PIM for Shopify

How to Deal with Shopify Limitations in Plytix

COLOR
Yellow

SIZE
XL

$25.99

Wood yellow unisex t-shirt

Made from natural materials, making it comfortable.

DESCRIPTION
Made from natural materials, making it soft

COLORS
Yellow Blue Red Green Pink

PRICE

SIZES
4XL 3XL 2XL XL L M S

Shop

Wood yellow unisex t-shirt

plytix
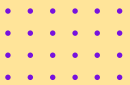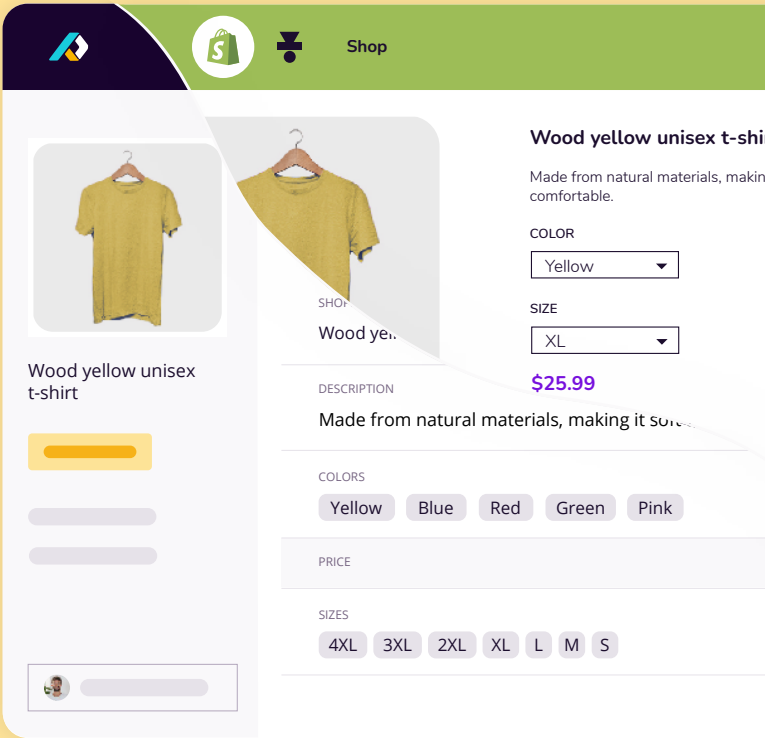
Who is this white paper for?

We have seen firsthand the product information related limitations customers experience on ecommerce platforms. This is why we've put this guide together to assist customers and prospects with common Shopify limitations—guiding them on how to overcome them with Plytix.

How Shopify became a big player in ecommerce

Ecommerce continues to prove that selling online is a lucrative option for businesses, and setting up an online store has become far easier thanks to Shopify. A platform that has seen tremendous growth, from being a snowboard shop in 2004 to starting an ecommerce platform in 2006 that is now a $200 billion multichannel ecommerce platform.

Shopify cemented itself as the third leading ecommerce platform worldwide in 2023 and has since maintained its dominance in the industry. It has the largest market share in the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, with revenue growth totaling a 22% year-over-year increase.
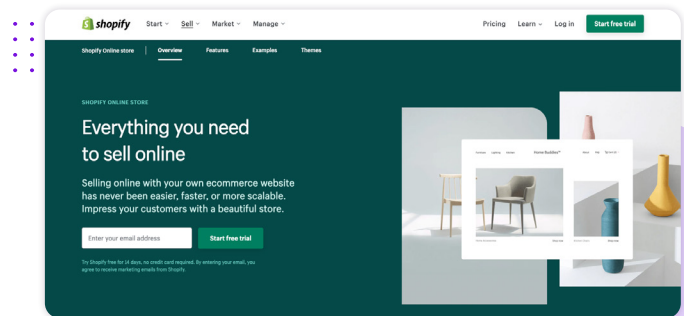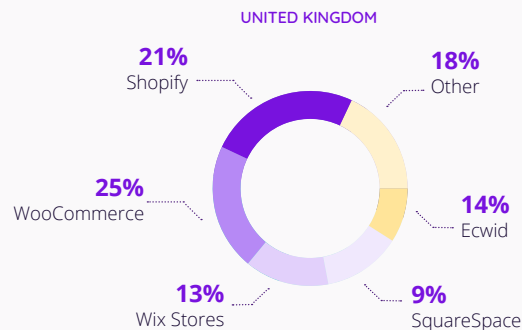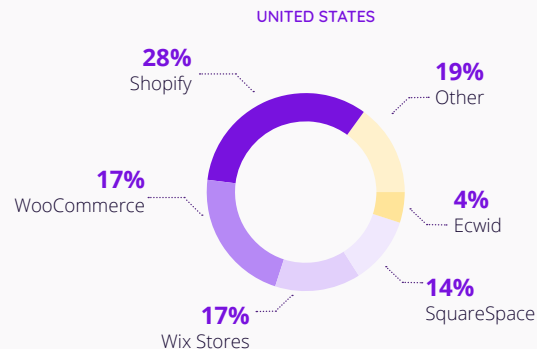

