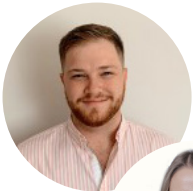




Bradford's drives competitive advantage in a traditional sector that's looking to digitally transform and meet the new online needs of B2B and B2C customers



*Akeneo PIM has played a key part in helping us optimise the digital sales channels and increase conversion. Not only are we seeing conversion rates improve, but also return volumes falling because customers are getting that which best matches their needs*

– **Fergus Bell**, Head of eCommerce at Bradford's

– **Ruth Rose**, Product Data Manager at Bradford's



### Challenges

- Cumbersome and outdated systems impacting data quality and conversions
- Unable to see what information was missing from online product listings and thus relying on suppliers who did not always know
- Difficulty managing own websites as well as multiple marketplaces and deal with the nuances and templates of each



### Benefits

- Optimised digital sales channels and increased conversion by 20%
- Overhauled systems and processes by creating a single source of truth for product data, while removing operational silos and driving efficiencies
- Centralised product onboarding and enabling relevant data for each sales channel

## The objective: Support customers, wholesalers and partners with consistent, detailed and accurate product specs and images across nearly 80,000 products.



Founded in 1770 in Somerset, Bradfords has been serving its community of building tradesmen for over 250 years. From its beginnings supporting local communities with farming and agricultural supplies, it has grown into a builders' merchant with over 40 locations in the UK, selling through its Bradfords Building Supplies and Yeovil Plumbing Supplies stores, as well as direct via its B2B (business to business) and D2C (direct to consumer) ecommerce sites, and more recently marketplaces. In 2020 it celebrated its 250 anniversary.

As the business grew online, Bradfords was unable to offer the same levels of one-to-one service in the way it would in the store. In a very competitive market, this was simply not good enough because detailed and accurate product information is a vital step in the journey to conversion.



*We were trying to cope using a series of disjointed processes that meant any enrichment would take multiple teams' involvement to complete a simple product set up, and we could not easily see what information was missing.*

*Using Akeneo completely changed the way we work, giving us structure and the ability to monitor and report on the completeness of ranges. It then became clearer what effect the missing information would have from a front-end point of view on the website and was in turn easier to fix.*

– **Ruth Rose**, Product Data Manager at Bradfords




## Operational solution Increased online sales and enhanced digital offer

Prior to working with Akeneo, the builders' merchant was using a mix of spreadsheets and manual processes to manage product information, which were both time consuming to update and prone to error – a problem that was exacerbated as its online order volumes grew, rising +26% in 2020, its numbers of sales channels grew online and it enhanced its digital D2C offer.

Using Akeneo core attributes and families, Bradfords now finds it easier to set up product groups. Akeneo enabled Bradfords to have complete visibility of any changes made to any product at any time in order to create an audit trail.

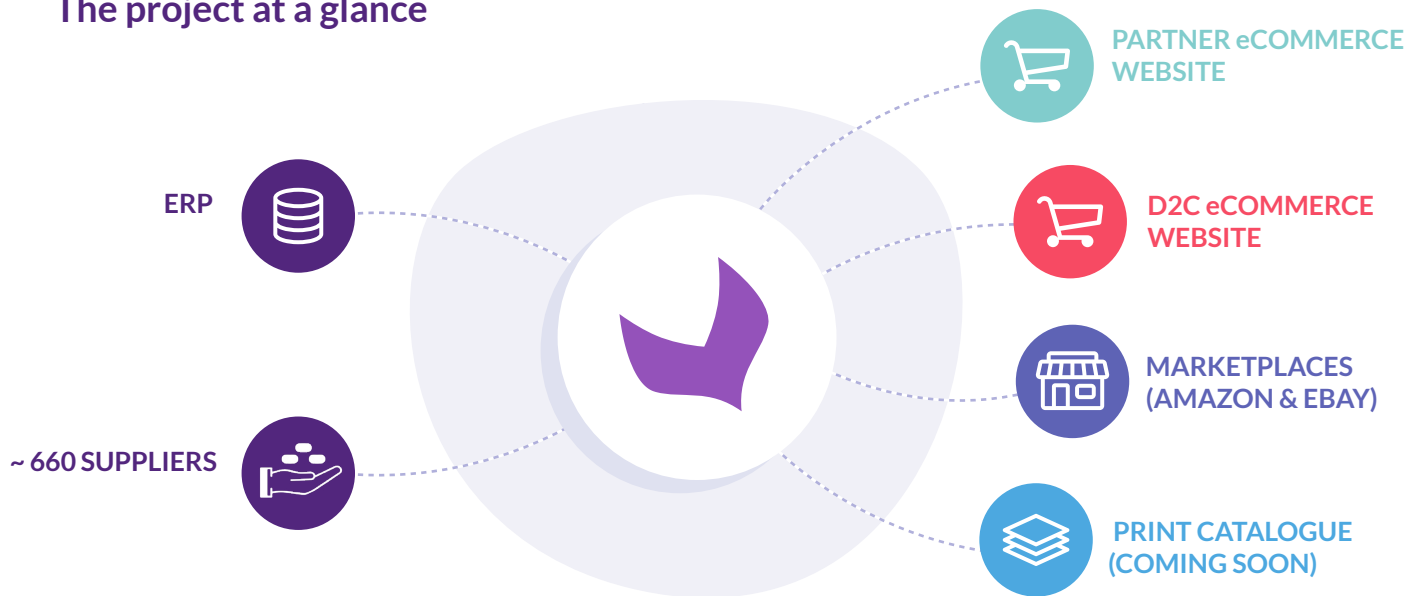
### Better for suppliers

Bradfords also deployed Akeneo across the h&b Buying group to encourage suppliers to update product information by giving them access to its network of over 80 builders merchants.

-  **Number of users:** 8 users across 3 teams – Product Data, eCommerce & Pricing
-  **Number of products:** 80,000
-  **Data sources:** ERP and directly from the suppliers
-  **Channels:** 1 eCommerce website, 2 marketplaces (eBay, Amazon), 1 partner website & soon print



## The project at a glance



## Dramatic improvements in product data quality and accuracy enabling easier catalogue, marketplace and partner management



### Higher conversion online

With better, enriched product data, Bradfords has grown online conversions by 20% with Akeneo PXM Studio. Bradfords has also reduced returns as shoppers are better supported through PIM to select the product that is right for them.



### Time to onboard new products slashed

Bradfords has cut the time taken to onboard a new product from three days to two hours or less, as well as helping its marketplace partners deliver exceptional, engaging and compelling content at the point of sale to meet the evolved needs of increasingly digital-first shoppers. This has built confidence into their customers' online buying journeys, with more accurate and richer product information.



### Simpler buying journeys for customers

Bradfords is now looking to use Akeneo PIM to build product associations to make customers' buying journeys even easier. Using Asset Manager, Bradfords will create an even better customer experience, and make it easier to introduce rich content assets, such as video.



“Akeneo’s PIM solution has played a key part in helping us optimise the digital sales channels and increase conversion. Not only are we seeing conversion rates improve, but we are also seeing returns volumes falling because customers are ordering and getting the product that is exactly what they asked for or that best matches their needs.”

– Fergus Bell, Head of eCommerce at Bradfords



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## About Akeneo

Akeneo is a global leader in Product Experience Management (PXM) solutions that help merchants and brands deliver a compelling customer experience across all sales channels, including eCommerce, mobile, print, and retail points of sale. Akeneo's open source enterprise PIM, and product data intelligence solutions, dramatically improve product data quality and accuracy while simplifying and accelerating product catalog management.