



Case Study: Kitwave

Reducing Returns and Enhancing the Customer Experience with Akeneo PIM



After implementing Akeneo PIM, our online customer return rate dropped from 10% to about 1.6%, and the vast majority of those are just damaged products instead of unsatisfied purchases.

Sophie McGovern, eCommerce Manager, Kitwave



Challenges

- Multiple brands selling to a wide variety of different types of B2B customers but virtually no ability to cross-sell between brands.
- Poor penetration on digital channels
- Poor product data organization and restricted search abilities
- High return rates due to lack of product information and customer confusion
- No single source of truth for product information, meaning that the time it took to launch new products and new channels was too long



Benefits

- Improved conversion rates and web orders from suppliers
- Online sales have a 7% average cart value compared to traditional telephone sales.
- Increased revenue from supplier advertising on websites.
- Return rates went from 10% to 1.6%
- Increased ability to provide ingredient, allergen, and regulatory information on food products
- Consolidated product content into a single source of truth before feeding 6 different websites
- Improved agility and time-to-market

Navigating Complexity in Wholesale Distribution

Kitwave is a prominent **food and beverage wholesaler** with an annual turnover of £600-700 million, structured into **13 distinct trading entities**.

This complex setup presented **unique challenges in product management and eCommerce**. Teams were working in **silos across brands using multiple ERP systems** and websites.

Kitwave was growing and acquiring companies that operated semi-autonomously. There are **multiple ERPs and technology systems but no single source of truth** or comprehensive digital strategy.



Kitwave's brands **relied primarily on traditional telephone sales with few customers using their brand websites**. They knew their customers bought more online, but **their existing eCommerce infrastructure and product content limited their ability to grow** this crucial channel.

Kitwave's biggest challenge was their inability to provide customers with one brand with the entire company's product assortment from all 13 brands, which meant **missing out on valuable cross-sell opportunities**.

For some of their brands, product information such as **ingredients and nutrition information allergies was very important**.

They sell to highly regulated costumes including hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons where there's significant legal liability if errors occur.

Streamlining Operations with Akeneo PIM Integration

The project commenced with the strategic objective to **centralize and streamline product information** across Kitwave's multifaceted operation. Leveraging the expertise of Foodservice Online, Kitwave **implemented Akeneo's PIM system to consolidate data from disparate sources**.

The ambitious scope of the project covered **7 channels** and involved the management of approximately **78,000 products**.

Percentages of Web Orders for Kitwave suppliers:

	Before Akeneo	After Akeneo
Eden Farm	16%	35%
Miller Foodservice	10%	32%
MJ Baker Foodservice	5%	32%
HB Clark	3%	18%
Turner and Wrights	11%	27%
Automatic Retailing	20%	25%
Central Supplies	0%	4%

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One of our businesses, Miller Foods, went from 10% of their customer base purchasing from online channels to 42% with the help of Akeneo PIM.



Alan McCartney,
IT Director

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This required a meticulous approach to ensure that all stakeholders, from IT to marketing, were aligned and that the **system supported the intricate needs of various trading entities** within Kitwave.

A vital aspect of the solution was establishing **multiple connectors to facilitate seamless data flows between Akeneo PIM and Adobe Commerce** platforms for all Kitwave trading entities. This integration ensured that **product information was synchronized across the group's eCommerce ecosystem**.

The successful implementation of Akeneo PIM, complemented by strategic partnerships and advanced technological integrations, provided Kitwave with a **powerful platform to manage its extensive product range effectively**. This foundational step was crucial in resolving the challenges faced by Kitwave and setting the stage for its **continued digital evolution and eCommerce success**.



A Tale of Transformation Through Akeneo PIM

The implementation of Akeneo PIM across Kitwave's trading entities has yielded tangible, impressive results, significantly **enhancing the percentage of web orders and illustrating the power of a robust digital strategy**.

Kitwave has seen a notable **uptick in web order percentages** across its trading entities, with figures such as Eden Farm's rising from 16% to 35%, and Miller Foodservice's nearly quintupling from 10% to 49%. This surge illustrates the platform's **impact on user experience and digital sales efficiency**.

Moreover, **return rates across the group have significantly decreased**, reflecting the benefits of accurate product representation. Additionally, the **average cart value has increased by 7%**, underscoring the enhanced customer purchasing behavior facilitated by the PIM system. Overall, **Akeneo's solution has been instrumental in driving digital transformation and operational excellence** within Kitwave.

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We now have a whole new conversation with our suppliers. They want to advertise their brand online and want our customers to see that. This is a new opportunity for us for our new suppliers.



Alan McCartney,
IT Director

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About Akeneo

Akeneo is the Product Experience (PX) company, helping organizations deliver enriched, engaging, consistent, and compelling product experiences across the entire customer journey. By providing best-of-breed technology and expertise, Akeneo equips global brands, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to deliver omnichannel customer experiences that turn browsers into buyers.

About Kitwave

Kitwave is a group of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) delivered wholesale companies. Focussing on ambient and frozen goods being - Confectionary, Crisps & Snacks, Soft Drinks, Grocery, Vending Products, Frozen Goods, Alcohol and Tobacco.

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