

Shopping is complex. It has evolved from the straightforward process of going to the store, picking up the item, walking to the check-out counter to pay, and done. Today, many shoppers forgo physical stores in favor of online shopping for its convenience and accessibility. They are also tenacious at finding information about a product they want to purchase because they have a variety of channels and devices at their fingertips.

This shopping behavior is one reason why e-commerce is booming and why its sales are expected to surpass \$7401 billion by 2023. It is also why brands and retailers must optimize their e-commerce channels and branch out to multiple marketplaces. To do so, they must be able to distribute product information (details, images, videos, ratings and reviews) easily, efficiently and often, all while complying with known standards and requirements. This is known as product content syndication – effectively syncing product information across multiple channels.

However, product content syndication is not easy, especially if done manually. Here's why:

- Different formats and specific requirements of each e-commerce platform or marketplace*
- Time-intensive efforts to validate product content*
- Maintaining all product information updated on multiple channels*
- High costs incurred to pay staff to do manual updates*

Furthermore, these manual processes can result in:

- Long time-to-market*
- Damage to reputation if shoppers see inconsistent, incorrect or outdated product content*
- Missed market opportunities*
- Possible rejection from marketplaces for non-compliance*

If product content syndication requires so much effort from brands and retailers, can it be improved?

Yes, because syndication can be automated.

When done automatically, product content syndication can:

- 1. Transform product information. Publishing product information to various e-commerce platforms involves transforming product data to comply with requirements such as format, style, etc. These requirements differ per e-commerce platform, and elementary mapping knowledge won't work. An automated content syndicator utilizes algorithms that map content on a taxonomy level.*
- 2. Distribute product information across multiple channels automatically. Sharing product content to multiple sales channels can be done automatically. This allows all sales channels to be easily kept up to date with minimal effort.*

3. *Maintain up-to-date product content. Inconsistent or outdated product information lowers sales and impacts the reputation of your brand. By automatically syncing high-quality and current product content, you can ensure your e-commerce shops always have the right information.*

Automation of product content syndication

Brands and retailers often leverage Product Information Management (PIM) solutions to manage and enrich their product content. However, they must find a way to upload and modify product content from their systems to the respective e-commerce channels.

Thankfully, many e-commerce vendors offer ways to syndicate without too much business disruption. These e-commerce platforms often partner with different software vendors to develop integrations to their software. For instance, PIM vendors can develop APIs or create proprietary connectors that enable brands and retailers to deliver optimal product content by integrating with the required e-commerce platforms. [Magento \(an Adobe Company\)](#), BigCommerce, Oro Commerce and plentymarkets, to name a few, are some e-commerce platforms that enable this type of integration.

By connecting PIM systems with e-commerce platforms, brands and retailers can:

- *Automate the distribution of synced product data to various channels*
- *Manage multiple e-commerce shops easily*
- *Optimize product information with rich, complete and up to date data*
- *Facilitate consistent and engaging customer experiences*
- *Simplify product content syndication efforts*
- *Minimize shopping cart abandonment and returns*

Enabling efficient product content syndication with e-commerce platforms makes it easier for brands to optimize customer experience without the need to invest large amounts of time and effort. Doing so is essential to compete in the digital race.

“15 years ago, the average consumer typically used two touchpoints when buying an item and only 7% regularly used more than four. Today consumers use an average of almost six touch points, with 50% regularly using more than four.”– Marketing Week²

References

¹ <https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/online-shopping-statistics/#5-essential-online-shopping-statistics>

² <https://www.marketingweek.com/why-marketers-are-failing-to-target-consumers-at-key-life-events/>