries.

[03] ## You need to ensure scalability

A resilient foundation for your business: It makes it easy to add new channels, product groups, shops, brands and language layers because your data is universally applicable.

[04] ## You want to improve the customer experience

Customers make their choices based on good product data. Better data means more opportunities for them to find exactly what they want – and make decisions. Better data means better SEO and on-site search, which means more conversions.

[05] ## You need to simplify collaboration in terms of product handling

PIM systems are increasingly becoming a platform where many different employees work together. Therefore, the system must be built for shared product-handling tasks. This provides a dynamic system that makes it easy to adapt to new trends, run your business and get to the top of Google's search results.

WHAT SHOULD I BE AWARE OF WHEN CHOOSING A PIM SYSTEM?

PIM isn't just PIM. There are many different options on the market and you should of course find the one that suits you best – both for now and in the future.

What are your needs?

It is important to clarify your specific requirements first. How many products should your PIM accommodate? How many employees should be able to work in the system at the same time? Which systems should your PIM integrate with?

The basic questions are your main filters for navigating the PIM jungle.

A PIM system is never free to implement:

This means that you must always take the future into account. Do you plan to scale your business abroad in the next five years? Are you planning to expand your offering? Will you pursue new channels as technology changes and customers change their behaviour?

A PIM system is a long-term strategic investment. The system must therefore be able to keep up with your ambitions.

What should the system integrate with?

Which ERP, DAM and CMS do you have now, and can your future PIM system be easily integrated into these systems? If you are also planning to replace some of these systems in the near future, your PIM system must also be suitable for new integrations. Which systems support both accessing and correcting of data?

There are many other considerations involved in choosing a new PIM. They are also important, but always remember the future perspective. It doesn't pay to purchase a PIM you'll outgrow anytime soon.

Get the most out of your product data

Product data is not just information. Think of it as arguments that help convince the customer to buy a product.

Customers need to be presented with the arguments that suit them. These can include anything from the right branding story about authenticity and sustainability to height and length specifications. In fact, all data can be a decisive factor for a customer to add an item to their cart.

It is therefore essential to be able to present the customer with as much relevant information as possible for each product. Product data is what sells your products.

In addition, the accuracy of your information is also crucial for ensuring that the customer finds your products in the first place. If you're buying a new TV, you typically know how big a screen you have room for. Customers are

therefore looking at, for example, 110 cm wide Ultra HD TVs. The size and fact it's Ultra HD is product information that comes directly from a PIM system.

Product information is therefore essential for the customer in both the research phase and the decision phase. This consideration is essential when creating your data structures in PIM.

Research what product information customers use for keywords or filtering when considering your product types. Make these searchable parameters in your webshop and make sure you don't miss a potential purchase.

Your product data needs to be comprehensive and clear, because customers use it to make the decisions you need them to.

– get the most out of PIM

A PIM system is not just a database. It's a tool you can actively use to increase your sales and reach new channels and markets.

A PIM system is the perfect launch pad to enter new channels. Before the coronavirus epidemic, not many companies used live shopping. But now they do – and one thing is certain. The companies that had a PIM system with open integration found it easier to use the new technology and jump on the live shopping wave. That's because they had available data that was easy to transfer to a new system.
A PIM system can thus lay the groundwork for the dynamism needed to rapidly adapt and implement new technology. It's an investment in short time-to-market on new initiatives.

However, PIM doesn't just safeguard the future. The same goes for current campaigns.

In fact, PIM is the perfect place to structure and devise your latest campaigns. You can easily customise prices and create segmentations to reach the exact audiences you want. It's a tool that enables your sales and marketing departments to quickly and easily build campaigns that address current trends and customer demand, right down to the individual customer.

Therefore, it is important not to see the PIM system as just a back-end function that supports your business – rather, the system should be viewed as an active one; as what drives your sales.

Checklist

To give you the best possible overview before investing in PIM, here is a checklist of the most important things to consider. If you've considered everything before signing with a partner, you can't go wrong.

Specifications

» Can the PIM system handle the number of products you want?

» How many people should be able to work in the system at the same time, and is that enough?

» Is the system cloud-based?

» Can the system integrate with your other technology and support your business processes?

» How easy is it to create and edit product data in the system?

» Can the system receive data directly from your suppliers?

Future-proofing

» Is the system scalable?

» Can the system match your growth ambitions in terms of product numbers?

» Is the system ready to deliver data to new sales channels like live shopping and marketplaces?

