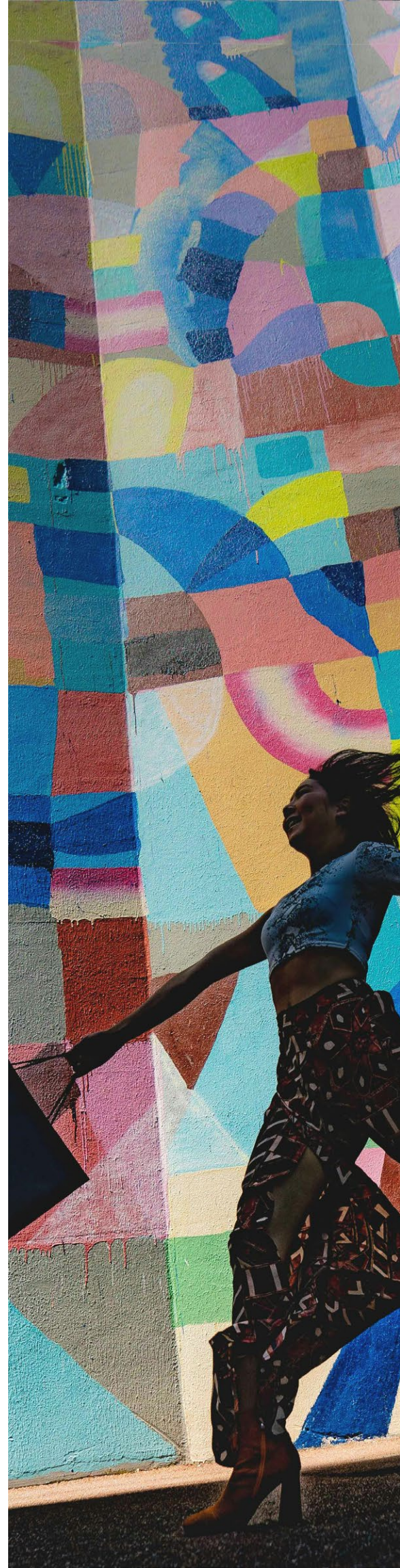


PIM for apparel and accessories

How to create exceptional
product experiences that
engage, inspire, and convert





PIM for apparel and accessories

In an ever-changing world, you need confidence that your next software investment will be in style today, tomorrow, and beyond.

As a leading global provider of Product Information Management (PIM) software, inriver has a wealth of experience in helping apparel and accessory brands unlock the limitless potential of their product data. This ebook explores the constantly evolving data expectations impacting the apparel industry and how only inriver provides the flexibility required to turn these expectations into opportunities.

- 1. an industry that’s always in fashion 3
- 2. the market dynamics reshaping the apparel industry 4
- 3. it all starts with data 7
- 4. how inriver helps apparel brands innovate, inspire, and accelerate 8
- 5. inriver: The flexible PIM solution for apparel brands 14



an industry that's always in fashion

The apparel industry is constantly evolving. As seasonal fashions and shifting trends impact the clothes, footwear, and accessories we buy, dynamic consumer and regulatory expectations are shaping how apparel brands sell their products.

In order to adapt to these dynamic expectations and thrive in an evermore competitive industry, apparel brands are turning to product data with increasing regularity and intensity. Only by harnessing the power of this data can they ensure their products meet the diverse expectations of shoppers, marketplaces, and regulators.

With Forbes predicting the global apparel market will top \$2.25 trillion by 2025, brands who don't prioritize their product data risk being left behind by the competition and shut out of an increasingly lucrative market.

inriver is trusted by leading apparel and accessory brands, including:



the market dynamics reshaping the apparel industry

Whether a fashion giant or a growing label that's going places, apparel and accessory brands face an increasingly challenging landscape. Here are some of the market dynamics shaping this highly changeable industry:

1 Adapting to digital commerce expectations

The landscape of digital sales is evolving every day and apparel brands need to keep up with the pace of change to stay relevant in a packed marketplace. Whether building Direct-to-Consumer models for owned websites or putting products on more channels in more markets, apparel brands need to deliver compelling experiences for every product at every touchpoint.

