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How digital product information shapes the shopping experience

The power of first impression

According to psychologists from the University of Princeton, Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov, **it only takes one tenth of a second to make a first impression about a person** (source: First Impressions: Making Up Your Mind After a 100-Ms Exposure to a Face). As their experiments have shown, longer exposure does not significantly change this impression, and all this is done on a subconscious level. **Exactly the same way we make our first opinions about products.**

A human is equipped with specific tools that enable the reception of a given object. These are the senses: sight, taste, smell, hearing and touch. **We use all of them to create opinions on products.** In the online world, however, things get a little more complicated. On the Internet we can only see or hear a product. The field of influence on the recipient is significantly narrowed.

That is why it is so important to use all possible tools that will allow us to reproduce a physical object in the Internet. **This set of tools is called product information, which is a comprehensive collection of all data describing the product.** It includes such attributes as: text, static images, motion pictures, music and sounds.

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Shopping behavior in numbers

Research on the use of smartphones provides interesting data. It turns out that when shopping in stationary stores, customers are increasingly **using phones to compare prices or to obtain product information**. As it turns out, only 35% of consumers decide to talk to the shopping assistants in case of doubts about the purchase.

Why do we use phones in the store?

- Searching for opinions about the product
- Searching for additional information
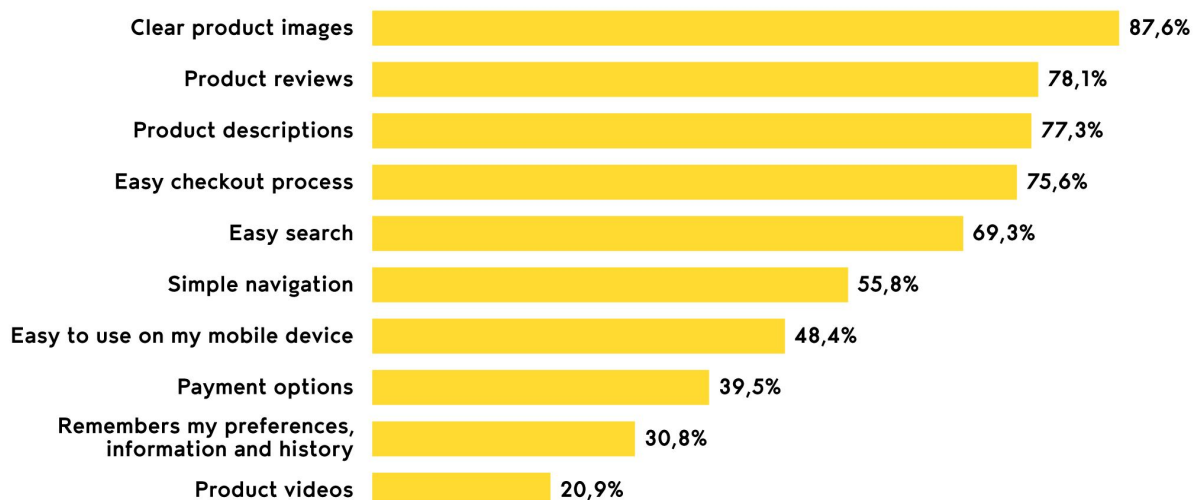- Checking prices online
- Looking for similar products
- Purchase

