



Manufacturing playbook:

Optimizing product data to meet
sustainability standards

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Introduction:

The growing importance of going green

What does 'going green' mean for today's industrial manufacturers? Where is the industry in terms of sustainable practices?

All fair questions. The blatant answers? Regulations are tightening, buyers are getting savvier, and supply chains are under more scrutiny than ever. Companies that fail to adapt risk more than just fines; they risk losing trust, customers, and market access.

But here's the good news: sustainability isn't just a compliance headache - it's a competitive advantage. By proving your environmental impact through enriching product content, you can win over eco-conscious buyers, tap into new markets, and strengthen your operations long-term.

So, how do you stay ahead? All it takes is ensuring your product data is accurate, highlights your sustainability actions, aligns with evolving standards, and is optimized for reporting. Easy enough, right? This guide breaks down everything you need to know—from key regulations to best practices—so you can navigate the complexities of sustainability and emerge stronger.



Sustainability status update:

The latest regulations and market expectations

The expectations for manufacturers to demonstrate accountability in their operations sit higher than the cranes used for skyscrapers. And, it's not just regulatory—consumers actively reward sustainable brands with increased loyalty and preference. Companies can quickly fall behind competitors who effectively communicate and prove their sustainability efforts.

Today's market expectations

Supply chain transparency:

Every company will have environmental impacts linked to their supply chains. Whether it's where they source raw materials, how much emissions they emit, or what their working conditions are like, both consumers and business partners increasingly demand visibility into manufacturing processes. Your company must track and disclose product origins, emissions, and environmental impact, ensuring full lifecycle accountability. For example, BMW has implemented blockchain technology to track raw material sourcing, ensuring ethical and sustainable mining practices.

Voluntary ESG disclosures:

Beyond legal requirements, many large corporations, including **Schneider Electric**, now publish detailed Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reports to maintain credibility, avoid greenwashing allegations, and attract sustainability-focused investors.

Circular economy initiatives:

The shift from a linear to a circular economy is reshaping how manufacturers operate. Industrial companies like **Caterpillar** have implemented extensive remanufacturing programs, allowing them to refurbish and reuse parts to reduce waste and material consumption.



Key regulatory frameworks

1. EU: Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

Effective as of January 2023

What is it? European regulation requiring businesses to disclose sustainability performance and risk management. It mandates comprehensive sustainability reporting, ensuring that companies document and verify their environmental and social impact.

Why should you care? Failing to meet reporting requirements puts you at risk for reputational damage, fines, and lost business opportunities.

2. EU: Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive

Effective since 2003 with evolving policy changes

What is it? Focuses on reducing electronic waste and promoting recycling. Manufacturers must track and report waste handling and ensure proper recycling channels.

Why should you care? Compliance enhances brand reputation and ensures smooth market access within the EU. Non-compliance can lead to product bans, preventing sales growth.

3. EU: Digital Product Passports (DPPs)

EU to mandate DPPs, starting with three key industries by 2026: apparel, batteries, and consumer electronics (with plans to roll out to additional categories later)

What is it? Ensures end-to-end product lifecycle transparency. DPPs track product materials, origin, and sustainability credentials, streamlining compliance and enhancing consumer trust.

Why should you care? Adopting DPPs ahead of regulation not only improves supply chain efficiency and enhances traceability, but also provides a significant competitive advantage. By the time they're enforced, you'll run smoother operations with a stronger brand image—while everyone else scrambles to catch up.

4. US SEC climate disclosure rules

Annual reporting to take effect in 2025

What is it? The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has proposed mandatory climate-related disclosures for publicly traded companies. This includes Scope 1, 2, and, in some cases, Scope 3 emissions reporting.

Why should you care? US manufacturers must track and disclose greenhouse gas emissions to avoid penalties and maintain investor confidence. Early adoption ensures alignment with ESG expectations.

5. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies

Mandated worldwide; increasingly adopted in the US, Canada, and throughout Asia

What is it? Requires you to take responsibility for the entire lifecycle of your products, including collection, recycling, and proper disposal.

Why should you care? Non-compliance can lead to costly product take-back requirements and restrictions in key markets.

Align your data, achieve compliance:

How to adapt

Aligning product data with industry standards

Ensuring accurate data is collected and shared from the earliest stages in the supply chain is step one, such as carrying out lifecycle assessments (LCAs). However, many manufacturers overlook (and underestimate) step two: ensuring the data is useful, usable, and used.