To create these experiences, apparel brands need a foundation of clean, complete, compelling, and compliant product information. This information should be optimized for product discoverability through SEO and categorization, and consistent across all digital selling channels, from marketplaces and third-party resellers to owned social channels and brick-and-mortar stores.

2 Agility to meet seasonal trends and fashions

There are few industries more impacted by changing trends and fashions than the apparel industry. As consumers expect new garments, lines, and product ranges with every passing season, it's imperative that apparel brands have the agility and flexibility to produce, market, and sell an ever-changing catalog of products.

To keep on top of the latest trends and ahead of the competition, apparel brands need to accelerate their time-to-market. This means optimizing internal processes for fast turnaround, ensuring all product information is accurate and updated automatically, and having technology that provides quick and effective syndication across all owned and third-party digital channels.

3 Customization at the point of purchase

Whether online or in-person, customers want flexibility in how they buy clothes, footwear, and accessories. They want to change the color of tennis shoes, alter the fit of a new suit, or personalize the engraving on a wedding ring. Providing this level of customization is no longer a nice-to-have; it's quickly becoming an expectation and a prerequisite for customer loyalty.

To deliver customization at every point of purchase, apparel brands need a single repository of product data that is flexible enough to support the vast amounts of product-attribute-component relationships required for personalization. Not only that, this repository needs to be dynamically connected to the customer touchpoint.

By 2026,

the speed of digital innovation will be 60% faster than it was in 2022 for organizations [that can] reuse digital commerce modules.

Source: Gartner Market Guide for Product Information Management Solutions 2023



4 Personalized buyer journeys

As well as flexibility in their purchases, shoppers also want the same personalized buyer journey online as they would receive from a sales assistant in-store. In a digital buying journey, this personalization could mean tailored product recommendations and marketing communications to help secure a loyal customer.

To offer personalized buyer journeys, apparel brands need to work smarter with their data. They need to efficiently track shopper behavior online and collate the data behind this behavior. Then, by pairing this insight with a flexible foundation of data on products, attributes, and components, apparel brands can offer truly tailored buying experiences.

5 Supply chain management

In an uncertain world, apparel brands need more resilience and adaptability than ever before to help mitigate potential supply chain disruption. Technology plays a key role in this drive for adaptability, through inventory management and demand forecasting. However, at the heart of this adaptability sits the need for comprehensive data-led oversight on the entire supply chain.

To secure this adaptability, apparel brands need a solution that promotes transparency across the supply chain. This is only possible with an organization-wide repository of product information that acts as a single source of truth for all aspects of the supply chain. Brands also need flexibility and composability within their tech stack that lets them react and pivot accordingly should issues arise.

6 Evolving requirements from marketplaces and regulators

The number of requirements placed on apparel products has never been higher and is only set to grow. From retailer requirements that could lead to costly retail chargebacks, to governmental legislations that could shut products and brands out of entire markets, it's more important than ever to have a handle on compliance matters.

To streamline compliance against ever-moving regulatory targets, apparel brands need a single source of truth for product data that offers the flexibility required to meet evolving requirements. With legislation such as the European Union's fast approaching Digital Product Passport set to revolutionize the European apparel market, brands cannot afford to take a chance on product compliance.

7 Brand storytelling and marketing

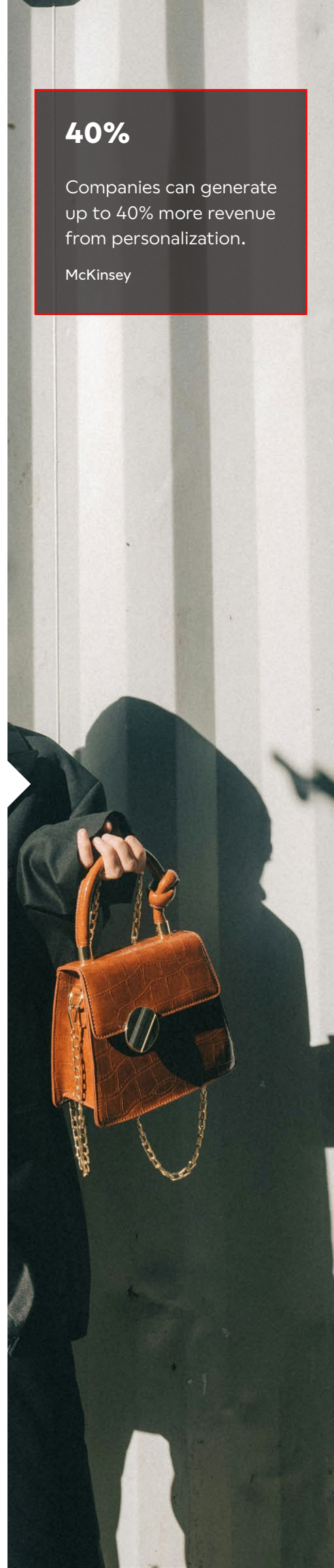
In a busy marketplace, customers are looking for a reason to choose a particular apparel brand. A sales and marketing strategy based around brand storytelling can be a captivating way to engage potential customers and differentiate a brand against a growing number of competitors from home and abroad.

