

5 COMMON MISTAKES IN PIM PROJECTS



Start with
Data

The product data experts



Introduction

A successful PIM project requires the best consultancy advice and action, a well-matched technology partner and involvement of all your key stakeholders.

Unfortunately, many organisations skip steps or fail to take into account the key factors underlying the involvement of the above parties.

This ebook identifies five of the most common mistakes made by retailers, distributors and manufacturers on PIM projects. We also touch on what to do to avoid these mistakes.

Prevention is always the best cure.





1

A lack of concrete objectives and business value

A common problem on PIM projects is a failure to establish exactly what goals have prompted its introduction. It might seem basic, but the extent of its usefulness is only determined by what it can do. In turn, that must be determined by the key stakeholders in the organisation, to the highest level.

Here are some things to get clear on **before** you start a PIM project:

- What is your overarching vision?
- How does that translate into company strategy for the coming years?
- What is the gap between where the organisation is and where it wants to be?
- Are KPIs in place to assess progress?
- Is there a strategic aim to, for example, expand the company, move into new markets, and extend the range of products?
- All in all, will the business leverage the power, adaptability and range of functionalities of PIM to fulfil its longer-term goals?

A discovery phase of a project is crucial for successful PIM project, especially for a PIM implementation. By communicating extensively with all partners and stakeholders, the two imperatives underlying the need for a PIM – specific objectives and added business value – will be clarified and crystallised. The organisation's longer-term aims will align with the integration of a PIM solution whose functionalities and capabilities ease the route to those goals.



2

Poor definition of business requirements

Do you know exactly what it is you need from your PIM?

Many organisations put the cart before the horse in their desperation to keep up with the ongoing digital transformation in retailing, distribution and manufacturing – they implement a PIM solution without having done the necessary discovery work required to ensure it does exactly what you need it to do based on your business requirements.

That means either it is not fit for purpose, or it fails to optimise its range of functionalities. The company may miss out on integrating features which, while not required at present, could be the key to adapting to new circumstances (extension of product range or expansion overseas, for instance) and being responsive to rapidly changing consumer demands.

When determining how to match your PIM solution to what your business requirements are, factors include:

Configuration

There are almost limitless variety of ways to structure processes, workflows, integration of incoming data and pushing enriched information out to a multitude of channels

Modularity

Offer greater flexibility when customising the PIM to your needs. You may plan for further modules to reflect your specific use cases or add features not covered initially, making it easier to develop the complexity of the PIM gradually

Automation

Decrease the manual workload and reduces the number of avoidable errors in processing. Onboarding product data, verifying completeness, translating information into various languages, assembling and enriching product catalogs, and quality checking of uploaded data assets

Integration

The new PIM needs to be fully-integrated with your existing technology stack, as a failure to do this may well result in repeated problems and an inability to fulfil the organisation's requirements (and expectations)

All the above is why at Start with Data, we run discovery workshops with the key stakeholders to capture business requirements and specific use cases in order to ensure the PIM solution you choose does what you need it to do.



3

No attention given to business processes and workflows

Many businesses envisage a shiny new PIM and are dazzled by its capabilities and wide-ranging functionalities. Indeed, there are many outstanding PIMs on the market. Nevertheless, if you don't give any thought to how you are going to adapt, alter, eliminate or add to your business processes and workflows, once the PIM is up and running, you will find that the practices you used pre-PIM (and assumed would be fit for use post-implementation) are no longer efficient or effective as your business grows.

When it comes to establishing a business case, PIM can also act as the catalyst for change. Your business could be looking to overhaul processes and reduce costs, or has the objective of gaining greater control over enrichment of product information. You may wish to expand the product range and are looking for ways to streamline the onboarding process. The benefit in the second case is significantly reduced time to market for newly onboarded product data. If the organisation wants to transform itself into a truly data-driven business, there are several operational and strategic benefits of PIM implementation. Taken as a whole, they will enhance business performance across the entire value chain and throughout the lifecycle of product data within the organisation.

You need scalable business processes designed which will optimise your management of product data. Furthermore, on the basis of in-depth analysis into your future requirements, the design of the solution and integration architecture can be done to ensure the PIM solution realises the value of better product data management.

Software should be fit for everyday use, so, give careful consideration to the people who will actually be working with it. The majority are business users, and a confusing, cluttered interface could render it difficult to use and even lead to mistakes.

An intuitive user interface, ease of cooperation and access controls are important for faster processes and also make the work flow more easily. That's why interface quality is a key requirement, both for individual use and team collaboration.



4

Selecting a PIM platform which doesn't meet the functional scope required

In some cases, the choice made for a PIM solution does not reach or match with the scope of functionalities required. A lack of foresight regarding operational efficiency or strategic growth could result in using a PIM which is not configured to fully respond to the needs of the stakeholders and daily users. For example, if your company is part of a group which has grown organically and where every business unit uses its own data model, the product data structures are not likely to be compatible. That would require an integration functionality which actually exists but wasn't included in the functional specifications agreed with the provider.

