WORLD SYNC

Second Annual

Consumer Product Content Benchmark

Survey Research | 2022

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Relevant, impactful product content is essential everywhere commerce happens.

That was my personal takeaway from last year's Consumer Product Content Benchmark from 1WorldSync, which documented the monumental acceleration of consumer spending to e-commerce in the first years of the pandemic, and the critical role digital product content played in facilitating positive shopping experiences—in-store and online.

Today, amid sustained inflation concerns and uncertain economic forecasts around the globe, has the core of the above story changed?

At the risk of spoiling the data on the following pages, the answer is emphatically, "No." In fact, compelling content arguably matters more than ever. In this year's survey, **7 in 10 online shoppers** said they often decide not to buy a product due to poor quality product content or a lack of product content.

As consumers modify their budgets, a vast majority will visit multiple retailers, sites and product detail pages for an individual purchase and many say they are relying on product content even more than years prior to make up their minds. Moreover, consumers expect quality and consistent content across these channels, and will walk (and click) away from brands and retailers who fail to live up to these expectations.

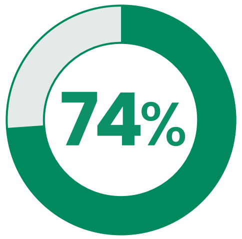
The data in the following report is based on a randomized, representative sample of 1,650 online shoppers in the United States and Canada, commissioned by 1WorldSync and administered online by Pollfish.

Thank you for reading; we at 1WorldSync wish you a successful 2023 and beyond!

Steve Sivitter CEO, 1WorldSync

INFLATION'S IMPACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

The shopping landscape remains dynamic in 2022 with long-term effects of the pandemic continuing to shape consumer behavior. Most significantly, inflation is impacting consumers across the globe—and many are taking an even closer look at product content as spending curtails.



of U.S. & Canadian shoppers say inflation has impacted their shopping behavior for products and goods.

Significantly 41%
Moderately 33%

Among those shoppers impacted by inflation, 63% are pulling back spending to adjust for rising costs. Clothes and electronics are the leading categories of non-essential goods getting the pinch from consumers.

Consumers say inflation is affecting their behavior in many other ways, including a reduction in holiday spending.

- 38% spend more time studying product content
- 38% have put off a major expense
- 38% are substituting for private label brands
- 36% will scale back gift spending this holiday season

As Figure 1 illustrates, shoppers rely on product content to guide purchasing decisions across a range of factors. Brands and retailers that utilize this information consistently and clearly will be well positioned in 2023 and beyond.

Why are consumers spending more time with product content?

Budget Watch
To ensure value for money 67%

Gut Check
To ensure they actually want or need it 56%
To ensure it will meet expectations 49%

Values Alignment
To ensure manufacturer's values align with their own 38%

Peer Review
To ensure other customers are enjoying the product 33%

Integrity Measure
To ensure marketing messages are backed by specific product attributes and features 32%

Cross-Reference
To compare similar products 30%

All in the Details
To learn more about how the product is made or what's in the product 28%

Figure 1

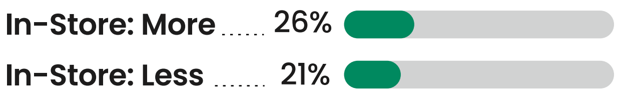
OMNICHANNEL SHOPPING TRENDS

Shopping continues to take place across the omnichannel. There have never been more ways to shop and consumers are taking advantage, both online and in-person.

The survey found that in the last 12 months 69% of U.S. shoppers have purchased items online they previously only or mostly ever bought in stores. This represents an 18% decline from last year's survey, likely a result of more shoppers returning to pre-pandemic shopping habits.

In fact, brick-and-mortar retail isn't going anywhere. In-person shopping is on the rise again after being temporarily halted in 2020. See Figure 2.

Consumer Shopping Compared to 2021



Engagement across channels varies. See Figure 2. For example, young consumers are driving adoption in gaming and VR marketplaces with 44% of consumers having shopped in a "metaverse" marketplace this year.

On the other hand, many direct-to-consumer (DTC) brands have had a rocky 2022, as the survey findings illustrate.* Shopping via e-commerce operated by a brand, mobile applications operated by a brand, and social media ads/in-app browsers all faced net declines compared to 2021.

Further reading: "DTC brands are experiencing decline" Retail Dive.