To instill brand confidence on the digital shelf, apparel brands need technology that can knit together a compelling experience for every product on every channel. This experience, built on high quality brand and digital assets, engaging product descriptions, and accurate product data, is the foundation for compelling storytelling in the digital age.

40%

Companies can generate up to 40% more revenue from personalization.

McKinsey



8 Sustainability and environmental responsibility

Sustainability is no longer seen as a trend. As consumer expectations around sustainability grow, apparel brands are choosing more environmentally-minded material sourcing and production methods. However, to meet consumer demand, these choices need to be conveyed to every customer touchpoint.

To project their eco credentials to the world, apparel brands require greater levels of oversight into their supply chains. This includes having data-driven transparency into every supply chain process and decision, collecting and cleaning this data so it's market-ready, and then delivering it to the right channel at the right time during the buying journey.

9 Technological innovations and integrations

Technology never stands still, and recent advancements such as blockchain technology and 3D printing are already changing supply chain operation and transparency. On customer-facing channels, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality are changing how we research, compare, and buy products.

To harness the power of these advancements, apparel brands need to be agile in their approach to technology and able to integrate new innovations wherever possible. Customer-facing innovations also require accurate and transparent market-ready product information to function.

10 Flexibility and adaptability

With the apparel market being shaped by so many dynamic challenges and opportunities, the need for apparel brands to prioritize flexibility and adaptability is clear. Only by investing in a business model that supports data-driven agility and continuous improvement can apparel brands plan for long-term growth.

To ensure they have the adaptability required for sustainable growth, apparel brands need to invest in technological solutions that support data-led decision-making, enable flexibility across all customer touchpoints, and optimize digital product experiences for conversions on every channel. In a market as competitive as apparel, securing this flexibility is not only preferable, it's essential.





it all starts with data

Whether you want to take a new product into new markets or channels, integrate enhanced content into all your marketplaces, or simply deliver a winning product experience across all your e-commerce channels, the power of product data is clear.

