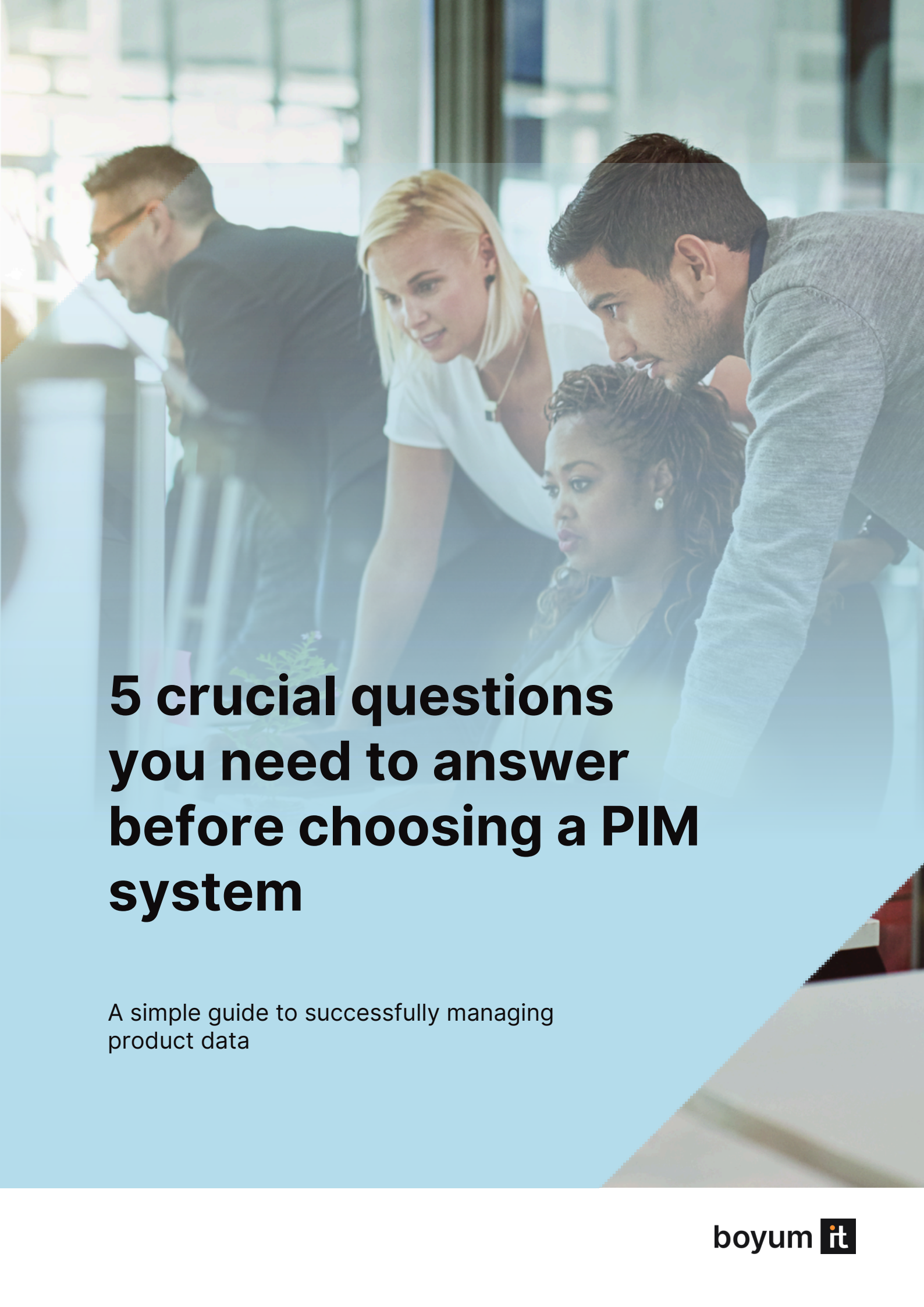




5 crucial questions you need to answer before choosing a PIM system

A simple guide to successfully managing
product data

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Your guide to making better decisions

Product information management (PIM) simplifies complex processes and gives you complete control over product data throughout its entire lifecycle and across all channels. Without centralized management, handling product data can be difficult to understand and time-consuming.

It's all about simplicity, but investing in a PIM is still a complex decision. Mainly because PIM affects many parts of your business, both in terms of data and the people who use it.

We have written this guide to help you lay the best possible foundation before investing in a PIM system. If you want to get the most value from your investment, it is essential to find a PIM system that meets your needs in all key areas.

Based on our experience with hundreds of customers worldwide, we have selected five essential questions to clearly identify your needs. These questions will give you a solid foundation for evaluating various PIM solutions.





1. Where do you use your product data?

Most companies invest in a PIM because they need to distribute their product data across different channels, in different formats, and in multiple languages. Furthermore, it is nearly impossible to ensure up-to-date and consistent information across all channels efficiently if you don't have a central place to store and maintain your data.

