

Managing information exchange and collaboration between products with a digital platform

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Expanding their products with a digital platform is one of the common smart product strategies that product companies are able to pursue thanks to digital technology. In this blog you will learn about the key drivers and benefits of a digital platform, illustrated with several examples of local companies.

> Sirris has analysed over 150 smart products and condensed them in a selection of 17 differen
> business value and key enabling technologies. In this blog series, we guide you through the 5

Products gain in functionality and interaction

A digital platform enables other products to exchange information and collaborate within an ecosystem of products. It may even manage and orchestrate these products. The key enabling technologies are a secure and standardised connectivity, software applications - in device hardware and/or in the cloud - to manage the products and good UI/UX design to ensure usability..

Some inspiring examples :

- **AVR**’s digital platform ‘AVR Connect’ is an online reporting tool for alle machine data, both on and off the field. Data collected in the cloud from harvesting machines provide insights into possible improvements and can be shared with other applications. More about this case
- **Effitrax**'s telematics platform ‘EffiCube’ makes it possible to have one solution for an entire industrial vehicle fleet, delivering a uniform information stream, to help to improve vehicle usage rate and optimise fuel consumption and maintenance. More about this case
- **Hannecard**’s ’Countroll’ platform allows their customers to monitor, manage and optimise their industrial roller operations from an online management system. More about this case.
- **Niko**'s Home Control portfolio stands for a coherent set of home automation products that logically fit together in a single experience. It contains a central control system that monitors and controls energy consumers, lighting, heating and other building technology using a touchscreen, tablet or smartphone. More about this case

Improved operational efficiency and access to solutions

The integration and cooperation of products in a centralised platform improves the customer's operations and productivity. A digital platform allows customers to manage and orchestrate connected products in a scalable and configurable way and increases their access to solutions. User experience gains as well, especially if a centralised solution can replace several standalone applications. Platform dominance and trust can be of strategic value.

Combining total customer solution with system lock-in

By adding a digital platform to their products, product builders blend two strategies: as an enabler of a product ecosystem a platform strives for a ‘total customer solution’ and at the same time, it creates a ‘system lock-in’ effect, making it difficult for customers to quit a systemic solution. Proprietary standards and the costs to switch to another platform contribute to a strong customer bonding. An overarching and centralising platform allows to capture a significant share of the value brought by the entire ecosystem. This dominance in the value chain, together with a system lock-in effect, enable higher margins.

Interested to learn more about smart product strategies? Deep dive in our online smart product inspirator for more strategies and product examples or contact our expert Pieter Beyl directly

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