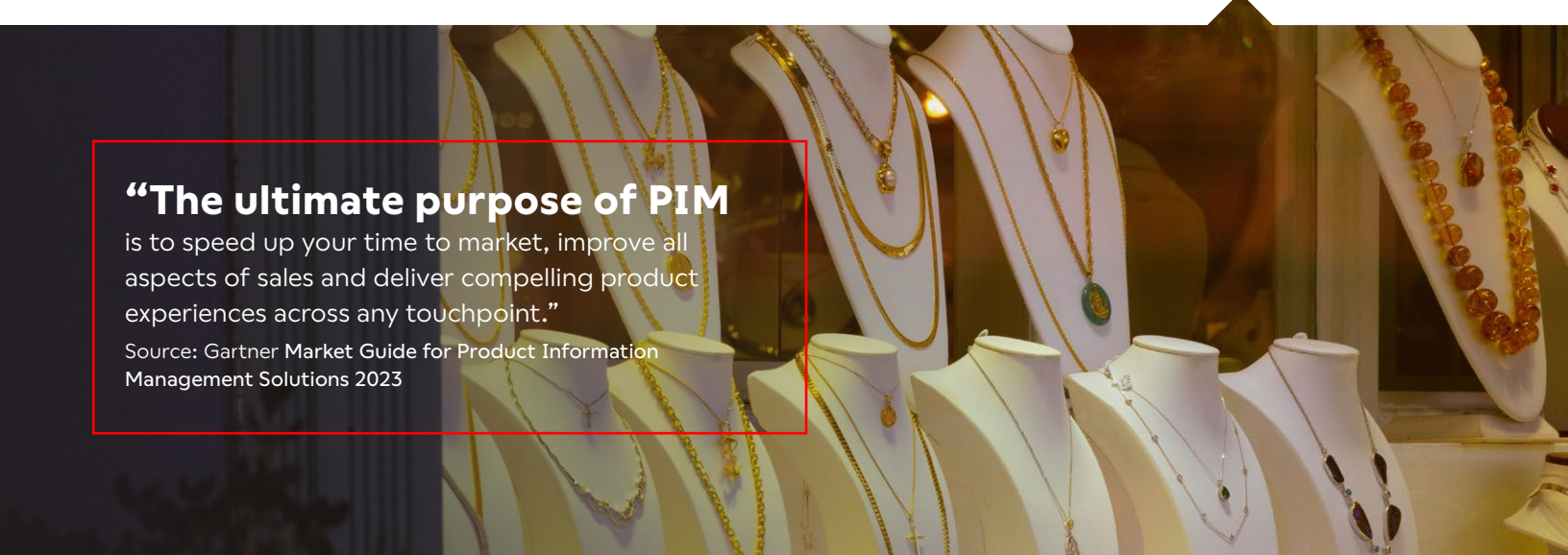
But product data is just the start of the story. To meet the evolving and extracting expectations of consumers, marketplaces, and regulators alike, you need to transform this product data into complete, compelling, and compliant product information that truly unlocks the strategic value of this data.

That's why so many leading apparel brands use Product Information Management (PIM) software.

What is PIM?

PIM software provides apparel brands and retailers with a complete solution for their product data needs. A PIM solution transforms raw product data into a single, organization-wide source of truth for market-ready product information. Advanced PIM solutions also offer single-click API-based syndication that connects to all digital endpoints and Digital Shelf Analytics technology that monitors online performance and provides actionable insight to optimize product listings for conversion.

For apparel brands, the inriver PIM offers the flexibility required to meet the evolving demands of this highly-competitive market. The inriver PIM is powered by the most flexible data model in the PIM industry, giving inriver customers an in-built advantage over competition from home and abroad. Whether introducing new products, opening new markets, or distributing content to new channels, only the inriver PIM offers the flexibility apparel brands need to grow with confidence today, tomorrow, and far beyond.



"The ultimate purpose of PIM

is to speed up your time to market, improve all aspects of sales and deliver compelling product experiences across any touchpoint."

Source: Gartner Market Guide for Product Information Management Solutions 2023

how inriver helps apparel brands innovate, inspire, and accelerate

The inriver PIM platform is the complete solution for apparel brands, offering:

1. Compelling digital product experiences

The ability to recreate the high-quality, in-store experiences shoppers have with your products is key to succeeding on the digital shelf. Shoppers want to know everything about a garment before they hit the buy button, from how it will fit to how it will feel against their skin. Above all, customers want to be confident in their purchase. As an apparel brand, you need to instill confidence in potential customers. If you don't, they'll simply look elsewhere.

The key to instilling confidence in your customers before they hit the buy button? A compelling product experience.

The inriver PIM helps you craft these product experiences from a single, easy-to-use dashboard. AI-powered content enrichment transforms raw data into rich product information optimized for search engines, marketplaces, and buyer expectations. This information is then integrated with technical specifications, garment sizes, and other critical information. Digital assets such as photos, size guides, and diagrams can be added to give another layer of detail to the product listing. Finally, the product content is localized for marketplace compliance or language needs, creating a complete, compliant, and compelling product experience that can be syndicated to all buying channels.

inriver

+



“In a world where digital experiences are increasingly interactive and immersive, we must continuously evolve how we handle and integrate our data and assets. The inriver PIM is central to this evolution.”

— **John Fister**, New Balance

New Balance is a leading global footwear and apparel brand, with products sold across the world through owned-retail outlets and digital channels as well as third-party marketplaces, resellers, and physical retailers.

