contentserv

Parsionate

Varo harvests the power of PIM to improve product data quality

varo

About Varo

Varo is one of Europe's leading companies in worldwide distribution of power tools, garden equipment, hand tools, and accessories. Headquartered in Lier, Belgium, the company also supplies safety tools, lighting, pumps and high-pressure cleaners, and home and lifestyle products. Its own brands, Powerplus, Kreator, and Premion as well as different private labels, are on sale in many DIY stores all over the world. With more than 60 years of experience, Varo operates in over 22 countries, with a focus on Europe and Asia, and has approximately 140 employees.

The challenge

With over 130 product groups, Varo had to manage vast amounts of product data, images, and translations and distribute it across internal and external channels such as company websites, marketplaces, and catalogs. The company relied on its ERP system, WMS system, catalogs, and Excel spreadsheets to store and create product information – which lacked optimal quality and approval checks. Most of the data was stored in catalogs, added to the ERP system, and then enriched in an Excel file.

The absence of a centralized repository meant data management was redundant, error-prone, time-consuming, and costly. It also affected translation management, since publishing product data in up to 22 languages was a tedious and extensive process. So, it was impossible to ensure that all data, additional information, and associated digital assets were consistent, transparent, and always up to date – and could be used efficiently for all output channels.

Additionally, teams within the company operated in silos, which meant that requests for product information – often from customers – triggered several rounds of back-and-forth communication, resulting in wasted time and increased frustration. Varo needed to solve issues around the siloed storage of product information in different departments, systems, and even local drives. These challenges prompted Varo to seek a product information management system that would automate and standardize processes to fully control the product content quality and make it available to the market without delay.

Requirements

Varo's primary requirement was to implement a centralized solution to access, manage, and enrich product information and digital assets effortlessly. Preferably, the platform would support multiple languages, as well as its strategy to maintain a consistent brand. Additional requirements included:

- Intuitive workflows to improve collaboration between different departments and locations

- Simple localization of marketing materials in the company's corporate design

- Clear and concise mapping of the structures and relations of complex product groups

- Establish a criteria-based approval process for data output

- Meet the demands of the international rules and regulations such as those from GS1 (DIY, garden and pet)

- Efficient and flexible data and digital asset enrichment process

- Flexible integration with existing system landscape

- Minimize operational costs by lowering the time spent searching for information and addressing errors

- Increase customer loyalty through uniform product information and high data quality standards

The effort previously required to maintain Excel files, Word documents, and PowerPoints has decreased by 70%.

Implementation

In 2017, Varo started looking for a new end-to-end solution that would cover its product and media data management. After narrowing down five PIM solutions as final candidates, Varo chose to implement Contentserv PIM. Initially, the status quo was analyzed, and an overview of the existing system landscape was created. The first year of implementation was marked by several challenges, delays, and readjustment of milestones. At this stage, the product information stored in the PIM system could not yet be easily exported and translations were not automated.

Significant progress was made primarily through the intensive collaboration between Varo, Parsionate, and Contentserv. As an end-to-end service provider, Parsionate set the strategic framework and promisingly drove the full tech implementation forward. This meant collecting and defining new project requirements. With Parsionate's support, Varo made necessary changes in the live system while the previous version was still being used. Varo developed a reliable data structure after defining best practices to move forward and analyzing the value lists, PIM structure, DAM structure, dashboards, and workflows. A standard DAM structure was implemented, and the PIM and DAM hierarchies were successfully synchronized.

The updated PIM version, went live in 2021 and since then Varo has continued to enhance the features in the system. One of the main features is Contentserv's Product Experience Hub. It is used extensively, both internally and externally, to effortlessly manage and implement integrations, simplify dynamic content, easily export data, and sync data in real time. Another essential part of the implementation encompassed implementing data quality rules. Workflow and rights management were centrally integrated to create processes and access rights in the system and control all pending actions and tasks, ensuring a significant increase in efficiency.

Results that matter

By using Contentserv, Varo gained access to a single source of truth to meet its content distribution needs. At the same time, Varo maintains data sovereignty over digital assets and product information, ensuring uniform management of corporate product data. With Product Experience Hub's flexible configuration and user-friendly interface, Varo was able to immediately create the necessary endpoints to provide all systems with high-quality data. Overall, the company raised its accuracy and completeness of product information to 85%, compared to 10% before implementing PIM.

The PIM/DAM combination provided Varo with effective product communication, despite complex product groups and hierarchical data, through an intuitive data structure. Varo now easily creates articles in Contentserv, documents them fully, and automates and organizes all translation-related tasks. The standardized workflows ensure data quality and a seamless distribution of product information to different channels. By accelerating its product introduction, Varo has sped up time-to-market and reduced costs. %. In addition, the sales department has experienced a significant decrease of 70% in the effort previously required to maintain Excel files, Word documents, and PowerPoints. Allowing sales professionals to devote more time to strategic initiatives, client interactions, and driving revenue growth.

Varo also achieved its goal of providing different departments with quick, secure, and simultaneous access to the central system while ensuring transparent versioning of all documents. Today, around 25 active users benefit from a user-friendly interface, smooth workflows, and intuitive features. By automating processes, the amount of manual labor was greatly reduced. Varo is now in the process of automating an entire user manual in the PIM system with Word templates in 21 languages to extract information from attributes, images, numbers, etc.

To respond to evolving consumer demands, Varo has recently incorporated QR codes into product packaging. This type of 2D barcode allows the company to provide consumers with additional information online. While designing new packaging, Varo decided to leverage the power of advanced product data encoded in 2D barcodes, using Contentserv's QR code generator. Now end consumers can scan a QR code with their smartphone to instantly receive information in various multimedia formats, providing an engaging digital experience. As well as containing the GS1 GTIN, these high-capacity barcodes also include the product batch number, serial number, and more.

> "We've been using the Contentserv solution for some years now and we raised accuracy and completeness of our product information to 85%, compared to 10% before we implemented the PIM solution."
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> **Nico de Troyer, Master Data Specialist, Varo**

About Parsionate

Parsionate empowers businesses and unleashes their potential to invent new solutions – all on the basis of Data Leadership. They work end-to-end by customers' side: from strategy development to full technological implementation.

About Contentserv

Contentserv's software solutions enable manufacturers, brands and specialized retailers to deliver rich, personalized and highly converting product experiences that delight customers, improve time-to-value and boost ROI.