Where Consumers Shopped in 2022 vs. 2021

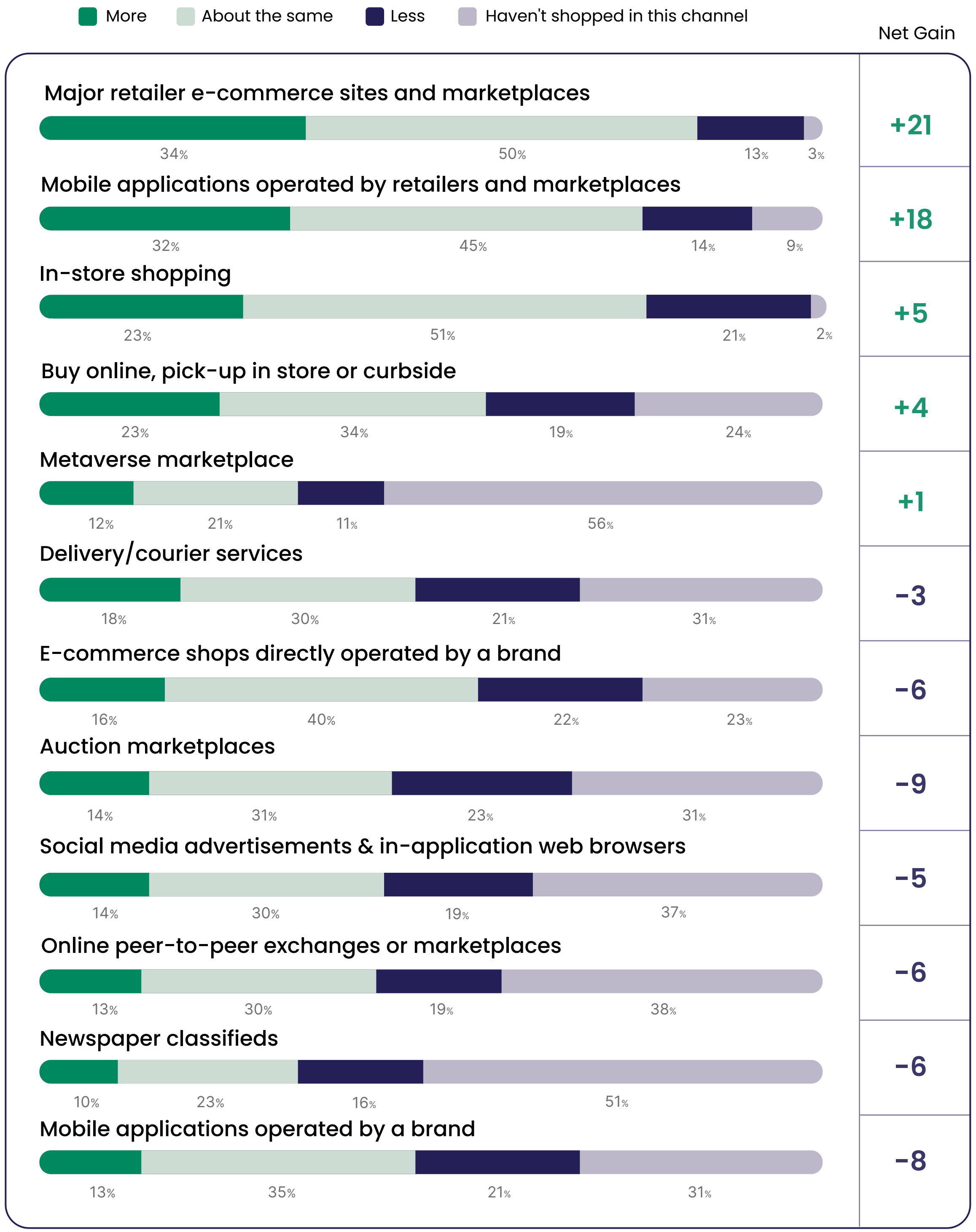


Figure 2

CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS & HABITS IN OMNICHANNEL COMMERCE

Despite their recent decline, the survey found that shoppers trust product content on brand e-commerce shops (DTC) slightly more (69%) than content on major retail e-commerce sites selling products from multiple brands (62%). However, it's not product content on any one channel that matters most, it's the expectation that a consistent story emerges across channels.

81% of consumers expect a brand's product content experience to be similar everywhere they interact with that brand.