To replicate high-touch in-store shopping experiences across its growing presence on digital channels, New Balance needed a comprehensive and flexible solution to manage and optimize its product experiences.

With inriver, New Balance can deliver consistent and accurate product information to every digital touchpoint. Product listings are elevated with enhanced content, detailed product specifications, and information localized for both market and channel.



2. Single-click syndication consistency

Creating a compelling product experience is only the first piece of the e-commerce puzzle. For it to be truly effective, that experience needs to be syndicated across all owned and third-party digital channels to ensure that no matter where a customer finds your products, they always find the same consistent product experience. Without this, it becomes impossible to instill confidence and boost customer loyalty.

Not only does the inriver PIM help you create winning product experiences, it also delivers these experiences to all channels with a single click. API-based syndication technology connects the single source of market-ready product information held within your PIM with each of your digital endpoints. Updates made to data held in your PIM is automatically updated across all channels, meaning customers always see the same up-to-date product information whether they're shopping on your mobile app, an online marketplace, or a third-party retailer. It is this consistency that's key to ensuring customers trust you enough to buy again and again, and again.

3. Customization at the point of sale

Customers want more flexibility in their apparel purchases than ever before. Whether they're buying sweatshirts, shoes, or sunglasses, they want to be able to choose the size, color, and detailing of their new purchases and they expect the customization process to be seamless.

The inriver PIM helps you offer this point-of-sale personalization thanks to the flexibility of its data model. Customization at scale is built on being able to plug into the complex network of relationships between products, attributes, and components. The inriver PIM data model supports this complex and evolving network, collating all these relationships within the single source of market-ready product information. With your PIM solution connected to all your digital endpoints, you can be sure that no matter where customers are buying your products, whether online or in-store, their customization needs are being met with the same reliable source of product data truth.



4. Simplified compliance for all channels

For apparel brands supplying goods to numerous retailers, the need for streamline compliance procedures is clear. Failing to adhere to retailer agreements on shipping, product quality, or compliance labels can lead to retail chargeback fees. If you're selling a significant amount of products wholesale, these chargeback fees can soon add up to a costly issue that you need to address sooner rather than later.

The inriver PIM reduces your risk of retail chargebacks by making it easier to answer vendors' questions. With a repository of market-ready product information and automated templates that don't lead to costly human errors, the inriver platform helps you move away from spreadsheet cumulation and towards an automated method for real-time updates of enrichment. With the inriver PIM also publishing data, compliance procedures can be as simple as selecting the relevant information and hitting the send button.

inriver

+



carhartt

"With inriver, we've reduced our risk as a company, we've increased our profitability, and we've kept our customers updated."

— Melissa Dyke, Carhartt

Carhartt is a globally renowned apparel brand with a reputation for producing high quality, hard wearing clothes and workwear.

The company needed to update its PIM system to meet the increasing demands placed on its products, including growing compliance needs that were leading to significant chargeback fees.

Following the implementation of the inriver PIM, Carhartt has been able to deliver standout product experiences to every channel while maintaining compliance with retailer requirements. Thanks to automated templates and clear oversight on all product-related data, Carhartt has reduced its risk of retailer non-compliance and slashed the cost of chargebacks.

5. Accelerated time to market

As fashions and trends change with the season, apparel brands need to be certain that they can get their products to market efficiently, effectively, and at speed. Whether you're selling t-shirts, trainers, or top-of-the-range necklaces, you need a solution that streamlines internal processes and gives you the agility required to accelerate time to market.

The inriver PIM slashes time to market by automating many of the resource-heavy tasks that can slow down this process. Thanks to a single source of market-ready information, go-to-market teams no longer need to search spreadsheets for the right data. PIM-integrated workflows also streamline cross-departmental tasks, with automatic prompts, configurable workflow steps, and simply access management.