» Is the system built so that sales and marketing can also benefit from it?

» Will the system continue to be developed and upgraded? What direction is it moving in?

Powerful data in multiple dimensions

Data is not limited to information about the products. It's also a question of actively using your data to reach customers where they are.

This means that, in addition to data about your products, there will always be data about your customers, about your market and about your sales channel. All data points are essential for establishing e-commerce success.

Therefore, it is important that your PIM system can handle data across four dimensions.

Your products need to reach the right customers, on the right platform, in the right market. This requires your systems to be able to segment correctly and display the right data across your audiences.
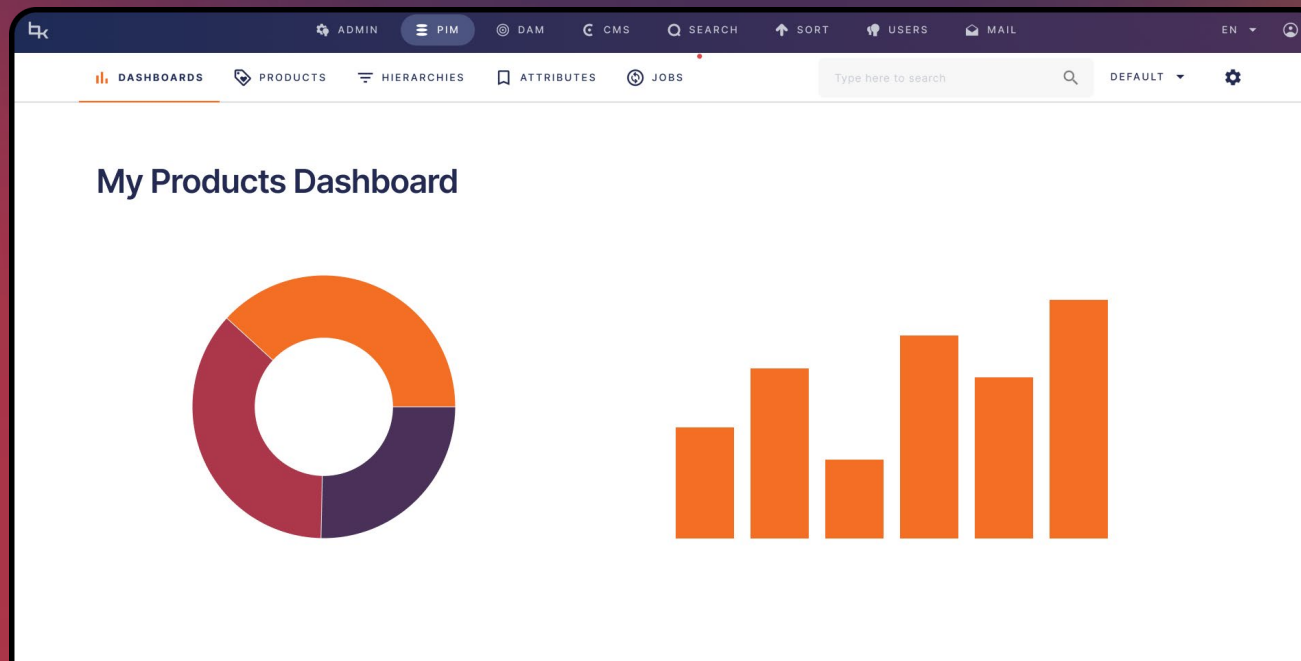
Segmentation is a complex task that requires a PIM system with flexible data structures, where it is easy to move between countries, customers, channels and products. Bizzkit PIM can do this, because the system is structured around each product being bound only by an ID number.

This means that the same product can easily change name depending on who sees it or in which country it is displayed. The product can be included in different bundles and SKUs because it is designed for flexibility.

