

# Mastering Ecommerce Product Content in Wholesale Distribution

Guide



# Introduction

In today's digital world, everyone expects to find the information they need at the click of a button [or a voice command]. We're an instant gratification nation. If we have questions, we want them answered immediately.

As a wholesaler/distributor, you need to enable your customers to quickly and efficiently find what they need so they can get on with running their business. Delivering a B2B ecommerce experience that gives customers the information they need to research a product and make a purchase begins with building a strategy around how you're going to acquire, enrich, and display your product content within your ecommerce platform.

Customers need access to product data to help them find the right products and inform their purchases. And they're increasingly turning to online research to get this information. According to a study of B2B researchers by Google, 89% of B2B researchers use the internet during the B2B research process. Customers are spending time educating themselves, evaluating your competitors and analyzing the right products and services for their businesses. Your product content has to answer the questions they're asking, or they will go elsewhere to find the information they need.

The reality is, without robust product content, your ecommerce site is like a grocery store without any food on the shelves. Pretty useless. You don't want your customers to go hungry.





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As you begin your ecommerce journey, here are some critical questions you should consider while building your product content strategy — and helpful tips to get you on your way to building out an ecommerce solution that meets the needs of your customers.

# 6 Key Product Content Considerations

Wholesaler and distributors should make while building an ecommerce strategy

## 1. What is your current product landscape?

We'll be the first to admit that building your product content strategy isn't exactly an overnight thing. Some distributors spend millions of dollars and dedicate multiple people to maintain their product catalogs. Before you start building out your product content strategy, take a moment to assess your needs. More specifically, ask yourself a few questions like:

- How many SKUs are in our catalog?
- How many products do we want to offer online?
- What verticals do we serve?
- What kind of product information do our customers expect to find?

Okay, so these first questions are pretty basic. The point is, you have to map out your product content needs BEFORE you can build a deeper strategy around how you account for those needs. That brings us to our next two questions...

## 2. Where are you getting your product information today?

It's important to consider where you are getting your product information from. Are you getting it directly from your manufacturers? Are you part of a larger group or association like IDEA or AD that offers ecommerce feed services? Are there multiple product feeds you need to account for? What

percentage of your product offerings are you able to get through a data feed as opposed to needing to gather the information manually?

## 3. What is the quality of your product information?

When you receive the content from the various sources, is it high quality? Is it accurate? Does it provide all the information your customers are looking for? Does it need to be enhanced or enriched? Really think about all of the work that needs to be done when you're analyzing this part of your content strategy so that you can plan for all the facets of providing the information your customers need.

This might sound like a lot of work but keep in mind, you can work with an external partner to enhance or enrich the data.







#### 4. Do you have the capacity to manage your product content inhouse? Do you need to hire help?

Many distributors dedicate entire teams to managing their product content. The reality is that end-to-end management of your product content takes time and resources. If you don't have the time or resources to take it all on, don't worry. You can outsource this to companies like DDS or Datagility, and they can manage all of the content data for you.

Once you have a plan for how you will collect and enrich the data you need, it's time to consider how you will keep the product information up-to-date.

The next step in building your content strategy is to really think about your product maintenance plan. Here's a stat to think about. There are over 100,000 changes per WEEK across 1.3 million products! And that's just in the electrical space.

It's mind numbing to think about how any single person could keep all that data up-to-date.

It's clear that product data maintenance has become quite technical and requires a considerable effort to keep up. You may not have the resources or expertise to manage all this. That's okay! There are many benefits to outsourcing product content management so you can focus on running your business. A content management expert can help give you access to more manufacturers and their full line of products. They can also help you reduce errors in manual, post manipulation of data. Finally, they relieve the stress of staying current with the continual product data changes. For some organizations, it makes good business sense to manage the content data in-house. If you decide to build a product content team internally, you'll need a tool to help you stay organized.

## 5. Do you have a centralized, efficient way to gather, curate and organize your product content?

You likely have hundreds or even thousands of products which means endless documents, images and digital assets. To build powerful ecommerce experiences and keep your customers coming back for more, you have to gain control of all of this content.

Most organizations do this with a Product Information Management (PIM) system. With a PIM, you can collect and store information about products, enforce content standards, upload assets and collaborate with contributors all in one place. PIMs give you an efficient, centralized way to gather, organize and curate all your product information.

After all that pre-planning, it's time to assemble your content strategy.

## 6. What is your product content strategy?

When creating your content strategy, ensure you're considering critical product elements that will set you apart from the competition including:

- Product safety and warranty information
  - Price and inventory
  - Comparison charts
  - Categories/facets
  - Accessories and related products
- Your product content needs to do a good job of answering common questions your customers are asking like:
- Is this the product I'm looking for?
  - Is this product available? How many are available?
  - How much does this product cost?
  - Are there other alternatives to this product?
  - What does my team need to know about the product?
  - What does this product look like?
- In an age when we expect to quickly find information online, your business needs to keep up with customer expectations. If you're not convinced, here's a few more benefits of strong product content strategies:
- Enable customers to find what they need to find
  - Improve SEO, driving more traffic to your website
  - Improve overall customer experience
  - Increase conversions, transactions and revenue

Episerver is a software company first. But we recognize the importance of product content. Our focus is on providing a world-class commerce engine and offering flexible options around product information so you're not locked into a one-size-fits-all scenario.

**Get started with us here: [episerver.com/contact-us](https://episerver.com/contact-us).**

# About Episerver

Episerver empowers businesses to scale through the most customer-centric approach to digital experiences. Its Customer-Centric Digital Experience Platform™ features best-in-class content management, robust commerce and intuitive data and personalization solutions. The platform has consistently earned industry, analyst and media recognition for its vision, capabilities and customer commitment. Episerver's 900+ partners and 825+ employees in offices around the globe are proud to help more than 8,000 customers enrich their customer lifetime value, increase revenue and grow their brands.

Learn more at [episerver.com](https://www.episerver.com).