6. Personalized buyer journeys

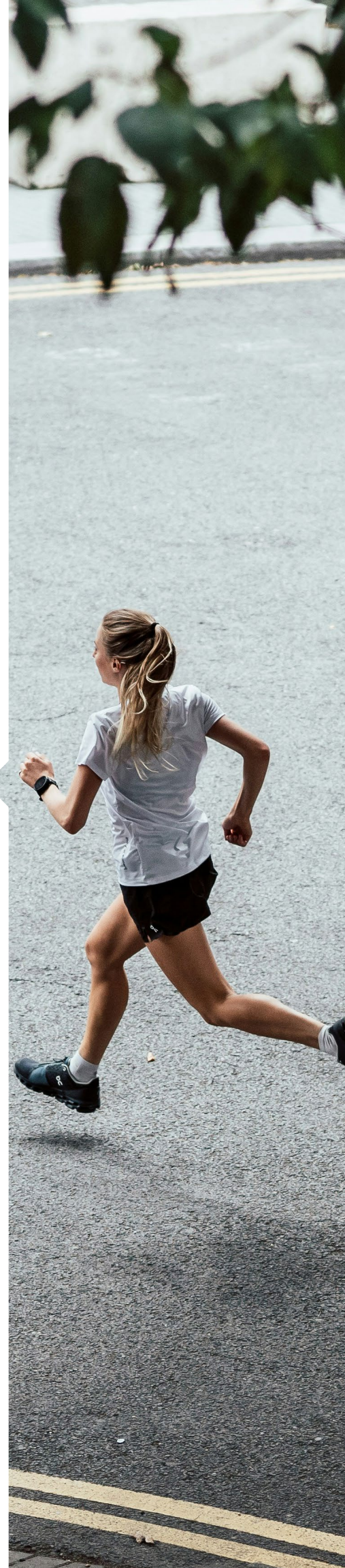
In an omnichannel world, the buyer journey is complex and multi-touch. However, customers still expect a buying journey that's tailored to their needs and desires, as they'd receive in a brick-and-mortar store. When selling products digitally, it's essential you're able to replicate a buyer journey that really speaks to the individual.

The inriver PIM powers this personalization through its fully flexible data model and the vast network of product relationships it supports. Every touchpoint can offer tailored product recommendations based on user behavior and purchase history thanks to the product bundling supported by the data model. With inriver, your customers no longer need to search for their next purchase as suggestions are delivered to the point of purchase.

7. Unified brand storytelling at every touchpoint

In an increasingly competitive market, making your brand stand out from the crowd is essential. However, simply creating a show-stopping logo or ingenious brand story is not enough. You need to ensure that brand experience is consistent wherever a potential customer interacts with your product online or in-person.

The inriver PIM offers the complete syndication solution for your brand, delivering clean and consistent brand content to every channel. The inriver PIM integrates with all leading Digital Asset Management (DAM) platforms, letting you maximize the value of your brand assets and ensuring you are telling the right brand story across all channels, markets, and languages.





8. Sustainability oversight and transparency

As customers and legislators demand more sustainability insight, apparel brands need to react today and plan for a more transparent tomorrow. From material sourcing and carbon emissions to production practices and logistics, you need complete oversight on this upstream data to keep downstream audiences happy.

The inriver PIM solution's fully flexible data model allows for simple onboarding of all supply chain data, letting you clean and manage this data before distributing it to the relevant audience, whether regulator or buyer. For buyers and other end users, this sustainability data can be enriched into complete product information and syndicated to digital channels as part of your standout product experiences. Once sold, this data can still be accessed to support upcycling initiatives, material recycling, and responsible disposal at the end of a product's life cycle.

9. Better supply chain oversight and resilience

Even in an uncertain world, demands from consumers and regulators alike keep increasing as they seek a great level of information on every product you take to market. However, when faced with potential disruptions or new production innovations, you need to ensure you have the agility and oversight in your supply chain to pivot when necessary and maintain your competitiveness in a crowded market.

The inriver PIM is a fully composable, MACH Alliance system that gives you the power to adapt and modify your supply chain without impacting on your profit margin. You can communicate confidently with supply chain partners and pivot as required. This in-built flexibility, coupled with the complete SKU-level data transparency offered by the inriver data model, gives your supply chain the resilience it needs to keep your sales strategy on track.

inriver



"The inriver PIM is super fast and super efficient. I don't even know how we survived without it."

— Ki Song, MonkeySports

MonkeySports is a leading retailer of sports apparel and equipment, with a portfolio of brick-and-mortar stores in North America and a growing international e-commerce presence.