For that reason, it is essential that you have a clear vision of how your product data will be used to ensure that your PIM system supports your needs in those areas.

Where do you publish and distribute your product data?

- Website?
- Online store?
- Catalogs- both digital and printed?
- Mobile apps?
- Amazon, eBay, or other similar marketplaces?
- Data sheets?
- Specific price lists for customers?
- Data files for customers and distributors?
- Direct mail?
- Email marketing?
- Social media?
- Intranet?

Taking a look at how you need to share your data can help you understand how urgently you need a product information management (PIM) system.

For example, while managing product data directly in your online store may work at first, a PIM system becomes essential as your business grows. It facilitates catalog creation and sales across multiple platforms, ensuring that your product information is consistent and always up to date.

By integrating a PIM system, you unlock new opportunities and improve operational efficiency. It becomes an indispensable resource for any business that wants to scale, ensuring accurate and consistent product data across all channels. This not only optimizes your processes, but also adds considerable value to your company, positioning you for success in a competitive market.

A simple rule of thumb is this: the more channels, formats, and languages you manage, the more sense it makes to invest in a PIM system.

Think about tomorrow...

When reviewing your data distribution needs, it's important to look ahead. What does your business strategy look like? Is e-commerce on your horizon in the coming years? Do you plan to enter new markets, possibly with different languages?

If you need to adapt quickly, having a PIM system ready to keep pace with your growth and changing needs will be key.



2. Where do you get your product data from?

Product information is usually created within your company, but it is also important to bear in mind that you may receive data from external sources. Processing this information manually can be very time-consuming, so it is essential that your new PIM system can manage these external sources efficiently.

Here it is important to remember that product information is not just basic data, but also images, translations, and metadata such as reviews, related descriptions, etc.

What external sources provide product information?

- Suppliers?
- Subcontractors?
- Photographers?
- Copywriters?
- Translation agencies?
- Industry-specific portals?

Consider PIM as part of your digitalization

When you identify your product information and usage scenarios, it is easy to focus on the specific task that a PIM system must solve- for example, receiving product images from photographers and distributing them. However, it is advisable to look at it in a broader context and focus on how PIM can contribute to greater digitization of your company and its work processes.

Is there any manual work you currently do in relation to product data that could benefit from being supported by a PIM system? And looking ahead, how can you use PIM to optimize your processes?

3. How complex is your product information?

The complexity of product information is often not apparent at first glance. In this section, we want to give you some guidelines to help you better assess what capabilities your future PIM system should have.

After all, what matters is not the number of products you have, but the type and structure of the information you use for them.



What does your product information consist of?

- What data is recorded in the products?
- Is there any difference between the data recorded in different types of products?
- How many languages do you work with?
- Is there certain data that is shared between many products?
- Do you work with variants and/or configurable products?
- Do you use metadata as part of your product information?

Metadata can be particularly challenging to manage. Take a wine importer, for example: in addition to specific information about the wine, they will need to display additional details about the grapes, the winery, the region, and other elements. That information will be used in various products and different marketing channels.



Is your data ready?

Many companies quickly respond “yes” when asked about the quality of their product data. However, a more detailed review often reveals a different reality.

Before implementing a product information management (PIM) system, it is essential to assess the quality of your data. The better the input data, the greater the value the system can deliver.

Ask yourself the following:

Do you have the necessary data?

If not, can you acquire or generate it?

Is your data consistent?

For example, do you always express length in the same way, or do you have variations such as “20mm,” “20 mm,” and “20”?

How complete is the data?

Do all products within a category have the same associated information, or does it vary from product to product?

The answers to these questions will help you determine whether you need to improve the quality of your data before implementing a PIM system.

4. What work processes should the PIM support?

Implementing a PIM in your organization will undoubtedly mean changing some of your work processes, simply because you now have a tool that allows you to optimize them.

It is essential to map your current processes and how different departments interact with product information. Your PIM system must support these workflows, especially when it comes to role management.

Who should have access to what? Should different departments have separate rights? Should product data be locked at certain stages? What should external collaborators have access to?

Addressing these questions will help you define the requirements for your future PIM system. To create a clear vision, start with these fundamental questions.

How do you work with product data?

- Who should interact with product information?
- What should they do?
- How should they do it?
- When should they do it?

An important factor to consider is how the PIM system displays the tasks that need to be completed.

Basically, you need to determine whether the system allows sequential or parallel work on product information.

In other words, must one task be completed before the next one begins, or can multiple users work on different tasks at the same time?

Reflecting on what best suits your organization is essential for optimizing your work with a PIM system.



Is your organization ready for PIM?

Successfully implementing a PIM system can be an exciting opportunity for organizational growth and improvement. To get the most out of this process, it is important to identify the departments that will benefit from PIM and involve employees from the outset.

In addition, management can greatly influence this transition by showing their commitment and ensuring that adequate resources are dedicated to the implementation. In this way, the organization creates a positive path to success.