To prepare for sustainability compliance, product data needs to be standardized and optimized with ESG information. Plus, as wholesalers and their customers increasingly demand sustainable products—90% of consumers prioritize transparency when purchasing products—you need to ensure your product attributes indicate this.

Key product data industry standards

- **ETIM:** Standardized international classification for product attributes, enabling you to incorporate environmental data into product catalogs efficiently.
- **FAB-DIS:** Ensures compliance with French sustainability requirements. The framework mandates reporting of carbon footprint contributions, recyclability levels, and product traceability.
- **BMDG 3.0:** Incorporates environmental certifications, such as REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation, and Restriction of Chemicals), WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment), and ErP (Energy-related Products) labels. This standard allows you to document sustainability credentials effectively.



Examples of sustainability attributes and values from industry data standards

Standard	Attribute	Description	Possible values
ETIM xChange	LCA Environmental Impact	Captures LCA data of a product	Carbon footprint, energy consumption
	Energy Efficiency	Categorizes products based on energy-saving performance	A+++, A++, A+, A
	RoHS Compliance	Identifies compliance with hazardous substances regulations	True / False
ETIM BMEcat	ETIM Classification for Sustainability	Uses predefined ETIM classification codes to describe eco-friendly product features	EC011550 (e.g., for energy-efficient motors)
	ETIM Features	Attributes related to energy use, recyclability, and materials	EF002169 (recycled content), EF011666 (energy efficiency rating)
	REACH Identification	Determines if a product is subject to REACH regulations	True / False

Examples of sustainability attributes and values from industry data standards

Standard	Attribute	Description	Possible values
FAB-DIS	FR_CONTRIB_CODE1	Code identifying the type of eco-contribution	DEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment), DEA (Furniture waste), PMCB (Construction materials waste), SORECOP (Private copying levy)
	FR_ECO_ELEC	Identifies whether an article contains electronic components for eco-tax purposes	True/False
	ErP Label (L01)	Energy-related product classification	A+++, A++, A+, A
BMDG	Environmental Product Declaration (EPD)	Certification for the environmental impact of a product	D08 EPD, France FDES
	WEEE Compliance	Indicates compliance with WEEE Directive	D07 Declaration WEEE
	ECO Label	Certification for products meeting high environmental standards	L03 ECO label

Examples of attributes for REGULATIONS (according to FAB-DIS)

Attribute (RTYP code)	Description	Possible values
CARBFULL	"Cradle to Grave" carbon footprint contribution	kg CO ₂ equivalent
CARBPART	"Cradle to Gate" carbon footprint contribution	kg CO ₂ equivalent
CARBPART	Eco-contributions (DEEE, PMCB, DEA)	Yes / No
SOCARB	ISO 14067 - compliant carbon footprint statement	Yes / No
PEP	Product Environmental Profile	Yes / No
RECYCLABILITE	Recycling capacity for waste from similar products	% recyclable content
RECYCLE	Incorporation of recycled material (article & packaging)	% article / % packaging
RECYCLEMAT	Percentage of recycled material per material	Material-based % values

Examples of attributes for REGULATIONS (according to FAB-DIS)

Attribute (RTYP code)	Description	Possible values
REPAR	Repairability index	Scale of 1-10
RECHANG	Spare parts availability period	Years (e.g., 5 years)
ROHS	Conformity with RoHS requirements	Yes / No
SVHC	Presence of Substances of Very High Concern (REACH)	Yes / No
TRACE	Product traceability information	Tracing codes, lot numbers

Explore our complete list of the top industry standards for 2025, including 2BA, ARGE, and DDS | [Learn more](#)



Implementing DPPs: Are you ready for the next era of supply chain transparency?

The slow rollout of **digital product passports (DPPs)** is the calm before the storm that will completely change the manufacturing landscape. Companies that aren't already considering how they will adopt the standardized approach to tracking product sustainability attributes will be 10 steps behind the early adopters.

The value of DPPs

1. **Improved supply chain visibility:** Enables tracking of materials, sourcing, and environmental impact throughout a product's lifecycle
2. **Accurate carbon footprint tracking:** Facilitates alignment with carbon reduction initiatives, such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol or SBTi
3. **Enhanced compliance readiness:** Ensures your company meets emerging regulations with structured data
4. **Increased consumer trust and market differentiation:** Provides transparent, verifiable sustainability credentials for buyers

The gold star of sustainability: Voluntary standards

So, we've covered the standards you **HAVE** to meet. However, today's leading manufacturers know you should go beyond regulations by adopting voluntary sustainability frameworks to meet buyers' true standards of excellence.