It may sound complex, but in reality, it reduces complexity as you only have one data point to keep track of – even if you sell the same product in ten different countries to forty different customer types across four sales channels.
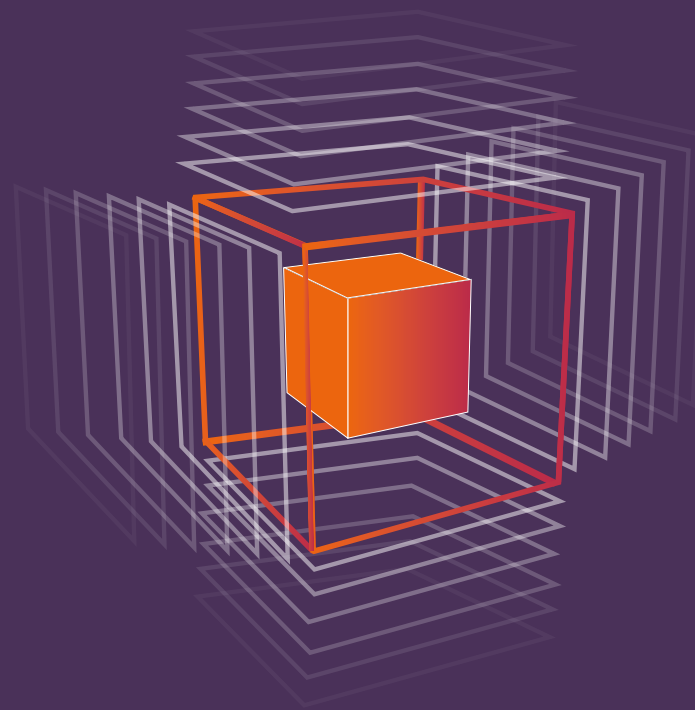
Be even more successful with PIM

The recipe for PIM success for those who are already well on their way.
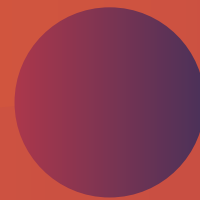
A PIM system is not just a data warehouse

Of course, your PIM system is first and foremost the place where you store your product data, but it's more than that. A PIM system is also a great tool for working across departments. It's a tool that makes it easy to reach new channels and new markets. It's also a tool that frees up a lot of time and money for other projects.

This is certainly the ideal PIM scenario. This is what PIM success looks like. Unfortunately, it may not look like that to you. That's why we've written this guide to help you get the most out of a modern PIM system.

We want to show what the very best systems can do and why these features are important in a system that handles product information. We do this so you can assess whether you're getting enough out of your current system, or whether it might be time to upgrade.

A PIM system is successful when you find that your customers are happier, your bottom line improves and your employees have more time.

Are you getting enough value out of your PIM system today?

Let's start with a simple question: Are your employees happy with the system? Has it made the job of creating and maintaining products simpler for them? This is the core task of the PIM system, and therefore one of the most important parameters for its success.

The next essential parameter is your customers. Are they satisfied? Are you receiving fewer calls to customer service with product-specific questions? Have you had fewer return orders after implementing your PIM system?

The two parameters employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction are the key figures when assessing your PIM system. The system should result in a simpler everyday life for both groups. If it doesn't,

it's a significant indicator that you're not getting the most out of your system.

Ask employees why they are not satisfied with the system? Is it unmanageable? Confusing? Do they need better training? Are they missing some functionality? Is it bothersome to create new products or update existing products?

You should also examine why customers do not feel like they are better informed.

These two studies are the main starting point for making informed, strategic decisions. Because something needs to improve – but is it the workflow of the system? Functionality? The PIM system itself? Is it training or is it better UX in your webshop?

What is the main area of focus?

In addition, you should also ask whether the system supports business development? Is there potential to go into new countries? To expand with new product categories and do complex segmentation based on data?

How easy is it to edit product data?

To be more specific, we would like to describe an example of common frustrations related to workflows. In most PIM systems, it is very easy to create or import individual new products. Problems usually arise when entire product groups need to be managed. In this example, the task is to ensure that all washing machines in a PIM system have a specified power consumption. While not previously in demand, the information has now become very relevant. At the same time, an employee discovers that some of the machines are missing brand information.

Many PIM systems include the option to perform the same action on multiple products at once. This means marking the energy consumption of all washing machines at say 350 W. The problem is that not all machines have the same power consumption. Some have 400 W. Others have 300 W. This means that you

can only update all machines with 350 W at once. Then all with 300 W. And so on.

However, some of the machines lack brand information. Not all machines are from Bosch or Miele, so you can't just add this information with the wattage information. This information must subsequently be added individually.

In other words, it quickly becomes a relatively heavy workload if the system does not support editing different data on different products in the same flow.

If employees struggle with this, you should investigate whether the functionality actually exists, whether it can be developed or whether you should change the system. It's about unlocking the PIM system's promise of efficiency.

What does the future look like?

Does your PIM system match your ambitions?

Your PIM system doesn't just need to support your objectives in the here and now. It also needs to do so in the future. Therefore, it is important that you consider how the system and its use will evolve in the future. In other words: Are you ready to grow?