5. How closely should the PIM system be integrated with the ERP?

A PIM system should integrate seamlessly with your ERP. However, integration methods can vary. Some PIM systems only exchange data from the ERP to the PIM, while others allow for tighter integration and two-way data exchange between the two systems.

Closer integration offers many advantages, so it is important to assess whether these capabilities will add value to your organization.



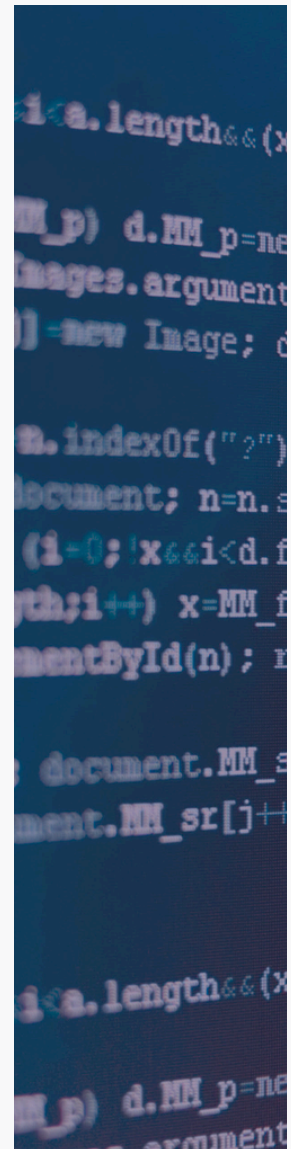
What kind of integration do you need between ERP and PIM?

- Should a product's lifecycle begin in the ERP or in the PIM system?
- Should ERP data, such as prices or inventory status, be visible in the PIM?
- Do you need to be able to maintain PIM data from the ERP without opening the PIM?
- Do you need to generate data sheets or other similar reports from the ERP?

The first question is key for many companies. For example, many retailers keep their entire product portfolio in the PIM until a product is sold, at which point it is transferred to the ERP.

Other companies require a “sandbox” environment to work with and enrich product data from the beginning of the lifecycle before moving it to the ERP.

One thing is certain: the more affirmative answers you have, the tighter the integration between PIM and ERP should be.



Consider the PIM before the ERP

If you plan to replace or upgrade your ERP system soon, implementing a PIM first can offer significant advantages.

Starting with a PIM system makes your ERP project more manageable. PIM implementations often reveal data that should not be in the ERP, reducing the need for customizations.

This process includes cleaning up data by removing outdated products and improving the quality of existing product information.

One last tip: find the right balance between a standard solution and a custom solution.

If you have answered the questions in the previous five sections, you now have a solid foundation for choosing a PIM system that suits your needs.

Another key consideration is how much you will need to customize the system to fit your requirements: finding the balance between a standard solution and a customized solution.

Most people start with a standard solution, but if you have specific requirements, customization may be necessary. Keep in mind that the more you customize, the higher the implementation, maintenance, and upgrade costs will be. Standard systems receive automatic updates, while customizations may require additional work and expense to remain compatible with new versions, often requiring further adjustments after each update.

The debate between standard and customized solutions can be lengthy, but it really comes down to finding the right balance.

Or, to put it another way, make sure you choose a standard solution that is dynamic enough so that you can make the necessary adjustments and maintain them immediately in the future when the PIM system is updated.



Perfion – The Only Source of Truth

Perfion PIM is developed for companies that communicate through many channels and in multiple languages, and that have a complex product structure with large amounts of product data.

As the world's only 100% standardized solution for Product Information Management, Perfion PIM provides you with the basis for optimizing your business processes, enabling you to reduce time to market, gain new market share, and always deliver the information your customers need.

With Perfion, you have a single, simple source for all your texts, technical data, files, images, videos, etc. This gives you complete control over all product data across all sales and marketing platforms.

Perfion's open API makes it easy to integrate the solution with the IT systems you already use- from your ERP system and InDesign to your Office suite. Similarly, Perfion has standard integration with various e-commerce platforms, making it easy to keep your online store up to date directly from Perfion PIM.



Bring Your Products To Life

We are Boyum IT Solutions, a global software company that helps small and medium sized Manufacturers Bring their Products to Life! We support every stage of the product journey from the first idea to the final customer experience. Our focus is the entire Product Value Chain, going beyond the supply chain to help businesses create value, spark innovation and deliver products with clarity, efficiency and confidence. Our solutions connect people, data and processes across design, planning, production, quality, delivery and go to market.

We act as a trusted partner rather than a traditional software vendor. With deep domain expertise, a family oriented culture and reliable innovation, we guide partners and customers through real industry challenges. We play a strategic role in both the SAP Business One and Microsoft Dynamics Business Central ecosystems, co creating value and driving shared growth with our partners and customers.

For more than 28+ years we have been 100% partner driven. Today we support over 15,000+ customers together with more than 1,100+ partners in more than 130+ countries.

Our purpose, Bring Your Products to Life reflects who we are and what we deliver every day. Through human centric innovation and technology that works for people, we help businesses create products that make a meaningful difference in the world.





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