Productsup

# Top manufacturing trends **in 2024**

# Contents


**2023 Retrospective** 3

- Ecommerce as an essential channel 4
- Industry 4.0 4
- Artificial Intelligence 4

**2024 Global outlook** 5

- Increased adoption of industrial classification standards 6
- Newer headaches 6
- Additional revenue streams 7
- Product content syndication tools 7
- Industry 5.0 8
- Sustainability 8

**Conclusion** 9

# 2023 Retrospective

The specter of an economic downturn loomed large for industrial manufacturers in 2023. As global economic tides shifted, industrial manufacturers found themselves navigating uncharted waters. With many facing supply chain disruptions, labor shortages, and inflationary pressure. Despite these challenges, industrial manufacturing leaders are optimistic about their long-term growth prospects.

Driven by a strategic repositioning towards innovation, digitalization and automation, and sustainability, leading industrial manufacturers are confident. Many key players in the sector are harnessing the power of data analytics, artificial intelligence, and product content syndication automation to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and boost productivity.

**While there is a lot to look forward to in 2024, let's first start by looking back at some of the major adoptions by industrial manufacturers in 2023:**

**Ecommerce as an essential channel:** While Covid-19 acted as a catalyst for industrial manufacturers to venture into digital sales, 2023 was the year the first steps were taken to use digital channels to sell products. This could also be attributed to the growth of the ecommerce market in general with wholesalers, retailers, and even distributors trying to get in on the omnichannel wagon. A few years back, we saw almost 66% respondents of a survey conducted by PWC agreeing that implementing digital marketing and sales over the next two years was a "very high" priority. In 2023, industrial manufacturers, understanding the importance of having an online presence, have already started on various pilot and POC projects to kick-start this initiative. 2023 saw "omnichannel" becoming the new norm and this led to distributors, and retailers applying pressure on manufacturers to deliver product content. In this new norm, manufacturers have run into the challenges of having huge amounts of product data which makes it tedious, labor-intensive, and time-consuming to manage.

**Industry 4.0:** The transformative wave of Industry 4.0 made substantial headway in 2023. Industry leaders keen on technological innovation embraced this paradigm shift. As the convergence of industrial IoT, digital twins, data analytics, and automation reached new heights, manufacturers harnessed the power of interconnected systems to enhance operational efficiency and precision.

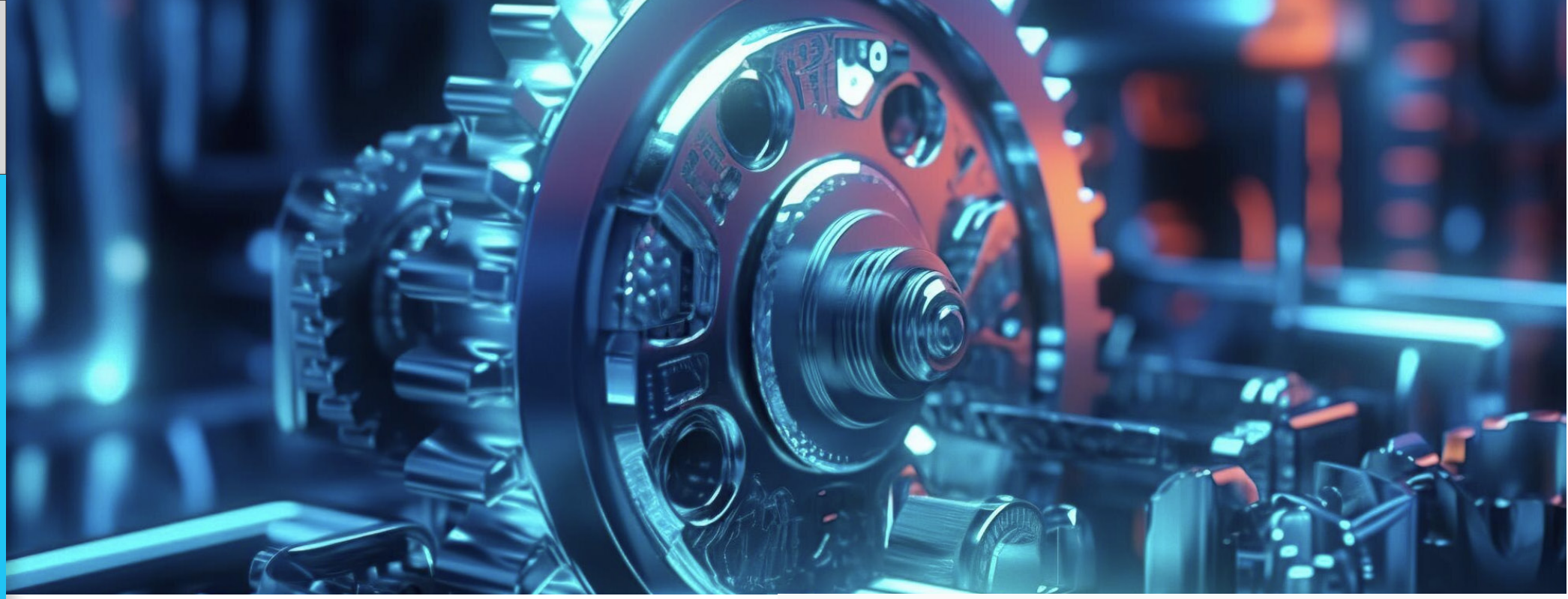
They started transforming their factories to "smarter" ones. Industry 4.0's adoption allowed for the real-time monitoring of machinery, predictive maintenance, and the seamless integration of digital platforms, fundamentally altering the manufacturing landscape.