At the risk of repetition, to avoid this mistake, discovery is key. Identify key stakeholders and decision-makers for the PIM, collate their requirements, examine the current working processes in depth and think strategically about future scenarios when it comes to implementing the project.

That's why at Start With Data, we carry out an assessment of your strategic KPIs and business outcomes to identify what functionalities you require for your PIM to enhance current processes and workflows as well as covering all eventualities regarding expansion and scalability. Once your PIM system is integrated, we run quality analysis on it, coordinate user training and perform system integration testing to ensure it precisely fits your needs.

Start with Data PIM Selection

The expert guidance you need to find the right technology for today and the future. Save time and resources and de-risk your selection process by turning to our business and technology experts.





5

No data migration plan

Poor quality data can cause all sorts of problems and the source of the problem often lies in a poorly-thought-out data migration plan (or no plan at all!). Businesses may think; “Well, we’ve spent good money on this wonderful PIM platform. All we need to do is transfer all our existing data and dump it in the new system and...hey presto! Perfect product data management.” Perhaps an exaggeration, but many PIM projects fail because the migration process wasn’t thought through. Product data from a legacy system could have all sorts of issues – it could be outdated, plain wrong, inconsistent, duplicated, incomplete. It’s illogical to take all those problems, dump them in a new system and expect everything to work like clockwork.

At Start with data, our data migration specialists take great care in carrying out a forensic discovery phase to identify problematic data. As such, we create and execute a solid data migration strategy –profiling, mapping, cleansing and transforming all your product data to make absolutely sure that your new data model to be implemented in your PIM solution is of the highest possible quality.

Making one or more of the mistakes above will impede the full effectiveness of a PIM project. That’s why it is highly advisable to use a consultancy partner with a proven track record in successful PIM implementations. Our network of expert consultants provide the knowledge, experience and interpersonal skills to ensure your needs and goals are captured and that the PIM you deploy maximises its effectiveness in relation to your specific requirements.

Start with Data Data Migration

Get a turnkey solution for delivering high-quality data as your systems landscape evolves.



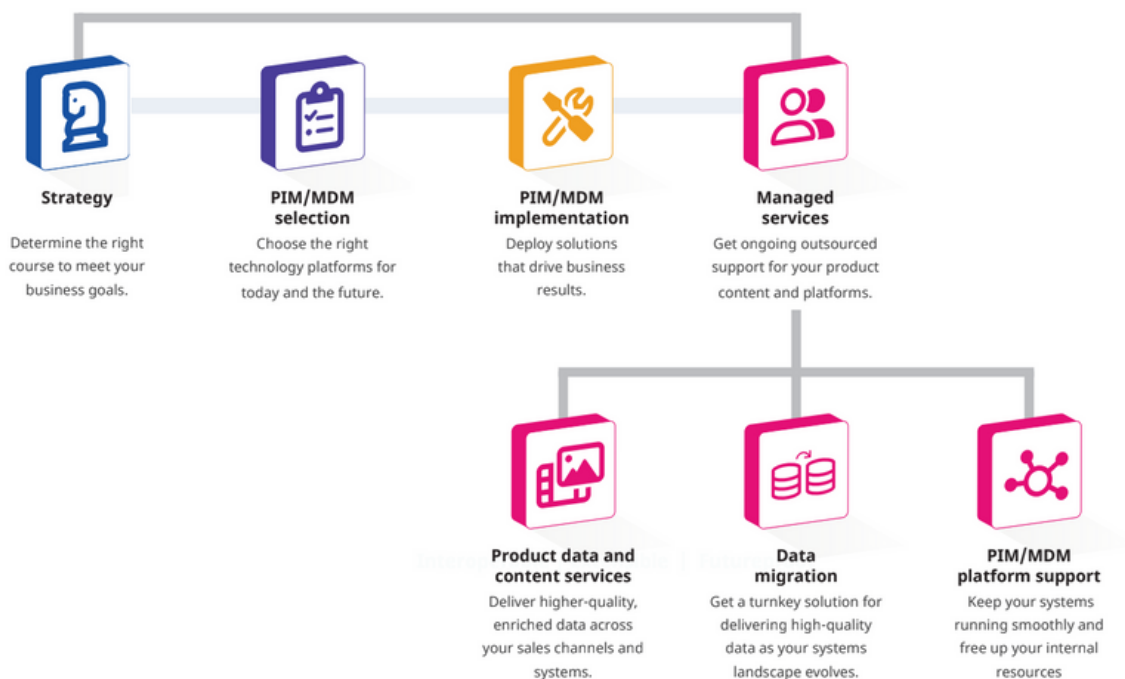


How can Start with Data help?

Whether you need help devising a winning strategy, selecting, or implementing the right platforms to meet your business goals, or need help managing your product information and systems on an ongoing basis—we've got you covered.

All our services have one thing in common, our strategic approach. We understand that to meet your business goals; we need to keep an eye on the big picture, which means your people, processes, and the technology that enables them.

That discipline, along with our deep industry and technical expertise, enables us to handle complex data management challenges and create long-term value for our clients.



Ready to start your journey to product data greatness?

Learn more about the [services](#) Start with Data provide at startwithdata.co.uk

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