

**Thomas Sjöberg:** You're listening to PIMtalk, the product marketing podcast brought to you by inRiver.

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**Thomas:** Welcome to this first episode of PIMtalk, the podcast for product marketers, merchandisers, and PIM professionals. Every second week, we want to gather and share knowledge, experiences, and challenges together to be able to create better product stories and product experiences for our customers. This is something we want to do for you and together with you. If you have any ideas of topics or guests, you can always contact us at PIMtalk@inriver.com or send a message on Twitter@PIMtalkPodcast.

In this first episode--

[phone ringing]

**Thomas:** Sorry. One moment. I'm just going to answer this. [foreign language]

**Speaker 1:** [foreign language]

**Thomas:** Hey, mama. [foreign language]

**Speaker 1:** [foreign language]

**Thomas:** Hello, mom. Well, I'm sitting here recording a podcast actually at work. I put you on there now because you never know, it can be good content. How are you?

**Speaker 1:** I'm fine, thank you. How are you?

**Thomas:** I'm great. I've got this new project at work. We call it PIMtalk. We're going to talk about PIM here in many different ways.

**Speaker 1:** What is that PIM?

**Thomas:** What PIM is?

**Speaker 1:** Yes.

**Thomas:** You don't know?

**Speaker 1:** I never heard about this. [chuckles]

**Thomas:** Well, that might actually be a good question. Maybe, there's someone else out there that don't know what it is.

**Speaker 1:** Something new?

**Thomas:** Yes, both new and old, I guess. I'll go out and ask some people what they know about PIM and I'll come back to you. If you just hang on, I'll come back.

[background noise]

**Thomas:** Let's see here who I can grab. Rob and Daniel, playing some table tennis. Excuse me, guys. Daniel-

**Daniel Nackovski:** Yes?

**Thomas:** - I just need to ask you. I'm talking to my mother and I need to explain for her what PIM is. You're the sales director from EMEA, you must know the answer. What is PIM?

**Daniel:** *This is your mother that wants to know?*

**Thomas:** Yes.

**Daniel:** [foreign language] *PIM is a solution that helps marketing people market their products across many channels. If they want to sell products online in mobile apps or they will have displays in stores, they will use our solutions to get their content to these channels as we call them.*

**Thomas:** Is PIM something for any type of business?

**Daniel:** *PIM is useful for many types of businesses that have an omnichannel strategy, that have products that they usually want to sell across many different channels.*

**Thomas:** Omnichannel sounds really hard to understand.

**Daniel:** *Omnichannel, in layman terms, multiple channels. A channel could be like we said, a physical store. It could be online sales. It maybe you're buying via catalogs. All these are multiple channels. The combined word for this is, in the industry, omnichannel approach.*

**Thomas:** If I have a PIM, I can get my products and the information about them out in all these places?

**Daniel:** *That is correct. That is what a PIM is all about.*

**Thomas:** Thank you, Daniel.

**Daniel:** You're welcome.

**Thomas:** That was a good start. I think I'm going to call my colleague Fedde as well to get even more information about what PIM is. Hello, Fedde, Thomas here. How are you?

**Fedde van Feggelen:** *Hello, Thomas. All good. How are you?*

**Thomas:** Fine. How is it in Amsterdam?

**Fedde:** *Well, it's starting to get sunny again. We've had our ups and downs with winter and rain but now it's getting sunny again, so it's all good.*

**Thomas:** You're the Director of Sales Engineering at EMEA. You have been out in many different cases here around Europe. Companies that are interested in PIM and what are they really interested in? What is PIM? I have to tell my mom something, what it's all about.

**Fedde:** Do I have to explain to it your mom? When I explained to my mother what I do and what the product is that we have, I actually start with the channels. For us, channels are a thing that we know that are multiple ones. For my mother, there's only one, it's, "I want to buy something," that's her channel. I would start off with explaining, "Well, you have all different types of channels, if you look at it, being TV commercial or radio spots, having your neighbor telling you, 'Well, this is the best product you should have or these type of things.' Actually, they have all those touch points that you have." Have a discussion around those.