Source

It ain't all sunshine and roses—but it can be with PIM

Even with Shopify's innovative features and third-party integrations, they still have a few limitations that make succeeding in this ever-changing industry challenging. This is only natural, as you simply cannot be everything. There will always be hiccups, but we've got the workarounds down to a tee.

We've got insights from brands across the globe on areas they struggle with, so in this guide, you can expect to read all about the following:

+ How businesses can tackle headless commerce
+ How to overcome the challenges of global selling
+ How to connect sales channels in Shopify
+ How to deal with attribute and image limitations

Shopify second leading ecommerce platform worldwide in 2018

UNITED STATES

28% Shopify
19% Other
4% Ecwid
14% SquareSpace
17% Wix Stores
17% WooCommerce

UNITED KINGDOM

21% Shopify
18% Other
14% Ecwid
9% SquareSpace
13% Wix Stores
25% WooCommerce

Source

How to achieve headless commerce in Shopify

The term "headless commerce" was coined by Commercetools in 2013 and has become a buzzword ever since modern customers started dictating where and how they shop. This can be from a brick-and-mortar store, web shops, social media platforms, marketplaces, or all channels simultaneously. To achieve this, you can use various technologies for the front-end presentation and simply pull data from Shopify via APIs to facilitate the process of going headless.

Decoupling your backend and frontend on Shopify won't be a walk in the park as it can take time. However, once done, Shopify businesses can reap the benefits of:

+ Having multiple stores connected to one backend
+ The ability to scale up multichannel commerce across all channels
+ Easily adapt their business to new technology
+ Integrate easily with systems
+ An improved customer experience

How a PIM tool can help you go headless

Product information management (PIM) is a perfect bridge between content and IT.

This single source of truth helps teams work together seamlessly and manage all product information in one place. Once you're done with the decoupling of your front-end and back-end, you simply pull all necessary data from one place and distribute it wherever it needs to go.

No development required
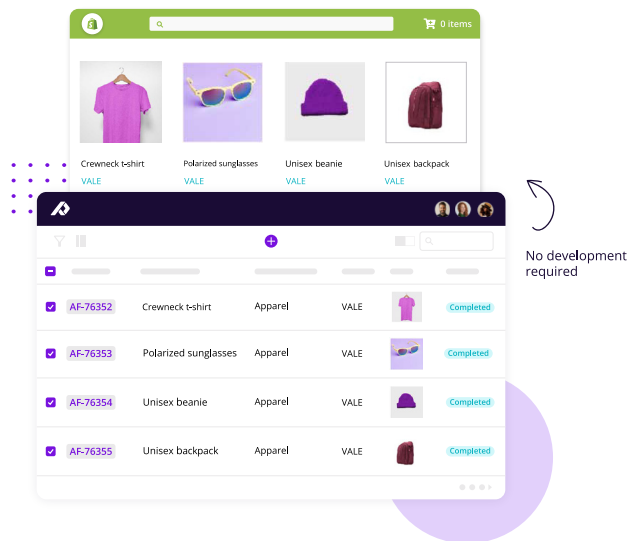
How to overcome the challenges of global selling

One of the benefits of going headless is that multichannel selling on a global scale becomes doable.

Considering that people worldwide are becoming more and more comfortable with cross-border shopping, it's worth improving your international selling efforts to expand your reach. Research shows that cross-border shopping reached $1.9 trillion in 2022 and is expected to exceed $2.1 trillion this year.

But, selling globally on Shopify comes with some limitations.

Businesses can either:

+ Use one storefront

+ Or set up multiple stores

1. The first option is easier as you won't have to create a new Shopify account for different storefronts. However, you won't be able to give your customers the full localized experience.

2. Creating multiple stores can be complex, but it's possible with a PIM. And it ticks all the boxes.

How can a PIM tool simplify global selling?

With Shopify, you can link multiple stores under one domain, but you will need to set up and manage each new store separately. This will give you full control over product data, the items you wish to sell, as well as pricing, payments, shipping, etc. For each store, you will need a localized strategy, which can be challenging to automate as you'd spend most of your time doing manual data entry.