1. **Science-based targets initiative (SBTi):** Helps you set emissions reduction goals for your company aligned with climate science. Industrial manufacturers, such as Prysmian Group and Grundfos, apply SBTi methodologies to reduce Scope 3 emissions from their supply chains.
2. **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI):** Provides standardized ESG reporting frameworks, enabling businesses to track environmental performance with verifiable metrics.
3. **B-Corp Certification:** Recognizes businesses meeting high environmental and social impact standards.
4. **ISO 26000 and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Guide you in ethical and sustainable business practices.



Looking to dive deeper into DPPs? Find everything you need to know [here](#).

Applying the mechanics:

How to optimize product data for sustainability initiatives

Key sustainability attributes to highlight in product data

1. **Carbon footprint information:** Utilizing standards such as ISO 14067 for carbon footprint verification of products.
2. **Recyclability and repairability indices:** Reporting on repairability scores as required under AGECE regulations.
3. **Sustainability certifications:** Highlighting third-party certifications (e.g., FSC, Energy Star, EU Ecolabel) to validate green claims.
4. **Material composition and recycled content percentages:** Disclosing recycled material content per EU Circular Economy policies.

Best practices for managing sustainability data

Ensuring sustainability attributes are effectively communicated across digital sales platforms is essential for compliance and consumer trust. Strategies include:

1. **Automate data collection:** Replace manual processes with automated workflows to a) monitor regulatory updates in real-time, b) aggregate supply chain data from various vendors, and c) identify gaps in environmental impact reporting and suggest optimizations.
2. **Show proof:** The more measurable data you have to support your claims, the better. Tools like **Arbor** can help you tap into product-level impact assessments. For instance, you could measure the environmental impact of changing from plastic packaging to recycled cardboard.
3. **Enhance search filters:** Allow consumers to filter products based on eco-friendly certifications, materials, or lifecycle assessments.
4. **Optimize for SEO:** For certified products, include keywords related to sustainability, such as “eco-friendly,” “biodegradable materials,” “low carbon footprint,” and “certified sustainable.”
5. **Highlight third-party certifications:** Clearly display compliance with recognized sustainability standards (e.g., FSC, Energy Star, Cradle to Cradle).
6. **Use visual markers:** Incorporate sustainability badges or icons to quickly convey eco-friendly attributes to buyers.



Important note!

You must have supporting evidence to back all sustainability claims in product messaging or images under the **EU green claims directive**.

Looking ahead

The future of sustainability in manufacturing

Sustainability will continue to shape the industrial manufacturing sector, with stricter regulations and evolving market expectations. Investing in robust digital infrastructure to manage and optimize sustainability data is essential. Companies that proactively adapt will gain a competitive advantage, mitigate risks, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Top 3 trends to watch

1. **Increased reliance on AI and automation** for sustainability compliance tracking and reporting
2. **Expansion of digital product passports** beyond electronics and textiles to industries, like automotive and industrial machinery
3. **Greater integration of circular economy principles** in product design and supply chains



Productsup as your product data partner

Operating in over 50 countries, Productsup is the go-to content syndication platform for industrial manufacturers, like **Prysmian Group** and **Hansgrohe**. Our solution simplifies the way you gather, enhance, and share product data, ensuring high-quality, consistent content across all sales channels and regions.

How our platform empowers you to sell globally

- **Unify your product data:** Seamlessly import information from any format (.csv, .xml, .xls, etc.) and leverage the industry's most extensive set of import connectors.
- **Optimize with precision:** Automate attribute mapping and run in-depth data readiness checks to detect errors and generate perfectly structured catalogs that meet all compliance standards.
- **Tailor your catalog for every audience:** Easily adapt product data to meet the requirements of industrial data platforms (e.g., ARGE, 2ba, EFO) and comply with standards (e.g., ECLASS, ETIM, BMEcat, and FAB-DIS).
- **Expand your global reach:** Distribute enriched, error-free product listings to major marketplaces (e.g., Amazon, ManoMano) while ensuring seamless order synchronization.

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