**Artificial Intelligence:** With the proliferation of data generated daily by industrial IoT and smart factories, artificial intelligence (AI) emerged as a pivotal force in industrial manufacturing throughout 2023. Manufacturers focused on AI solutions, prominently featuring machine learning (ML) and deep learning neural networks along with the vast benefits of generative AI for content production.

These powerful AI tools became the linchpin for the comprehensive analysis of vast datasets, enabling manufacturers to make data-driven decisions of unparalleled sophistication and create product-related content at a faster rate for an even faster go-to-market strategy.

# 2024 Global outlook

Industrial manufacturers can anticipate an exhilarating journey marked by the accelerated adoption of cutting-edge digital automation technologies, the amplification of sustainability-driven initiatives, and a steadfast commitment to fortifying global competitiveness. After speaking to leaders within our customers who are trailblazers in the industry these are the few themes that emerged as patterns:



## Increased adoption of industrial classification standards

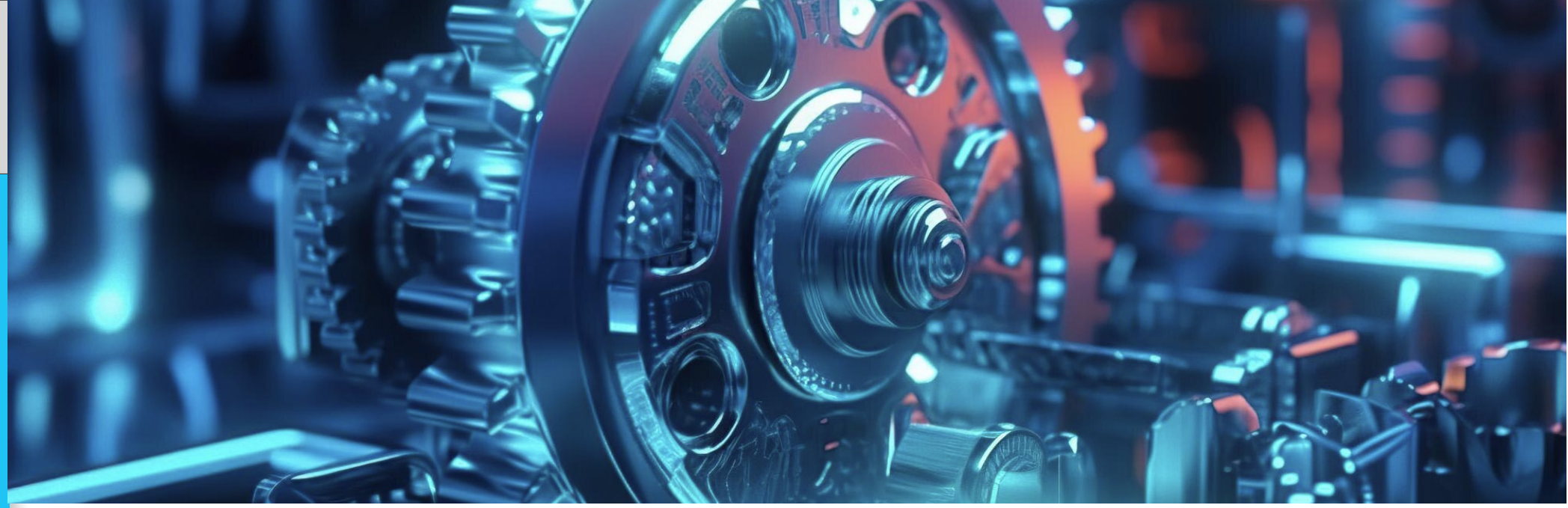
The industrial manufacturing sector is poised to witness a rise in the adoption of standardized product content classification, with a strong focus on standards like ETIM and ECLASS. This strategic shift underscores the industry's commitment to optimizing product master data management, a crucial facet for seamless product content syndication to data pools, and wholesale distributors.

As more companies recognize the inherent value of adopting industrial classification standards, the year ahead will witness a surge in efforts to classify internal data with the help of product content syndication offerings to organize their product content according to these standardized frameworks. This meticulous classification of product content enhances internal organization and coherence and sets the stage for streamlined syndication to data pools and wholesale distributors.