The analysis of the chart with the average age of smartphone users (below) also leads to interesting conclusions.
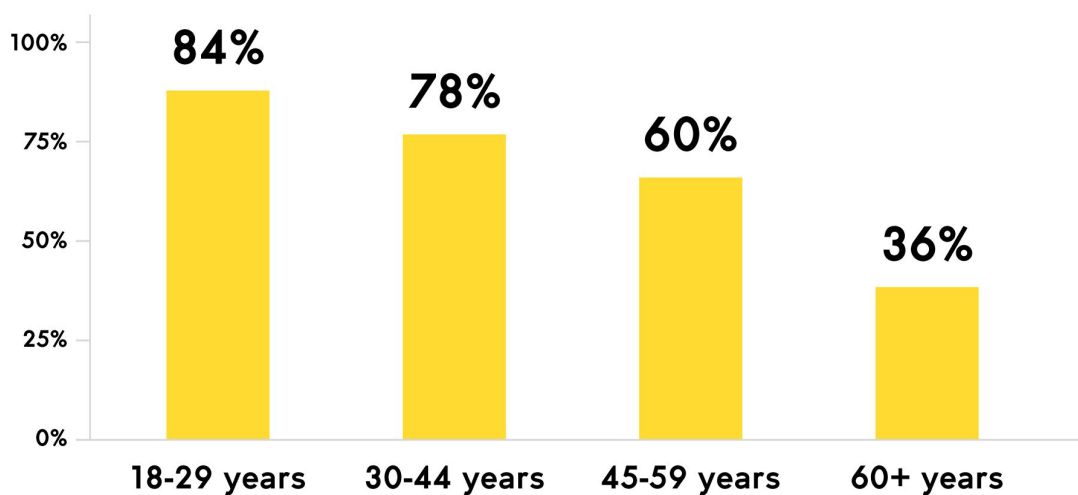
Contrary to expectations, not only the youngest generation or millenials use smartphones. Seniors are also a large group of users.

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Elementy dobrego doświadczenia zakupowego

Element	%
Clear product images	87,6%
Product reviews	78,1%
Product descriptions	77,3%
Easy checkout process	75,6%
Easy search	69,3%
Simple navigation	55,8%
Easy to use on my mobile device	48,4%
Payment options	39,5%
Remembers my preferences, information and history	30,8%
Product videos	20,9%

Source: Namagoo (May 2018) Based on a survey of 1,372 online users who made purchases at least once every 2 weeks. Question: What do you think makes the shopping experience better? Select and answer.

As many as 87% of consumers consider product information to be extremely important when making a purchasing decision regardless of where they buy. It should be remembered that sales will depend on how we present a product. The winners will be those who do it professionally, with a view to presenting the product on mobile devices.

Apart from the price, regardless of the category, practically the same elements of product presentation have a significant impact on the purchase. These are detailed descriptions, evaluations and opinions. **It is worth bearing in mind, however, that setting an excessively low price may have a different effect from the one intended** (e.g. suspicion about the quality of the product or the credibility of the seller).

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Photos

One of the most important elements of good product information is clear and an eye-catching photo.

Microsoft conducted an A/B test of product photos, i.e. a test in which one set of photos had a colored background, the other a white one. The ads were shown to two different groups of consumers. The results were very interesting, it turned out that photos on a colored background (which should theoretically attract more attention) had significantly lower conversions from clicks - photos on a white background had on average 325% more interactions. Does this mean that a plain background is always better?

Turns out not necessarily.

For advertising and product photography is not so much about the background or lack of it, but about the context. Better impact is achieved by those photographs that clearly show the product's functional features - presented in an appropriate arrangement that fits a given category or industry.

For example, **presenting a package of coffee in a cosy café will immediately make the consumer want a cup of aromatic brew.**

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Here is an example of how not to present an assortment in an online shop. In the picture below we see sweaters. However, we do not know whether they are men's or women's sweaters or what style they have - loose or fitted.