Then, I would ask or explains like, "Okay, now you have a need for a certain product. What is it that will convince you to buy something?" You go into the discussion around, "Okay, well, a part of that is content. I need to know what I am buying. When I'm buying online, I would like to know what will be delivered the next day, what will I be paying for." Besides discussions around prices and how fast it can get to our house, of course, important to know what is it that I will get. That's the whole content story that we, of course, from a PIM perspective, we make sure that the channels where my mom will look, that's where inRiver feeds information to.

Basically, explain wherever you look, the information will come from one source, which will then be the PIM system and that is the one that will hold all the product information. That's what I do, make sure that wherever you look for information, the information is going to be the same.

**Thomas:** What are your mom saying? Does she understand it? Does she thinks that's a good thing?

**Fedde:** Yes, for sure. The funny part is that the whole multi-channel or omnichannel approach, within marketing, it's a common thing but just for normal consumers, it's like, "Okay. Well, I didn't realize it works like that." It gives another perspective to things and to understand the complexity also of this world. It makes sense and also the whole user experience, of course, from an inRiver perspective specifically, it's about the inspiration, the storytelling.

Why would you buy something? Not because it's a product. No, your life will look like this if you buy this product. She's like, "Yes, of course, for me it's important. If I buy a dress, I need to know if it would fit me. If I buy a car, I would like to know what it looks like. Of course, that's important for me."

**Thomas:** Great. Thanks, Fedde.

**Fedde:** [unintelligible 00:07:22] also work for your mom.

**Thomas:** Yes, I guess so. Well, we're starting this podcast PIMtalk. It would be great if you want to co-host some episodes with me.

**Fedde:** I'd be honored.

**Thomas:** Have a nice day and talk to you later.

**Fedde:** All right. Talk to you later. Bye-bye.

**Thomas:** Bye. I thought we're going to call one of our customers to talk about what PIM is. Here on the line, I had Marta Tripp from Össur. Hello, Marta.

**Marta Tripp:** Hello, how are you?

**Thomas:** I'm great, thanks. You are down in Eindhoven?

**Marta:** Yes, in Holland.

**Thomas:** In Holland. The reason that I am calling you is that I try to explain for my mom what PIM is and you are implementing PIM here at Össur. I wanted to ask you what you would say PIM is?

**Marta:** If you need to explain it to someone external that has not been working with PIM previously, I think the easiest way to say about it, is that PIM is a software, a platform, that gathers information, is able to enrich the information, and pushes this information to external channels like e-commerce websites for the catalogs, print productions, to be able to display the marketing information, to be able to sell the products.

**Thomas:** You work with marketing on Össur?

**Marta:** Yes, I'm a part of the marketing department. On an everyday basis, we are dealing with a lot of product information. The challenge on our company is to keep this information correct in all the channels. For example, in 16 websites all over the world and in 20 product catalogs and a lot of different channels that are needing product information. All this information needs to be correct everywhere. This is something that we've been finding to be quite difficult to maintain and to manage. PIM is helping us to align this information.

**Thomas:** Who decides your team will be working with PIM at Össur?

**Marta:** I can envision that there's going to be-- Following the content journey, there is going to be need of global product managers. People that are involved with the product creation itself because this is the moment that those are the people that know the best, what the product does and how it looks like. They have all the basic information for the software. Then it will follow the content journey and travel towards marketing departments where the product can be enriched and transformed into specific market channel needs.

We will need photographers, we will need videographers, we will need a lot of people that can enrich the product with images, with videos, with a lot of other content as well.

In the end, it is going to be branding people that are going to look at the images, at the product information, making sure that it follows the branding guidelines. There's going to be also medical office affairs department that is going to look at if the public information is

applicable to the patient needs. There's a lot of different roles, a lot of different people, different departments that will be involved with PIM.

Today, those departments do not correspond fully with each other. They're not talking to each other so the product information can be different and can be displayed differently to the customers looking at the different channels and this is, of course, incorrect.