According to this report, the three biggest time-wasters for sales teams are:

+ Manual data entry

+ Lengthy sales cycles

+ Not leveraging technology

With a product content management tool, you have a central repository for all your product content.

Not only content for your main web store but also for the different regions.

This means that you will have a centralized location to update, edit, manage and optimize your product information in different languages and currencies, that work for the desired target market. If you have a PIM with DAM capabilities, and access to a Shopify connector, then global selling is possible.

How to connect sales channels in Shopify

Being visible to your potential customers doesn't only mean having multiple stores in different countries. It can also mean selling on more than one sales channels. **Shopify does help business owners succeed in multichannel ecommerce as it lets sellers connect to other sales channels.** For example, Amazon, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and eBay.

However, the platform is meant for selling products, and not managing large amounts of data. Apart from managing data in Shopify, **many customers struggle with the consolidation of data due to Shopify's**

requirements. For example, creating a file or multivalues compatible with Shopify's requirements isn't easy because your data needs to be formatted and uploaded in a particular manner. Now, add the format and requirements of Amazon to the mix, and you have a challenge on your hands

A product information management tool helps with…

Creating product attributes for different markets

Let's say you have an attribute for products available in the French, Spanish, and US markets.

Instead of importing it as one column with one SKU, and having all of the options in that cell separated by commas, Shopify requires you to have one row per option.

Adding digital assets makes it even more time-consuming. However, a PIM tool with DAM capabilities let's you create different channels, linked to different stores, and have all that information available in a centralized location. This cuts down the time spent managing product data significantly.
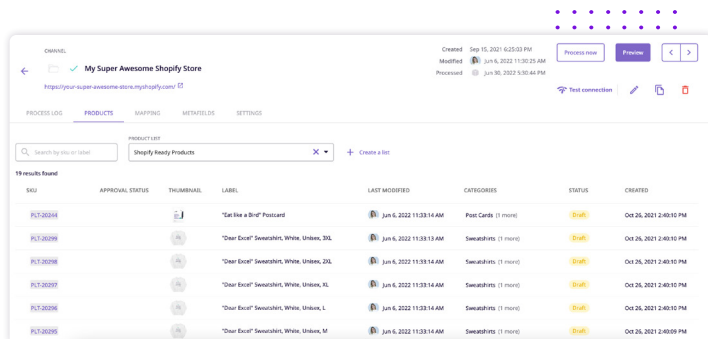
Creating and optimizing custom fields

While you cannot create custom fields for Shopify in spreadsheets, you

can create them on Shopify's dashboard or using the Plytix Shopify connector. When using the connector with your uploaded content in PIM, you can optimize some product information like product titles that need to be unique for each product.

The Plytix Shopify connector allows you to import, export, modify, and neatly prepare data for each sales channel. Whatever you do in Plytix reflects in Shopify, and vice versa.

This makes updating content easier and faster.

It also means that anytime you add new products after your first import, you don't need to export them into a CSV and send it to Shopify again. It's all there. It moves automatically from Plytix to Shopify.

Syndicating product information to a specific platform

Depending on the volume and frequency of your product updates from Shopify to other channels, and how you configure these options, you won't need any additional integration. Let's take Amazon, for example. If you update your listing on Amazon twice a year, you won't need to have integration, as you can create a template using the Plytix Channels module and upload it on Amazon.

But if you do it once a month or weekly, you'd need to invest in a feed management system that directly integrates with Amazon. PIM systems pair well with feed management tools, which further make running a multichannel business more efficient.

When using Plytix, you'll simply take the Plytix URL and put it in the tool.

From there, it will automatically flow into Amazon. Your Shopify becomes a standalone, and Plytix is what will distribute your content. Or, with Facebook, Instagram, and Google Shopping, you can copy and paste the Plytix channel URL into these platforms and the data will update automatically.

Our connector also provides a log for every sync. This means users get notified if there is an error during the process, which is something you don't get with manual data entry.

How to deal with attribute and image limitations

When running multiple stores, and on different sales channels, you need to have optimal visibility of product options. You need product attributes and variations to help customers navigare your store. That way, they can choose a product that best fits their lifestyle or preferences as they would in-store.