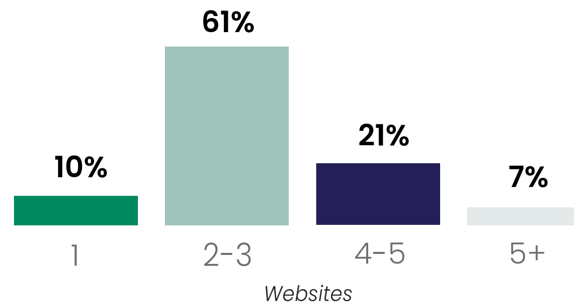
Consumers aren't just interacting with a brand in one place, they are viewing product content across many channels. This makes it crucial for brands to ensure product content is consistent everywhere it's found. Even when shopping for just one item, consumers are spending more time looking at content.

As shown in Figure 3, for a significant online purchase, most consumers are researching at least four products (52%) and visiting multiple sites (89%) with 28% of consumers visiting at least four sites.

This level of product research displays consumers' dedication to understanding products prior to purchase. Product content allows them to understand products clearly and purchase with confidence.

Consumers Rely on Multiple PDPs & E-Commerce Sites for Major Purchases

How many different websites do you typically visit before making a significant online purchase?



How many different products do you look at before deciding the right one for you?

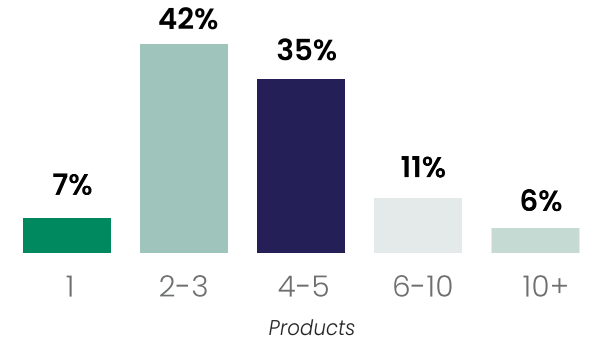


Figure 3

Frequent consumer electronics buyers are more likely to conduct in-depth research for significant purchases

36% visit more than four sites before buying

56% look at more than four products before buying

THE GROWTH OF MOBILE SHOPPING FEATURES AND CONSUMER USE

Even traditional in-store shopping no longer takes place entirely in-store. 90% of shoppers use their smartphones to look up products while shopping in a physical retail store at least some of the time. Overall, consumers are using their smartphones while shopping 49% of the time, on average.

What are they looking for on their phones while shopping?

Price comparisons	53%
Customer reviews	46%
Detailed product description	35%
Health nutritional information	28%
Information about brand reputation	26%

Shown in Figure 4, half of consumers scan QR codes on packaging to learn more about products. Programs like SmartLabel can provide more highly desired product transparency to shoppers enabling them to better understand information such as ingredients, allergens, key differentiators and more.

A newer feature that consumers are using in their shopping experience is augmented reality (AR). AR allows consumers to digitally replicate a product in their own space through their smartphone. This technology can be used for anything from seeing what a piece of furniture would look like in a consumer's living room or finding the right lipstick shade before committing to a purchase. Figure 4 provides further insight into what consumers like about AR.

Consumers Favorite Shopping Features

51% of shoppers in the U.S. have scanned a QR code on a product package to learn more about that product.

46% of shoppers found 360-degree photography that you can spin to see all angles helpful.

What Consumers Like About AR

52%

52% of shoppers have used an AR feature to view a product on their smartphone in the last year

47%	Helps to get a sense of size and scale
43%	Shows the brand is cutting edge
37%	Displays product or brand's personality

Figure 4

PRODUCT DETAIL PAGE (PDP) CONVERSION DRIVERS & BLOCKERS

The product detail page (PDP) houses all product content on an e-commerce site and is the most thorough look a customer gets at the product. The features on a PDP can drive a sale or drive a customer to leave a site altogether. One of the strongest features on a PDP is photography. As shown in Figure 5, ample, high-quality product images/photos positively impact the purchasing decisions of 58% of shoppers. The most helpful imagery types according to consumers are: 360-degree spin, scale, action, customer and image text showcasing features and benefits.

Photography is not the only conversion-driving PDP feature. 54% of online shoppers say product multimedia (such as videos and AR) has persuaded them to purchase something they initially didn't think they needed or wanted.

On the contrary, low-quality or too few images leads 52% of shoppers to leave a PDP, as well as poorly written product descriptions (49%), too few reviews (46%) and insufficient or too hard to understand product details/specs (35%).

7 in 10 online shoppers decide not to buy products due to poor quality or lack of product content.