**Thomas:** You mentioned the customers and you also mentioned a little bit about your product, too. Could you just-- what is important in your line of work and your press, you're working with prostheses and other things within the medical sphere.

**Marta:** *It's extremely important for us to provide our users, our customers with the correct information. We are prescribing actually our products to be used in a specific manner. If the prescription is going to be wrong, for example, if you're going to prescribe a product that has a limited weight range to a person that is heavier that's that limitation, the product can actually break and harm a human being.*

*It's extremely important for us to provide the correct information and be consistent with it. No contradicting each other. If we are talking to a consumer through a website or an e-commerce channel and then providing a different information in the product catalog pages or instructions for use, we are obligated actually by law to provide the patients with the correct info.*

**Thomas:** I would like to go deeper into this and how you work with PIM, but I think we have to do that in other episodes. I would love to get back to you very shortly about this. Thank you, Marta, for telling us more how important PIM can be in an organization.

**Marta:** Of course. Thank you, Thomas, for inviting me to this conversation and I hope to speak to you soon.

**Thomas:** Yes, sure. Have a nice day.

**Martha:** You, too. Bye-bye.

[music]

**Thomas:** PIM stands for product information management and inRiver stands for PIM. Want to learn more about how your organization can benefit from PIM software? We've put together a free white paper where you can learn what you need to know about how your e-commerce platform can benefit from PIM. Go to [www.pimtalk.com](http://www.pimtalk.com) to download a free guide to help you better understand how PIM can work for you. That's [www.pimtalk.com](http://www.pimtalk.com).

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**Thomas:** I'm on the phone here with Filip Lindwall at the iStone, I think the partner we have that has done the most inRiver implementation. How many can it be Filip?

**Filip Lindwall:** I think I've been involved in around 10 to 15 implementations of the PIM system. I have a total around 15 implementations, I think, depending on how you count. Quite a substantial amount, actually.

**Thomas:** As a PIM expert, the situation here is that I need to explain to my mom in simple wordings what a PIM is or what it's all about. What would you say that PIM is?

**Filip:** To refer to a stereotypic type of mom, I would explain it as where you store everything that you need to use in any critical situation within the house, but in terms of marketing your products. That's a way of putting it. The other way of putting it as we usually explain it to our customers and other important persons that we talked to is that it's three levels, basically. It's a strategy, it's also a process and, of course, it's a system and usually refer to it as a PIM system. What PIM actually stands for is the management of product information. What we see is that when we talk about this, it's usually a system that we're talking about but that only solves a part of the problem, basically.

**Thomas:** It's not just an IT project or an IT software? It's more than that if you see PIM in a more general sense.

**Filip:** Exactly. I haven't been working with PIM for that long if you see to PIM in history. The five years I've worked with iStone, I've worked with PIM and my first meetings regarding PIM and sales process for PIM systems, we exclusively talked to IT department, I would say. There was a need or there was a strong salesperson from inRiver selling this to a company. The IT responsible bought the system because it's a good system. Obviously, the need is there in the company.

Then when we have implemented the project or should start implementing it, the marketing department needed to be involved the sales department and there used to be quite the discrepancy between those. What we see now is that it's mainly or it's exclusively the marketing department that orders these types of project from us and from inRiver. That's a major shift, I would say, because the whole digital shift has driven it to where we are today.

**Thomas:** If you have a PIM system, how does that change the way you work and your business?

**Filip:** Usually, many companies see PIM as a solution to all of their problems. Some companies have or most companies have a terrible way of managing their product data. It's the classic, what's inRiver called, "Content spaghetti." It's content, it's texts, it's images, it's products, everywhere. Most companies succeed in actually marketing their products in quite a qualitative way. It's a lot of branding and it's a lot of product information, it's nice pictures, but what happens in the backend, within the company before that is sometimes horrible and it's not logical at all.

What you would like to solve with the PIM system is that the system itself should solve things. That's usually where, we as implementor, needs to be really careful because the projects that we are usually selling to a customer is a technical implementation. We are not

usually selling implementation to make the organization work in a different way or make their process work in a different way.

