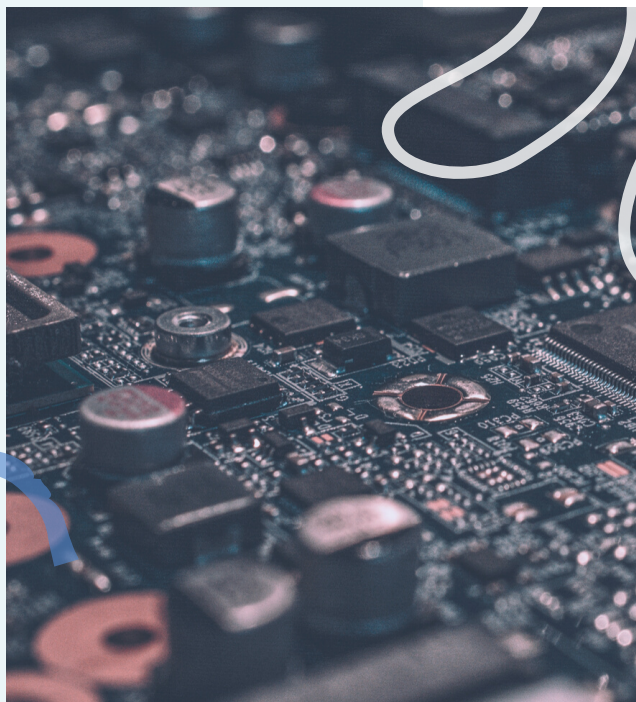# Helping Westcoast to Offer an Unrivalled Purchasing Experience and Support International Expansion

The Pimberly team has always been passionate about helping retailers, manufacturers and distributors to leverage their product data to create seamless online shopping experiences for their increasingly e-savvy clientele. To do so, they go the extra mile to forge lasting relationships with customers they work with.

One such company is Westcoast Group. They have been operational for 35+ years and have 2.5 billion revenue. Based in the UK, the company's distributor arm, Westcoast Limited, is a well-known dealer of major IT brands to office product merchants and retailers throughout the UK and further afield. This includes high-profile brands like Apple, Microsoft, Lenovo, Hewlett-Packard, as well as Hewlett-Packard-Enterprise.

> "
> **As the company grew, we knew we needed a standalone PIM platform that wasn't driven by internal web developers.**
>
> Chris Meredith,
> Head of PIM, Westcoast Group

Today, the company employs 1600+ individuals throughout the UK, Ireland and Europe. It has gained a reputation as being one of the most efficient and trustworthy IT vendors throughout these territories.

According to Westcoast, they had outgrown the systems they had in place. Therefore, they were looking for a partner that would support their growth and ambitions.

pimberly

The Challenges

A company like Westcoast has a variety of very intricate operational challenges when it comes to product information management. Before partnering with Pimberly, Westcoast faced key challenges such as:

Thousands of New SKUs Generated Daily

Westcoast was struggling to keep up with the amount of stock-keeping units (SKUs) that were being set up every day. In a given month, up to 80,000 SKUs could see the light of day. This was not easy to track, nor maintain. It was time for a standalone PIM platform that was not driven by internal web developers.

Clunky, Hard-to-Use Database

Westcoast's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) data and rich eCommerce data previously sat in a Structured Query Language (SQL) database on their premises. This system was quite clunky and difficult to use.

Slow Time to Market

Finding the correct information from disparate sources was a slow process and reduced the ability to launch new products quickly. This slow time to market had a dramatic impact on Westcoast's competitive edge

Technical Debt Pushed to the Product Team

The company was using a middleware solution that was provided by their web team. This worked as an internal Content Delivery Network (CDN) and blended general ERP with mandatory attributes.

This middleware was pushed out to the product team, ultimately leading to technical debt. When Westcoast outgrew the system, they found themselves without support or resources in this area. Therefore, a more centralised system that was easier to use was required.

pimberly

The Solution

By working closely with the Westcoast team, Pimberly determined their needs and developed a comprehensive solution, which addressed their unique operational concerns. This included:

The Power of Agility

By connecting supplier, manufacturer and data feeds as well as managing the product completeness through Pimberly lifecycles, Westcoast were able to streamline their product launches.

Now Westcoast can launch a product within three days rather than weeks, as it had previously taken before implementing Pimberly. Quicker speed to market means that they can release products before competitors, gaining vital extra selling days.

Supporting Multiple eCommerce Stores and Expanding Internationally

The increase in efficiency through utilising Pimberly's core functionality has helped Westcoast launch and support four online stores with rich eCommerce content. These stores include Westcoast UK, Westcoast France, Computer Centre, and a Mercato Device as a Service (DaaS).

For an ambitious company like Westcoast, international expansion was always on the horizon. With Pimberly's easy to use channel and locale setup, they were able to launch Westcoast France in a matter of months; half the time than originally planned.

> **Everything starts with a SKU.**
>
> **Without the setup and stewardship that Pimberly provides, we wouldn't be able to do what we do today as quickly.**
>
> Chris Meredith,
> Head of PIM, Westcoast Group

> **Pimberly came to us and said; "we are building something from the ground up, do you want to be a part of this?" And this opportunity was too good to miss.**
>
> Karl Harris
> Chief Information Officer,
> Westcoast Group

A Community of Collaboration

Pimberly paved the way for a strong relationship with Westcoast straight away. The company came on as one of Pimberly's beta customers. This allowed for collaboration in the development of the platform they required as a distributor.

Although Pimberly and Westcoast have subsequently gone on to grow their businesses, the strong relationship that was forged in this initial phase has never wavered. In addition, the features and functionality developed at the start remain at the core of the Pimberly platform today.

pimberly

Effortless Data Management
Westcoast gets huge volumes of data from distributors and content partners throughout the business. This happens with lots of feeds coming from both internal and external sources. Pimberly enables them to bring all of this data into one place.

They can then define what they trust and don't trust from a data governance perspective and push it into the relevant channels.

Considerable Cost Savings
The middleware that was previously used has now been replaced in full by Pimberly and that technical debt has been resolved.

Pimberly's feed functionality enabled Westcoast to have greater flexibility making it effortless to gather information. This gave Westcoast the confidence they needed to renegotiate the contract with their data aggregator, allowing them to be nimble across data suppliers and considerably reduce licensing fees.

> **We just looked at the mess of what the workflow was and what the workflow is now, and the difference is truly remarkable. We've managed to increase the quality and the amount of data we handle, without increasing our headcount. Without Pimberly we would have to hire another three skilled employees.**
>
> Karl Harris
> Chief Information Officer, Westcoast Group

> **"The future holds more of the same if I'm honest, just on a grander scale!"**
>
> Karl Harris
> Chief Information Officer,
> Westcoast Group

The Future

Westcoast Group is expanding into European territories, with Dutch and German sites coming soon. This expansion means they need the ability to move into each region with agility and flexibility to respond to the market forces they encounter. As an acquisition-driven, fast-moving company, one of their goals is to get new data to their customers and partner companies more efficiently.

Westcoast will use Pimberly's API to distribute information from their warehouses to suppliers, gaining greater insight through powerful reporting, which will help shape their future eCommerce strategy.

"I challenge Pimberly like I challenge all of my vendors and it's still giving good value back to us. It's obvious when something is good and is of value - you don't need a fancy ROI calculator to tell you that."
Karl Harris, CIO

WESTCOAST

Pimberly looks forward to helping Westcoast as they continue to drive efficiencies and take advantage of their vast sources of product data.

pimberly