Why Consumers Leave PDPs & Why They Click 'Buy'

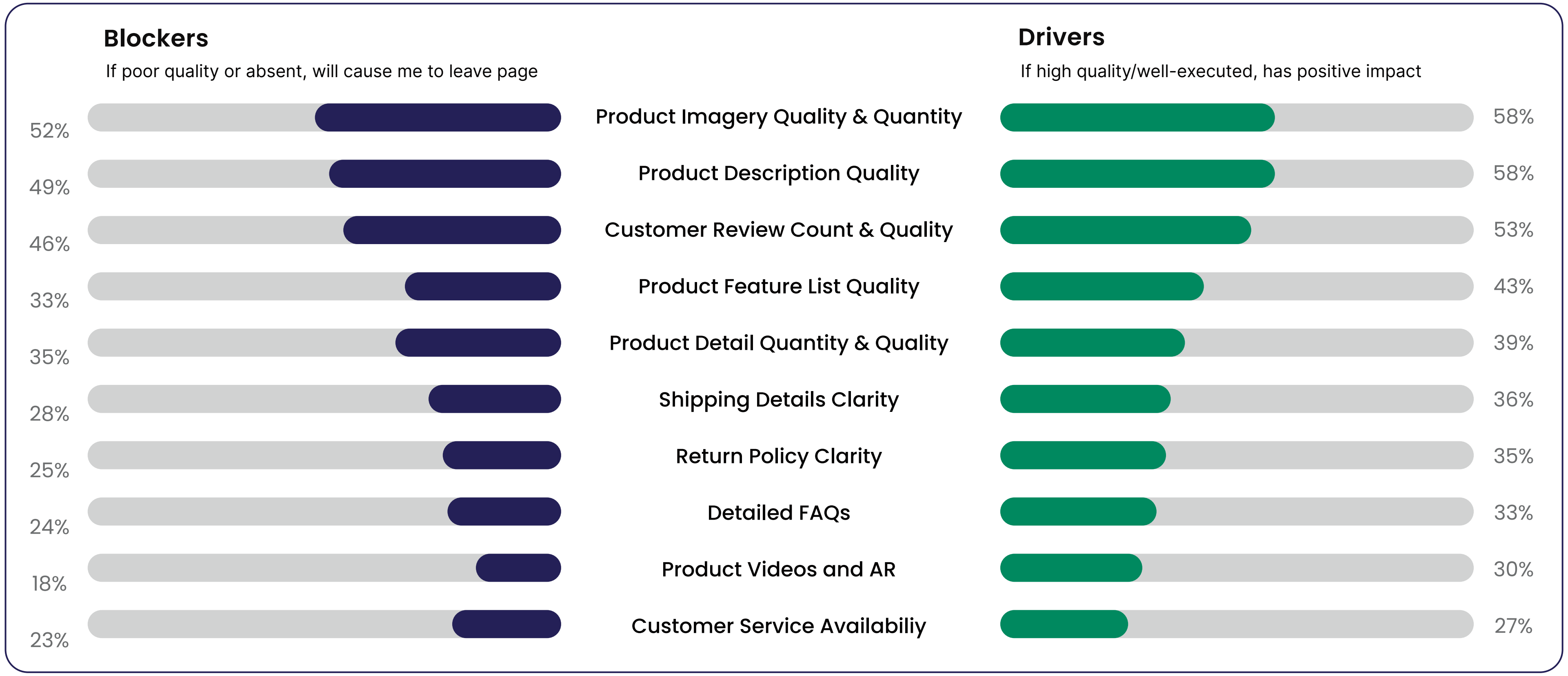


Figure 5

CONSUMER'S CAUSE FOR RETURNS

Returns can be a hassle for brands and hurt their bottom line. Consumers blame specific product content errors for their returns. By providing high-quality, rich content to customers, brands can avoid returns and increase brand loyalty and sales.

55% of shoppers have returned or received a refund for an online purchase in the past 18 months.

Clothing	52%
Electronics	29%
Groceries	23%

59% said inaccurate, misleading or poor product information featured on the e-commerce website were to blame for their returns.

- Imagery
- Descriptions
- Size
- Weight
- Color
- Ingredients

Younger consumers are much more likely to make an online return.

18-24 years	60%
55+ years	49%

TOP REASONS FOR RETURNS IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS

What problems with product content are most to blame for your returns?

