



## Akeneo PIM Helps iBuyStores Reach New Heights



“We couldn’t survive without Akeneo.”

– Rick Mueller, CEO at iBuy Stores



### Challenges

- Time-consuming product enrichment processes and a high number of eCommerce stores led to slow time-to-market
- The company’s massive product catalog and wide range of eCommerce sites made it difficult to train new employees to manage product information
- Could not afford to spend lots of time or money on implementing a single source of truth for product information



### Benefits

- Implementing Akeneo PIM allowed iBuyStores to get to market 10 times faster
- Akeneo PIM’s short learning curve and user-friendly interface allowed the company to train new employees in a matter of hours
- Akeneo’s free-of-charge and highly scalable Community Edition PIM allowed the company to take control of product information without breaking the bank

## A burgeoning eCommerce business looking to grow



In need of some spare parts for your grill? Or perhaps you're looking to replace the motor in a chainsaw? Maybe you just need a new gas line for your indoor fireplace. Where do you go to get any of these seemingly random or difficult to find items?

Simple. iBuy Stores, a small business with a collection of more than 50 eCommerce stores that help consumers and businesses find everything from grill and fireplace parts to construction equipment parts and everything in between. Founded more than 20 years ago with just a handful of online sales websites, the company now operates more than 50 sites offering a wide collection of parts and products, with plans for expansion in the near future.

## Product information problems plague growth efforts

As iBuy Stores continued to expand both the number of eCommerce stores it operates and its product catalog within existing stores, the company's business model began to run into a problem.

According to founder and CEO Rick Mueller, the process of adding or updating new information to dozens of eCommerce sites was a "slow and cumbersome" process. Their small team of existing employees struggled to manage product information in a timely and efficient manner, while the company found it difficult to train new employees that could help the team manage this growing workload.

As enrichment times and expenses continued to rise, these product information problems threatened to cut off the company's plans for aggressive expansion into new products and markets. So, in an effort to help the company continue to expand, Mueller began to look into a product information management (PIM) solution.

*“It took us ten times longer to enrich or update product information before Akeneo.”*

## Finding a cost-effective and scalable solution to unlock growth

When it came time to find a PIM solution, Mueller and his team faced two primary challenges — they needed to find a solution that could handle a massive product catalog and one that could do so without breaking the bank. As an SMB, the business couldn't afford the expense of an enterprise-class solution, yet faced challenges with catalog breadth and volume. Enter Akeneo's open source, free-of-charge Community Edition PIM.

Mueller said he was struck by the Community Edition's ability to handle a large product catalog, even one as big as iBuy Stores', without any subscription costs to him. As he learned more about the features and scalability, he realized that this combination could be the solution he was looking for and decided to download and install Community Edition. Within 24 hours, Mueller said, the company was using PIM to manage more than 300 categories of products with ease and efficiency. "It was the easiest thing we've ever done," he said of the implementation process.



In the weeks and months since implementation, Akeneo Community Edition has withstood the test of time — and seemingly every other test the company has thrown at it. “You can’t imagine how many pieces of software we’ve broken due to our product volume,” Mueller said. “We tried to break Akeneo several times, and we never could.”

“Akeneo has really been a dream come true for our company.”

## Akeneo PIM powers growth

### Faster product enrichment

The biggest boost iBuy Stores saw after implementing PIM was in enrichment speed and time-to-market, Mueller said. Once the PIM was in place, product enrichment times decreased by 10x, allowing the company to accelerate time-to-market and gain more selling days for its products, increasing revenue. This also allowed the company to expand more quickly, growing from 20 to 50 unique eCommerce sites after its implementation.

### Easy employee training

Before Akeneo PIM, Mueller said, it would take days, if not whole weeks, to train employees to add or update product information to their eCommerce sites. This further delayed time-to-market and hampered the company’s expansion efforts. But, with Akeneo PIM, the company is now able to train employees in a matter of days, accelerating both time-to-market and expansion efforts.

### Breaking new ground without breaking the bank

Now that his team has been trained to use PIM to boost product enrichment speed and accelerate time-to-market, iBuyStores is using Akeneo to plan the next phase of their expansion. Mueller noted that the company plans to continue to open new 20 stores in the next 18 months, while also widening the product offering at existing retailers. All told, the company plans to go from 1.5 million unique products to 2.6 million by 2022, “and none of that would be possible without Akeneo PIM Community Edition.”

“We’ve been expanding non-stop and plan to continue to expand, and Akeneo PIM is the key to all that.”





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## About Akeneo

Akeneo is a global leader in Product Information Management (PIM) solutions that enable retailers and corporate brands to deliver a consistent and enriched customer experience across all sales channels, including eCommerce, mobile, print, and retail points of sale. Akeneo's open source enterprise PIM dramatically improves product data quality and accuracy while simplifying and accelerating product catalog management.



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