However, **Shopify store owners run into a wall when they have to set up more than 100 variants for a single product**. This is due to Shopify's 100 variants per product limit. According to Shopify, "the variant limit of 100 variants per product cannot be raised for any account or plan.
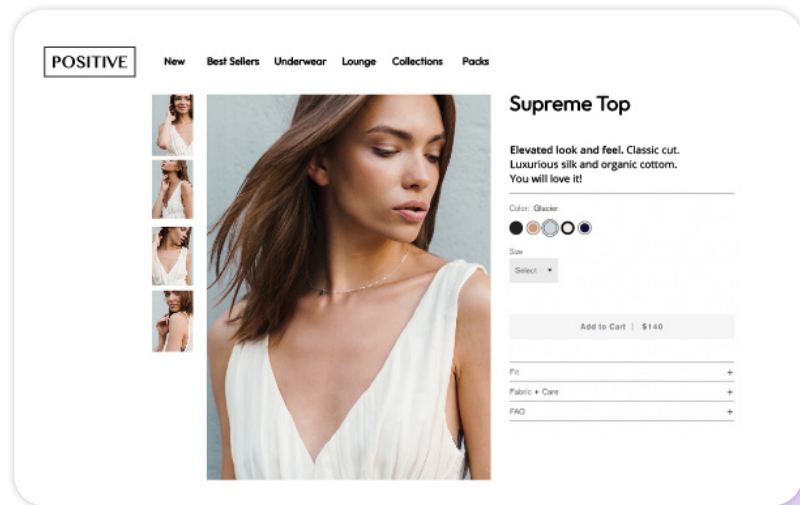
How can you deal with product attributes and image limitations with PIM?

With a PIM tool, you can work around this by splitting up a single product into 3 separate products to increase your variant's availability. For example, if you sell pajamas in three different materials (cotton, silk, and satin), you can split the product according to these materials and assign 100 different size and color variants. This makes up a total of 300 variants for one product.

How to deal with complex attributes?

Even with complex attributes, you need is the right strategy. Meta fields might be considered more complex since these are 'custom' attributes that can manage things like an SEO description, title, shipping options, etc. through 'global' namespace tags. Either way, you can create the right setup in PIM.

Setting up galleries with multiple images for variants

The Shopify default only allows you to assign a single image to each variant. That means you're unable to assign multiple images per variant. But with Multiple Variant Images from the Shopify app store, you can assign multiple images to variants, and display a corresponding image to a selected variant.

Here's how to achieve image success with PIM:

Adding images to variants as a bulk action

1. Map both image attributes (the 'Featured Image' and the 'Image Gallery'). All products will have the main image (including 'Parents' and 'Variants'), and the image gallery with the assets linked in Plytix.

2. Map 'Image Gallery' and leave 'Featured Image' unmapped. All existing featured images will be deleted from your Shopify listing, and the first image from 'Image Gallery' will be used as the main image for 'Parent' products. Variants won't have the main image display with this setup.

Adding videos to variants

With videos, users need to add them manually via the Shopify product page or using third-party apps. Alternatively, since Shopify product descriptions accept HTML formatting, users can send their embed snippets to add videos to descriptions. This content can be syndicated from Plytix.
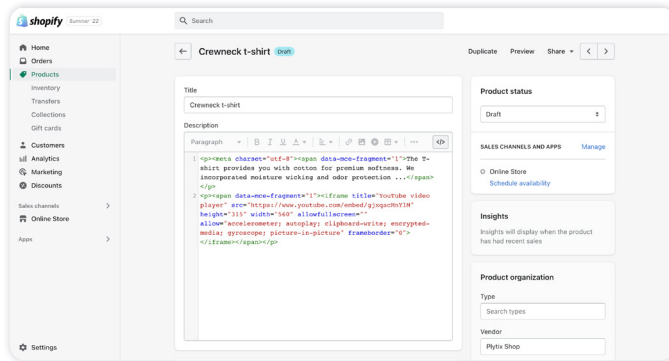
Resizing images on Shopify

Images are required to have the same width and height in order to be displayed the same way in Shopify. When resizing the type of images into different sizes, the only way to have the same size would be to leave the lock ratio unselected. However, this means images wouldn't stay proportional.

This is why it is so important that packshot images have a white or transparent background. That way, when you downsize them (and even force them to be square), the images will still look good because the product will be centered. With a product management system like Plytix, you can store and manage all kinds of data in a centralized location, and create unique attributes when necessary.
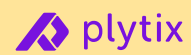
Do more in Shopify with a product information system

A product content management system is an essential part of your ecommerce tech stack. It's a tool that allows users to organize, store, manage, and distribute all the information a product has during its lifecycle all from a central location. PIM softwares go beyond fixing limitations brought on by ecommerce platforms. They are designed to ensure efficiency and improve the quality of product information for both your customers, suppliers, manufacturers, sales channels, as well as your teams.

Hi, I'm Trever!

To learn more about PIM for Shopify, get in touch. We'd love to walk you through our tool and show you everything you need to know.

plytix