They have one thing in common - they have a cleavage on their back. But until the user makes any interaction, he or she will not know about it, because the photo itself says nothing.
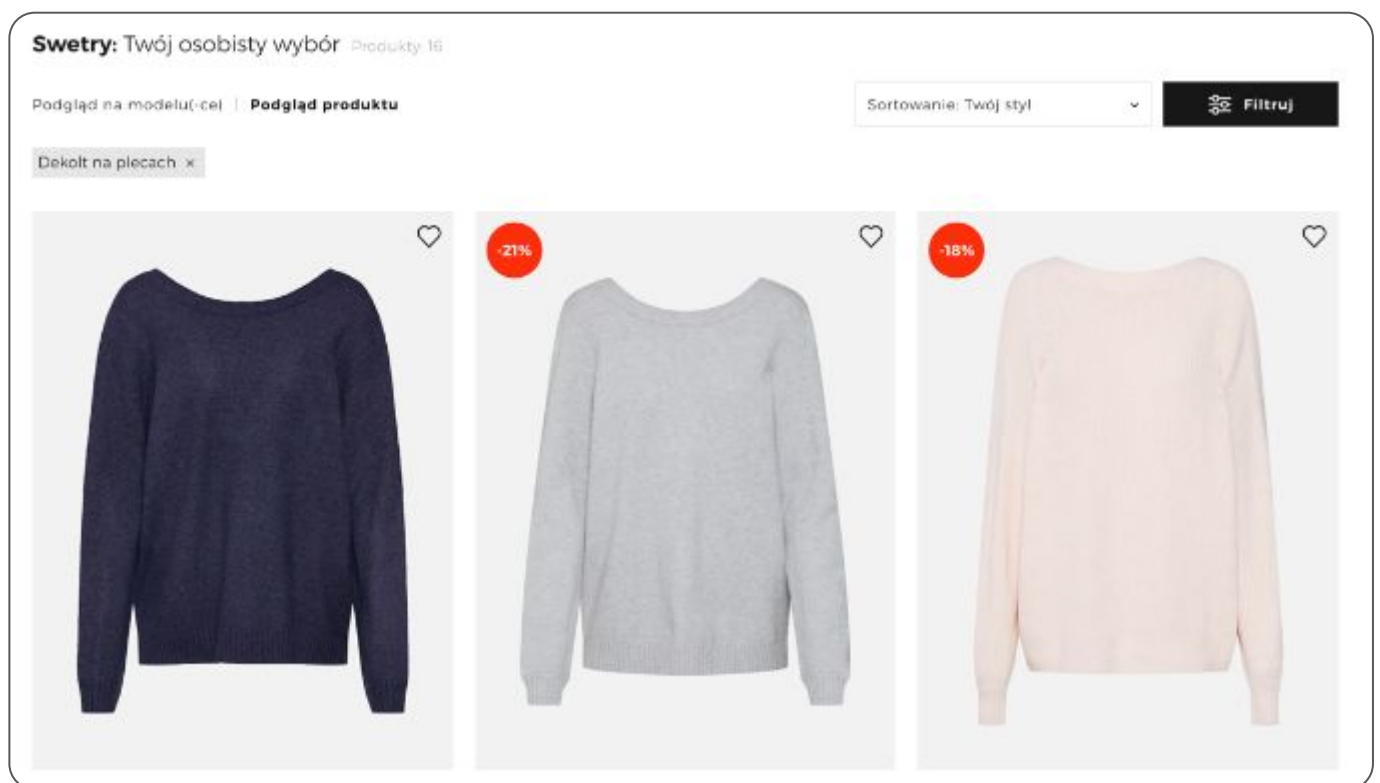
Source: www.aboutyou.pl

In the case of photos of clothing it is very important to present them on models. First of all, you can see how the clothes look like on a person, and secondly, the human face is more often eye-catching.

The same product can also look like this:

It's better, but still not perfect. In the picture below you can see a similar piece of clothing on the model in her home environment. Such a presentation of the product builds an appropriate shopping atmosphere right away.

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Another example comes from the furniture industry. Less than a year ago we started cooperating with one of the furniture manufacturers and importers. The customer was present on the Internet, but it was not fully professionalised sales - he needed an appropriate sales platform that would cover all business needs. During the workshops we analysed the issue of product information, especially photography, because **even the best design and functions of the new platform will not make a positive impression if the products are not well presented**. We started to think about what to do to make the client's assortment looks better in the photos. We proposed a different arrangement, better lighting and less aggressive colors. The effects can be seen below.

BEFORE

AFTER

Source: www.bemondi.pl

A separate category are products in which both the appearance and the technology used is important, such as electronics or household appliances. An example of such a "hybrid product" should be a refrigerator. A fridge for 4000 PLN is available in the assortment of a popular household goods store. The product information, apart from specifications, contains only two photos from the producer. **And although the technical details are very important in case of such a product, it will be difficult for the customer to make a purchase decision.**

Below is an example of what a good product photo should look like. On the one hand, the functionalities are presented - i.e. spaciousness, a separate section for wines and beverages, a large freezer, and on the other hand, you can see what character of the interior best fits such a refrigerator. Customers can immediately imagine it in their kitchen.