When entering the e-commerce space, MonkeySports soon realised its existing technology was clunky, inflexible, and unable to support diverse product information needs.

With inriver, MonkeySports now deliver comprehensive omnichannel product experiences for 150,000+ SKUs, with data feeds fueling different marketing channels including Google Ads and other search engines.

10. Integrations to elevate every tech stack

Every business is different, with apparel brands of all sizes relying on a complex network of interconnected and often overlapping software solutions in their tech stack to run their everyday operations. However, if considering your next tech investment, you need to be confident it'll elevate your existing tech stack.

The inriver PIM does just that, providing your tech stack with a unique, single source of market-ready product information. With ready-made integrations to all adjacent software and technologies, the inriver platform seamlessly connects with even the most complex tech stack, giving you the flexibility of the inriver PIM platform without the hassle.

11. Complete flexibility for the future

Uncertain geopolitics, increasingly competitive markets, always evolving products and, of course, ever-changing consumer expectations make one thing certain for apparel brands: the need for total flexibility for today, tomorrow, and beyond.

The inriver PIM has flexibility built into its very core: the fully adaptable inriver data model, which gives you the freedom to sell your products in your own unique way. In addition, the composable nature of the inriver PIM technology allows you to adapt and upgrade your tech stack with ease. Finally, inriver's completely customizable pricing structure gives you the power to build the PIM solution tailor made for your own unique requirements.



inriver + PANDORA

"A PIM system that met our immediate needs and allowed for ongoing development was crucial. We wanted a system that addressed the needs of local merchandisers, the global team, and myself. We found that with inriver."

— Isabel Marschall Thstrup,
Pandora

Pandora is a global leader in the jewelry market, with over 6,500 retail outlets across 100 countries and a growing e-commerce presence that attracts 600 million annual visitors.

Faced with the chaos of internal data management issues that led to confusing product experiences and a disconnect between digital and physical channels, Pandora needed an enterprise-ready PIM solution.

With inriver, Pandora now benefits from consistent, high-quality product experiences wherever customers meet Pandora products. In-store catalogs are now unified with e-commerce catalogs to create a seamless buyer journey.

Pandora is now flexible enough to meet evolving demands from the market, be legally compliant in all new and existing markets, and accelerate its growth strategy.

inriver: The flexible PIM solution for apparel brands

As the apparel industry evolves, so does the software that powers it.

Early-generation PIM solutions were built to be solely a system of record for apparel brands. They were never designed to support an omnichannel world, or the ever-changing expectations of the modern consumer.

The inriver PIM goes beyond the needs of apparel brands today. The most flexible PIM solution on the market, built on a foundation of a fully adaptable data model, equips you with all the tools you need to succeed today, tomorrow, and beyond:



Single source of truth

Create a single, organization-wide repository of market-ready product information that offers the flexibility to evolve and grow with your product data needs.



AI-powered content enrichment

Bring the magic of the retail store to your digital shelf with AI-powered enrichment that transforms raw data into compelling product information for every customer.



API-based Syndication

Deliver standout product experiences to every touchpoint with single-click syndication that ensures consistency for your brand and products on every owned and third-party channel.



Self-serve digital storefront for brand assets

Secure the integrity and accuracy of your brand and product identity with a single centralized repository of information for all internal and third-party audiences.



Seamless integrations with all adjacent software

Benefit from a fully extensible platform with ready-made integrations for all leading software systems, including ERP, MDM, DAM, and more.



Digital Shelf Analytics

Monitor product performance on all digital channels and get actionable insights straight to your inriver dashboard that can be used for immediate product listing optimization



Contact inriver today and start selling your products your way with the most flexible Product Information Management software on the market.

why inriver?

Inriver helps create customers who are inspired, informed, and invested in your brand.

With the most flexible Product Information Management software on the market, you have complete control over your product data across the entire product cycle. This gives you the freedom to market and sell your products the exact way you want, on every channel in every market.

For apparel brands, inriver offers the complete PIM solution. Built in syndication and digital shelf analytics connect to a single, organization-wide source of market-ready product information to ensure your products always shine on every digital touchpoint.

Ready-made adapters ensure the inriver platform is fully extensible and can integrate into any tech stack, streamlining internal workflows and giving you the agility that's so critical in the competitive apparel market.

