

# HOW TO DIGITIZE YOUR PACKAGING DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Ditch email and spreadsheets so you can  
work smarter & drive innovation





Today, the world is demanding more of packaging: it needs to travel through eCommerce and retail channels, be sustainable, internationally compliant, cost-effective and so on.

Simply put, packaging teams need to respond faster than ever to change. But poor specification data management is holding packaging teams and their companies back.

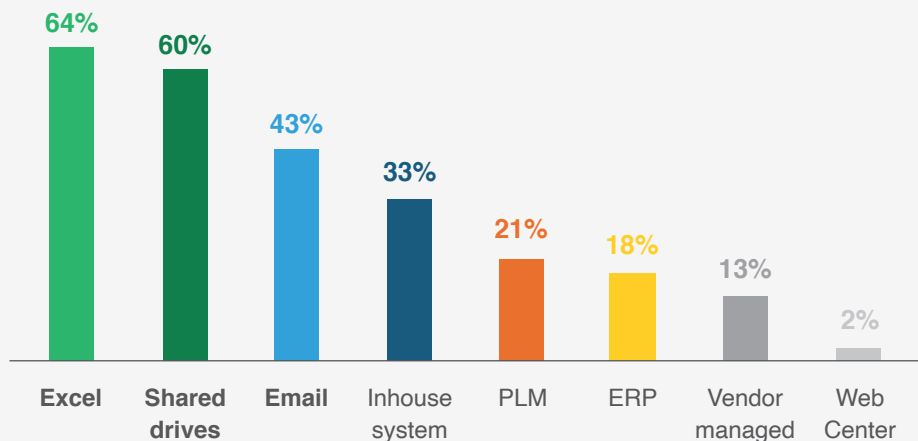
We surveyed hundreds of packaging professionals on the current state of Specification Management – and the results are alarming.

Today, 64% of packaging professionals report managing specs via Excel and 86% said they share this data with suppliers through email.

Email inhibits timeliness, meaning packaging data is immediately outdated; delaying time-to-market, resulting in packaging failures, or even creating liabilities like recalls.

What tool(s) is your company using to manage specification data today?

Responses



It doesn't have to be this way!

In this eBook, you'll learn how leading companies are using Specification Management software like Specright to accelerate packaging development, optimize distribution and track packaging performance across the value chain.

## 03

# The State of Packaging Data Management

Today, most companies manage packaging specs in spreadsheets and shared drives, over-configured ERPs, or rely on their suppliers to manage it for them.

These systems weren't designed to manage the granular level of data required for packaging and, if they manage them at all, were added as an afterthought.

**These are just a few examples of what we've heard from packaging engineers at leading companies – sound familiar?**

*"We were using Microsoft Word and Outlook to communicate specifications and changes."*

**- Packaging Engineer, Cosmetics Company**



*"Our systems were dinosaurs. You could sort faster in excel than you could in our database."*

**- Packaging Engineer, Chemical Company**

*"From my point of view, my company's biggest problem is finding the data they need. Information is sometimes not there. It's not complete or even correct."*

**- Packaging Engineer, CPG Company**



The reality is that existing systems aren't working for packaging engineers. And with the explosion of products and SKUs, the number of packaging

specifications have exploded, and packaging engineers are spending more time managing data and less time designing innovative packaging.