Product reviews

Before making a purchasing decision, consumers are guided by the opinions of other customers. As many as 86% of respondents check at least three opinions before making a purchase. This is nothing less than the rule of social proof known in psychology - **the more people consider a given product to be good, the more willing others are to reach for it.**

Therefore, it is worth taking care to allow users to add reviews and opinions on the shop's website (e.g. on the product card).

What is important is not only the average rating of the product, but also the number of opinions posted.

A test was carried out to examine users' shopping habits. Two mixers were presented - one with an excellent 5/5 star rating and opinions from five people, the other with a worse rating (4.8), but with opinions from 1425 users. As many as 66% of respondents were willing to reach for the second product. Conclusion: the higher the number of opinions, the better and the product is more reliable
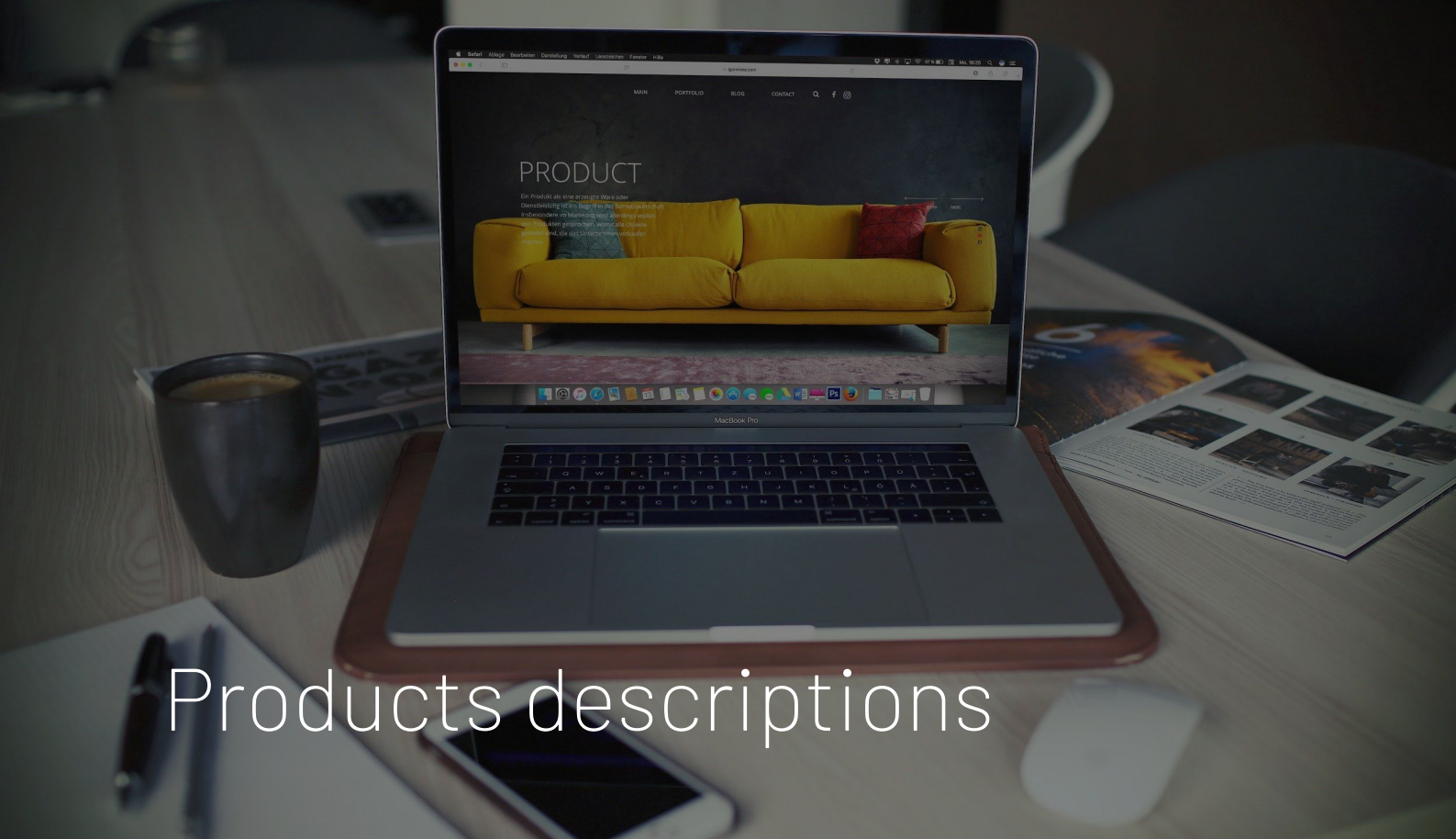
Products descriptions

In addition to opinions on products, it is also important how the item is described on the website. It is crucial to include all relevant information about the product - e.g. type of material, usage, number of additional accessories.