## Newer headaches

The standardization process, while crucial for consistency and efficiency, will challenge manufacturers to navigate new and diverse go-to-market (GTM) channels. The ability to dynamically tailor product content will become a pivotal trend, requiring manufacturers to be agile and responsive to the unique requirements of different data pools and wholesale distributors.

Moreover, staying ahead mandates a shift towards real-time adaptability. Industrial manufacturers will be required to equip themselves with the capability to enable live data exchanges, ensuring that product content is standardized and updated dynamically for a faster syndication process. The ability to seamlessly adapt product content to diverse channels and engage in real-time data exchanges becomes a strategic imperative, positioning manufacturers for sustained success and relevance in 2024.



## Additional revenue streams

The year 2024 is expected to witness the emergence of a new dynamic in the industry, one where manufacturers actively participate in the entire product journey, from production to end-user interaction. Along with the traditional B2B approach involving wholesale distributors, and datapools, industrial manufacturers will also look to test the ecommerce waters with a DTC approach in 2024.

Ecommerce and omnichannel strategies are at the forefront of this transformative approach as manufacturers seek to find a balance between traditional distribution channels and engage directly with end customers. This novel strategy not only serves as a means of diversifying revenue streams but also offers manufacturers the opportunity to strengthen their brand presence in the market. By establishing direct connections with customers manufacturers will look to gather valuable insights into customer preferences, enhance customer experience, and respond dynamically to market trends.

## Product content syndication tools

In 2024, industrial manufacturers are poised to witness a pivotal shift in their technological priorities.While the past year was marked by significant advancements in enhancing production line efficiency, the focus for the year ahead is expected to shift towards post-production activities, particularly the adoption of product content syndication tools. These tools will take center stage in manufacturers' strategies, acknowledging their profound role in streamlining revenue streams.

A product content syndication tool is a comprehensive solution designed to streamline the intricate process of managing and disseminating product data. It facilitates importing product data from diverse sources and file formats, enabling manufacturers to optimize and customize the data to meet stringent requirements and standards. Subsequently, the tool empowers manufacturers to export tailored product content seamlessly to any data pool, distributor, or specialized retailer. The tool also slashes costs by automating tasks, reducing time-to-market, and eliminating the need for custom developments and IT support. Read more about how Productsup's Distribution PX can help you **here.**

## Industry 5.0

Industry 5.0 transcends the traditional confines of efficiency and technology challenges, extending its focus to societal considerations such as employee well-being. This paradigm shift positions industrial manufacturers not merely as problem-solvers but as integral contributors to broader global challenges. Industry 5.0 aims to streamline processes in novel ways, exemplified by advancements like product data syndication. Implementing such tools holds additional benefits beyond the immediate gains in operational efficiency. It frees employees from mundane tasks, fostering a workplace environment where human skills are more strategically utilized, enhancing job satisfaction and overall well-being.

## Sustainability

As sustainability takes center stage, the industrial manufacturing landscape in 2024 is characterized not only by products but by the wealth of information that empowers consumers to make choices aligned with their values. Along with the overarching commitment to sustainability by adopting cleaner technologies and embracing circular economy models, another development in this trajectory is the increasing emphasis on new product content types, necessitated by a growing demand for comprehensive information on reparability, carbon footprint, eco-tax implications, and an array of sustainability certificates and legal accreditations.

A noteworthy initiative exemplifying this trend is the introduction of the “European Digital Product Passport” (DPP). This pioneering concept encompasses a structured collection of product-related data, defined within a specific scope and governed by agreed-upon data ownership and access rights. Accessible via electronic means through a unique identifier, the DPP seeks to provide transparent and comprehensive information regarding sustainability, circularity, and value retention for reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling. This strategic move aligns with evolving regulatory expectations and positions manufacturers as responsible stewards in the global pursuit of sustainable practices.

# What's coming in 2024?

In summary, the industrial manufacturing sector is gearing up for a pivotal year in 2024, characterized by a convergence of influential trends and strategic transformations. These include standardizing product content, adopting product content syndication tools, adapting to industrial standards such as ETIM, the emergence of Industry 5.0, a shift in business models in search of additional revenue streams, and a steadfast commitment to sustainability.

Manufacturers are expected to proactively address economic challenges, by viewing them as opportunities for growth through digital and operational transformation. The forthcoming year promises to be an important time in the digital transformation narrative, where change through automation is anticipated and embraced as a driving force for progress and excellence.

Yet, with these exciting changes come new pain points, particularly in managing product content. Manufacturers will need to create new types of content and ensure it's standardized. They will need to have the agility for live data exchange and the flexibility to use new channels to enter markets.

Learn more about how Productsup's Distribution PX can enable your teams to easily aggregate all of your product data and streamline your product content journeys.

Productsup

Empowering commerce

**Get in touch today!**

hello@productsup.com

www.productsup.com

Productsup 2023, all rights reserved