It's essential that your data structures are set up in a way that makes it expedient to extend the range with new products or language layers. For example, how easy is it to create variations across products when you enter a new country?

Is the system ready to handle thousands of new products, or does it have a limitation?

It's important to match the PIM system to your business development expectations, so you can choose a system that can scale as you grow. Keeping the system working and doing what you need it to do is an essential element of your PIM success.

It's important to stay on top of this, because the implementation of a PIM system is both costly and time-consuming. That's why it's essential to clarify whether you need to update your current system, extend it or change it completely to meet your next five-year plan.

Sustainability strategy enabled by PIM

Sustainability is a complex and evolving issue. This is evident for the Davidsen chain of hardware stores, which is experiencing increasing documentation and legal requirements in the area of sustainability. This means that their B2B customers are very much looking for lifecycle assessments, impact reports and certifications when building. And they want the documents in the most simple way possible.

Davidsen therefore use their PIM system to ensure that all relevant documents are linked to individual products, but they also do much more than that.

For example, it's important that builders can download all certificates of a certain type at once for an entire building. There are perhaps a hundred different materials involved in the construction of a standard house. Retrieving certificates manually for each material would be cumbersome.

Davidsen used their PIM system as a foundation to divide the documents into a number of different types, allowing customers to retrieve exactly the documents they need. Whether it's for a single order or a full contract.

This has made it easy for customers to document the buildings' sustainability and has reduced the time Davidsen spend on documentation. The solution has been simple and cheap to implement and develop because Davidsen's PIM already supported the data complexity and could divide the documents into the right categories.

How is cooperation within the system?

How can you work together across departments in the PIM system today?

The latest PIM systems are now well-functioning collaborative machines that support work across departments.

When sales and marketing have easy access to the PIM system, creating campaigns and addressing emerging trends is made easier. It is easy to get an overview and stay in close contact with the product team.

At the same time, it makes it easier for your SEO managers to create the right optimised product descriptions that will reach a wide audience.

It's about organising work in a way that creates synergies. Therefore, it is essential that your PIM solution supports a variety of workflows. It is important that you can set up automation targeted at individual teams and functions. For example, you should let the SEO copywriter extract a list of all products that do not have optimised product descriptions. At the same time, the product team receives notifications about all items that require action.

The system also needs to be able to go back into your supply chain or design department, so they can either automatically or manually add specific data points.

You should be able to control exactly which rights different groups of employees have in the system. What can they see? What can they do? What should they not be able to do?

The system should be scalable to make your work on products, campaigns, SEO and conversion optimisation simpler.

Think:
PIM FIRST

A new concept is beginning to emerge in the e-commerce market. A PIM First Approach. The idea that the most fundamental system for a webshop is the PIM system. This is because the PIM system is the products' system. Products are what you sell. Therefore, they must be completely under control. The products are a prerequisite for the rest of the shop.

This idea is about both system architecture and workflows. It's about which system different information should be processed in, and about focusing on the products as much as possible.

This approach ensures that the products come to life on your platform as quickly as possible. It's about creating a shorter time-to-market, but also fewer errors. Errors in products and descriptions are costly in terms of returns and lost customers. By ensuring that you are completely on top of your products from the start, you minimise the risk of customers finding the product elsewhere.

The PIM First mindset characterises most modern systems that are not just databases. These are the solutions that act as a hub for many different employees, all of whom need to be close to your products. At the same time, it ensures that your product data can be sent to all kinds of sales and media channels.

It is worth considering whether this mindset can contribute positively to your future growth and PIM strategy.

Checklist

We want to make it easy to understand the advice and considerations we present in this white paper, so we have created a checklist for you to use to see if you have covered all the essential details regarding your PIM system.

How satisfied are you with your PIM system?

» Are your employees happy with the system?

» Is it easy to use and are your workflows efficient?

» Do you feel that product work has become easier?

» Are your customers more satisfied?

» Are they returning fewer orders?

» Are you experiencing a higher conversion rate from the product pages?

Are you future-proof?

» Does the PIM system support the objectives of your strategy?

» Can your system be easily updated?

» Can it be integrated with new channels and platforms?

» Does the system support increased collaboration and a higher number of active users at the same time?

» Does the system have the flexibility you need?

CHECK LIST

Curious?

You are always very welcome to contact us at Bizzkit to learn more about our PIM system. You can call or write to us here:

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