It is also important to remember about the clear layout of the content - even the most patient consumer will be deterred by a long block of text. **Users usually scan the text for the content they are interested in, so the most important information should be highlighted,** bold or in any other way.

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How to do it right?

The most advantageous solution is to place key information in a clear form of product attributes.

Source: www.eobuwie.com.pl

How to handle product information?

The answer is to choose the right PIM system for Product Information Management. Many companies use simple Excel sheets to organize their assortment. However, with large volumes and bigger organizations, such a solution is insufficient and very prone to errors – duplication of content, incomplete information or mistakes in product descriptions.

A functional PIM system is a tool that not only simplifies the work, but is also important in the context of building a positive purchasing experience for the customers, which increases sales.

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Distribute/export

Management & enrichment
verification and control, editing, searching

Import & agregate

Data treatment

Prices

ERP

Identification

Units

Attributes

Photos

PIM

Categorization

Accessories

Translations

ergonode

on-line store

mobile

SEO

catalogue

marketplace
(ebay, amazon)
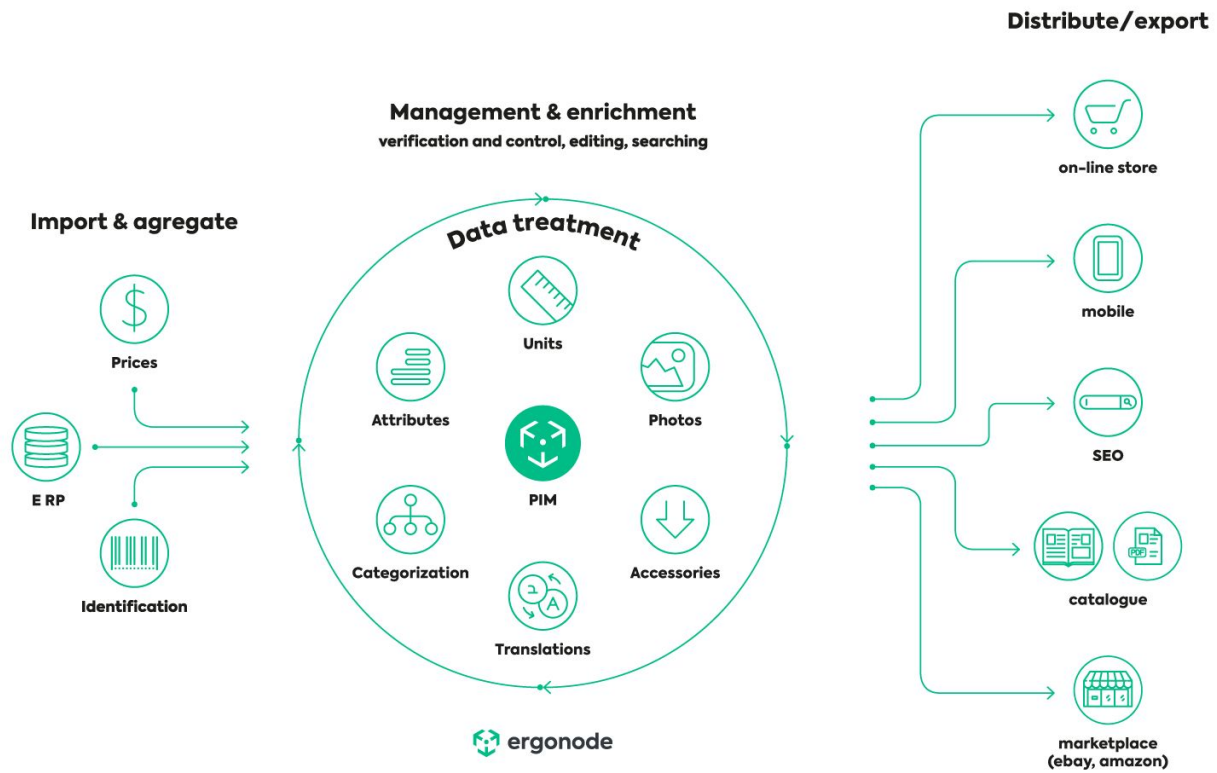
Key processes in PIM