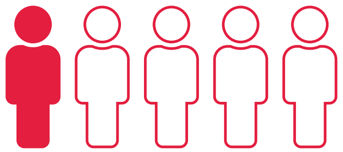
- **45%** Product specifications were inaccurate
- **34%** Product description or features were misleading and/or inaccurate
- **38%** Product photography did not match the product that arrived
- **26%** General lack of product features & information
- **37%** Product photography insufficiently captured all angles of the product
- **24%** Inaccurate or misleading manufacturer-provided FAQ answer

Figure 7

E-COMMERCE PRODUCT BUNDLING RECOMMENDATIONS

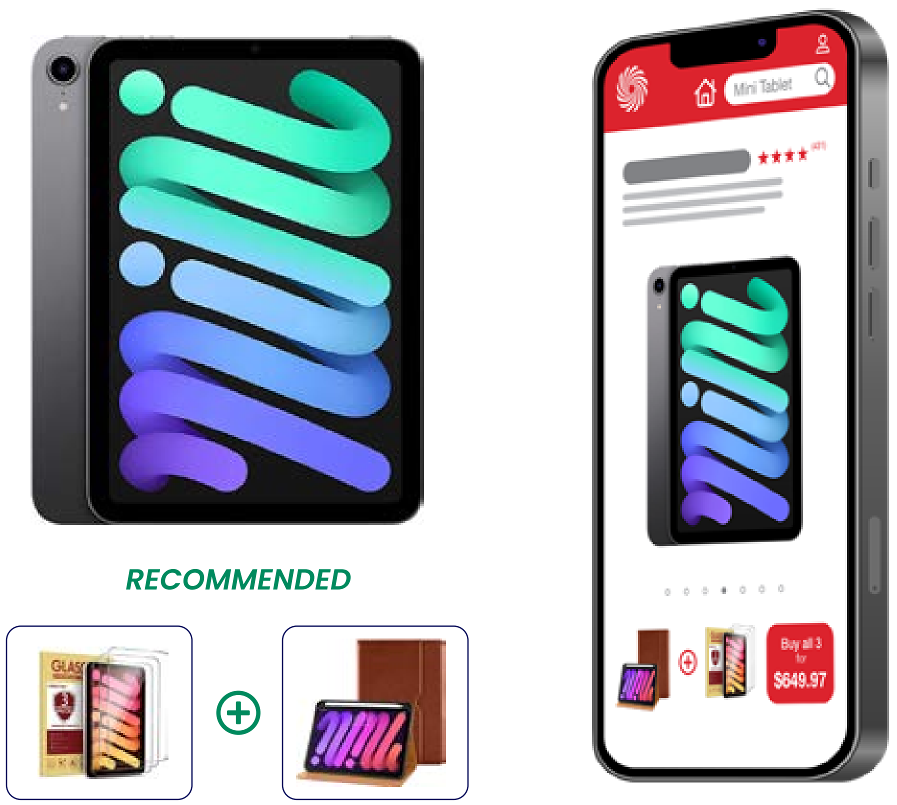
Product bundling recommendation features allow retailers to increase a customer's average basket size by suggesting relevant products in addition to the products customers are viewing or already have in their carts. The survey found, however, that less than half of online shoppers (47%) have ever used such features. Why? Most say it's because they don't like being presented with items they're not actively shopping for (54%).

According to the survey findings, the aversion may be countered by improving relevance and compatibility.



1 in 5 shoppers say they'll leave PDPs that serve irrelevant or inaccurate recommendations or product bundles.

When done right, recommendations can significantly improve shopper experience. In fact, online shoppers who do use recommendation and bundling features are largely pleased, with 73% stating they've been moderately or very satisfied with the feature. See Figure 8.



Why do you find product recommendation and bundling tools helpful while shopping online?

Figure 8

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

This survey was conducted online by 1WorldSync via Pollfish in September 2022 among a randomized, representative sample of 1,650 online shoppers in the U.S. & Canada over the age of 18. Margin of error +/- 3% at the 95% confidence level. Results are displayed as the weighted, percentage share of the sample selecting each option.

For Further Reading

See how leading retailers and brands are improving their digital product content and improving consumer experiences. Download the 1WorldSync E-Commerce Product Content Checklist.

About 1WorldSync

1WorldSync® is the leading provider of omnichannel product content solutions, enabling more than 14,000 companies in over 60 countries to share authentic, trusted content that empowers confident commerce and intelligent consumer purchasing decisions. Through its technology platform and expert services, 1WorldSync solves revenue-impacting product content challenges faced by leading brands and retailers in the CPG/retail, DIY, consumer electronics, healthcare and foodservice industries. 1WorldSync is one of the only product content providers and GDSN Data Pools to achieve ISO Certification 27001.