That's why we usually say that, "Yes, it is a system. It will help you do things but if you don't change your strategy for how you should market your product or work with your product information and set up a new and better efficient process for it, you will not get the return for your investment in the system. Because the system in itself, how good it may be, it won't solve all the problems that you are looking for to solve usually."

**Thomas:** Interesting. I think we need to continue this discussion and go deeper in it and maybe have some real-life examples as well. Let's discuss what we can do for-- I will let this out sometime.

**Filip:** Yes.

**Thomas:** Thank you, Filip. Have a nice day.

**Filip:** You, too.

**Thomas:** Bye. I'm on the phone here with Danny Langlois from our Canadian partner, Absolutnet. How are you?

**Danny Langlois:** I'm fine, you?

**Thomas:** I'm great. You are one of inRiver's champions, that is individuals that we have identified bring a lot of value to the community. I just want to ask you, my mother just called me and I'm trying to explain what PIM is. What would you say?

**Danny:** Well, at first, PIM means product information management. Usually, you're using a PIM when you need to centralize all your data or your product data. If you have an ERP and a website, you don't want to sort all your data in your websites because you want to export it to somewhere else. You want to centralize it at one place, and you don't want to export it manually with Excel files and import it with Excel spreadsheets. You don't want to do that.

You're using a PIM, you're centralizing all your data and you can do connectors that will fetch all your product data from your ERP and then you have all the departments that will enrich the products and then you can export with connectors wherever you want.

**Thomas:** Companies that don't have a PIM, how do they manage this today?

**Danny:** I have no idea.

[laughter]

**Thomas:** How they manage?

**Danny:** I'm guessing they're exporting all the data from the ERP but it's minimal data. They have to enrich it in an Excel file and I'm guessing then import this Excel file into their website.

**Thomas:** Sounds like there's a lot of manual work that can lead to a lot of errors.

**Danny:** *What are failures, exactly.*

**Thomas:** What is the typical company that invests in a PIM?

**Danny:** *Well, you need a company that setting on an e-commerce website, because they want to have all the information on the product, on their product. A product without image won't be selling on the website.*

**Thomas:** Thank you so much, Danny, for sharing and see you around.

**Danny:** *Have a great evening.*

**Thomas:** Perfect. We have got a lot of good insights here from our friends. To summarize, PIM stands for product information management, and you want to gather and centralize all the marketing information around the product so we can support the marketers that want to sell and market the products in many channels. When it comes to the product information, there is a lot of requirements around it. It needs to be correct; it needs to be consistent, and it also needs to be desirable. Different professionals here will contribute with product texts, images, videos, documents, and so on.

It's all about creating the perfect product stories in all the different channels. It's not just a software or a service, it's also a process and a strategy of how you want to work with this in an effective way. You also want to be more effective internally, not having to import and export Excel files all the times. You can use connectors to connect to your ERP and to your different channels or to your print software. Well, that's PIM. I guess that's the summary of what PIM is and why you would like it. What do you say?

**Speaker 1:** *That sounds like a good idea and I think it's great.*

**Thomas:** We think so, too. Otherwise, I would be out of the job. I think I can use this in the show actually.

**Speaker 1:** *Have you gotten any time to visit?*

**Thomas:** Yes, sure.

**Speaker 1:** *It was a long time when we talked to each other.*

**Thomas:** Sure, we'll find a time. I talk to the family and we-- Let's meet.

**Speaker 1:** *That's good.*

**Thomas:** [foreign language]

**Speaker 1:** [foreign language]

[laughter]

**Thomas:** That concludes the first episode of PIMtalk. As I said in the beginning, I really want to do this as something organic and something that we do together. Please, if you have any feedback, if you have any ideas of how we can continue doing this show as interesting and as rewarding as it possibly can be, please contact us at [pimtalk@inriver.com](mailto:pimtalk@inriver.com). You can also message us at PIMtalk podcast on Twitter.

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