- **Management of data sources** - all import processes.
- **The process of creating and processing data** (also known as enrichment) - it is at this stage that the target structure and content of product presentation from our offer is created. It is here that the persons responsible for accepting the product content and those who describe the products (photographers, content specialists) are involved. Data such as e.g. dimensions, product categorisation, adding translations, pictures, combining products into different sets, collections are supplemented.
- **Distribution process to selected channels** - when distributing content to appropriate channels, it is important to remember about their specifics and purchasing context. Other data will be needed for an online store, and completely different if we are thinking of a printed catalogue or a marketplace such as Allegro, Amazon, Empik, etc.

The process of digitising and managing a product catalogue is one of the key processes in the digital transformation.

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ergonode

Simple**.**
Ergonomic**.**
Efficient**.**
For people**.**
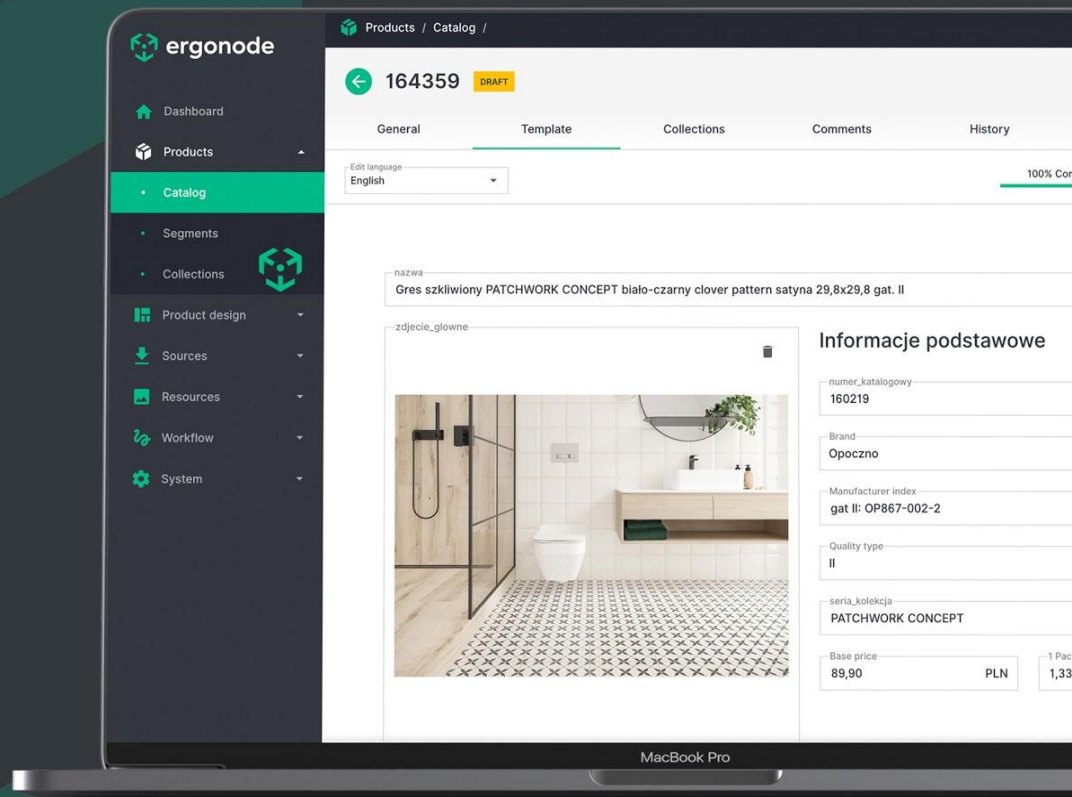
**Modern PIM system
for product catalogue
management**

Check and schedule a demo

Smooth data completion in Ergonode

Ergonode is an open-source PIM system that facilitates and streamlines product information management in e-commerce. It is simple and ergonomic platform to create, manage and distribution of product information to multiple channels.