Inriver is headquartered in Malmö, Sweden, and is the strategic PIM partner for over 1,600+ global brands across a range of B2C and B2B industries.

inriver offers

- Multi-tenant SaaS solution that offers the full power of the cloud, including faster deployment and zero maintenance downtime
- Simple integration with leading DAM solutions, as well as limitless integration potential with industry-leading CRM, ERP, and many more
- Next-generation syndication (PDS) functionality that automates data output to all marketplaces, channels, and endpoints to ensure a better customer experience
- Industry-leading digital shelf analytics (DSA) offering actionable insight into buyer behavior, product performance, and channel competition



inriver

why Ntara?

Ntara is a systems integrator that specializes in connecting disparate e-commerce ecosystems. Today's market requires modernized software that automates product data and digital assets to multiple channels, with less error. Ntara is known for implementing digital commerce strategies that make an immediate impact.

Founded in 1999, Ntara specializes in PIM, DAM, and ecommerce enablement for productized businesses. Ntara has been a trusted inriver platinum partner since 2016, with three inriver Champions on staff – that's more than any other North American inriver partner. Ntara has implemented PIM for leading manufacturers & brands, including Estee Lauder, Hyster-Yale Group, and SATCO-NUVO.

By helping brands integrate PIM into their tech stack, Ntara empowers them to automate and better manage the product experience. This ensures product data captured in PIM is always up-to-date and accessible to those who need them.

Ntara's consultative approach to digital commerce:

Taxonomy & architecture

Establish a scalable system that meets the needs of today—and tomorrow.

Integrations & automation

Connect your product process software to improve efficiency and ensure accuracy.

MVP + feature sprints

Launch your first iteration quickly, then continually optimize and add new features.

Digital shelf analytics

Learn how your product data and assets are performing against the competition.

A young child with dark skin and curly hair is captured in mid-air, jumping over a puddle. The child is wearing a bright yellow raincoat and blue rubber boots with a colorful pattern. The background is a warm, golden sunset over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a strong reflection. The Ntara logo is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Ntara

inriver + Ntara: The perfect ensemble for apparel brands

Brand storytelling across all channels

A high-end clothing manufacturer went to great lengths to source the best wool in the world, gathered from a specific type of sheep on a single mountain in Europe. They used that wool to create luxurious fabric, which they used to make the finest sweaters.

This was the brand story of quality that justified the cost of their products. The problem? No one knew about it.

The people responsible for sourcing materials hadn't shared the painstaking details of this process with their marketing team. Without that information, the brand storytellers could not sell the value of their products.

Through discovery as part of their inriver PIM implementation, Ntara helped capture every step of the sourcing process. Today, those details live inside their PIM and are syndicated across all sales channels – and the brand's customers know the real value of their products.

Launching products faster to increase sales

A leading global footwear brand was planning a major ecommerce launch, but slow and error-prone data stood in the way. They needed one centralized SaaS-based PIM to standardize product data for their global locations. They also needed reliable data flow to their ecommerce fulfillment and drop-ship vendors.

That's when Ntara stepped in to help them launch the inriver PIM. Today, thanks to PIM, this footwear giant automatically sends fulfillment data to their WMS and can update their ecommerce product data in seconds. Their drop-ship vendors now automatically receive order data for improved invoicing and customer service. They're even managing product data translations through an API integration that tracks when jobs are created, executed, and delivered.

They've added 60 custom extensions (and counting) to empower their brand to launch products faster than ever before. That translates to more saleable time on the digital shelf, i.e., significantly more revenue opportunity thanks to inriver.





inriver

Inriver powers the entire product journey. Our [PIM solution](#) enables B2B and B2C enterprises to meet growing demands on product data at every touchpoint. Visit inriver.com for more information.

Want to see how inriver can transform your product journey? Book a personalized guided demo today.

Ntara

Ntara consults and implements PIM, DAM, and digital commerce software. They are leaders in product experience management (PXM) strategy and integration for manufacturers, brands, distributors, and retailers.

Ntara's services include primary research and PXM roadmapping, architecting, implementation, and customization. They also provide full-service support for long-term PXM strategy. Learn more at Ntara.com.