In good PIM systems, data completion work is fast, efficient and much more effective than manual entry. Additionally, the product card in PIM represents the sales context of other channels.
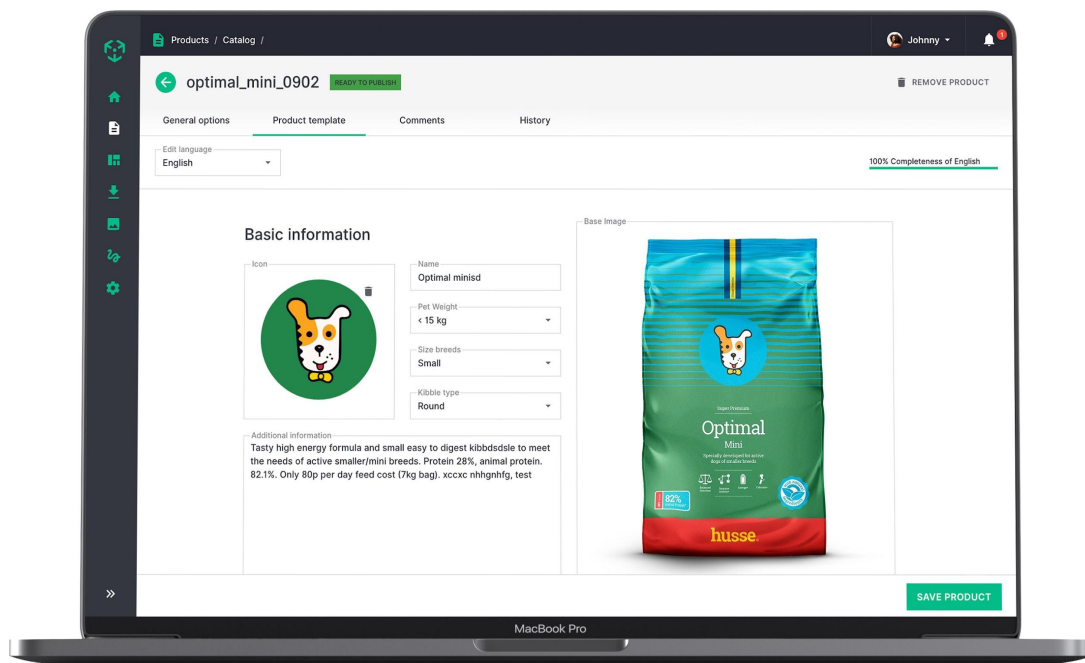
Example of a template to complete a product card for one of the products of the Swedish brand Husse, a manufacturer of dog food. In Ergonode, you can immediately see the size of the pictures your customers will see while shopping.

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One of the important functions of PIM systems is also workflow control. In the process of completing product content, usually several people are involved. These include a content manager who structures and accepts the content, a content writer who is responsible for entering product data, and a translator who transcribes content into other languages may be needed. In Ergonode, each user determines the level of content completion using specific statuses. **Only when all the necessary attributes have been completed will the item be able to be published on the site.** This avoids the risk that items with incomplete descriptions are displayed on the shop window. PIM facilitates digitization of the product catalogue and helps to effectively manage the work of several people.

Creating a data structure

What steps should be taken before describing the products?

1. **Get to know the customers** - at the beginning it is worth to think about who we address a given product to. It is best to prepare a description of a few model customers (personas), their shopping habits or lifestyle, so as to better define the context in which we will present the product.
2. **Discover attributes** - it is necessary to specify which attributes will be required to describe the item.
3. **Aggregate the content** - then you should rank the data, starting with the most important ones.
4. **Prioritise** - to ensure that the content is flawless.

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Are you tired of manually entering hundreds of product descriptions? Contact us. We will show you **the first Polish open source PIM** and present how you can **improve your customers' shopping experience** with the product information management system.

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12
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