# 04

## The Business Impact of Poor Specification Management

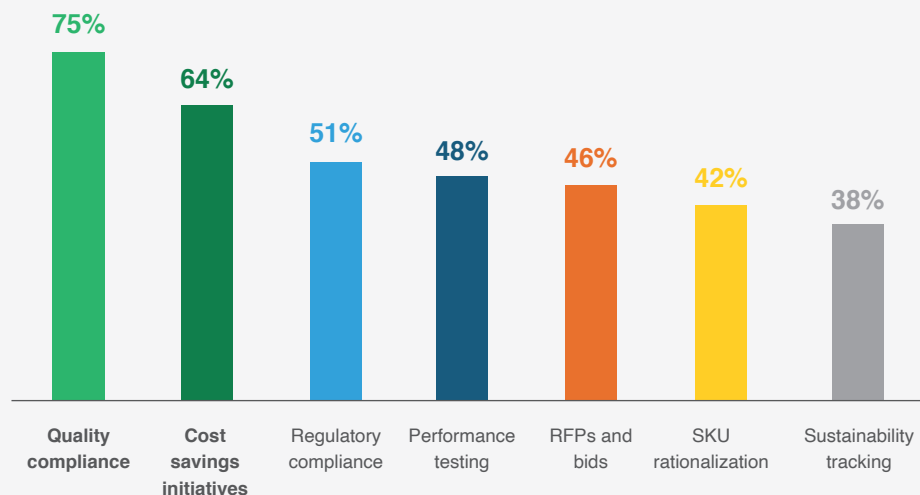
The challenges from poor spec management do more than create headaches for packaging teams — they impact the top and bottom line of your business. When companies don't have packaging specification data at their fingertips, they have a hard time reporting on sustainability, rationalizing

SKUs, or ensuring packaging quality.

A recent survey of packaging professionals on the State of Specification Management revealed the business impact of specifications across the organization.

What initiatives do you utilize specification data for?

Responses



We live in the age of big data — and it's impacting every company and every supply chain function.

## Why Specification Management is the Future of Packaging

With the rise of Specification Management software, packaging engineers can finally have the tools and data they need to make better, more intelligent packaging decisions.

For packaging professionals, knowing how to harness the power of data can get you a seat at the table. After all, specification data doesn't just impact packaging engineers.

Specs are highly interconnected, creating a ripple effect across product

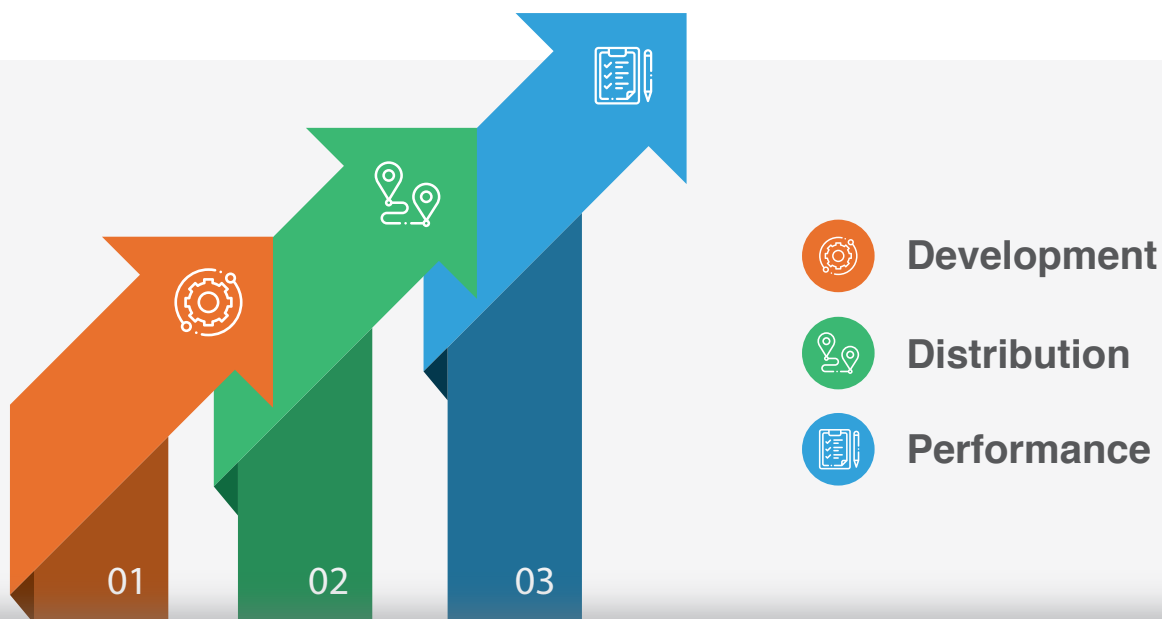
development procurement, quality, and marketing. By controlling your packaging specifications, your data can drive new product development, purchasing, and quality decisions rather than being reactionary to those functions.

# 05

## Managing Packaging Data Across the Value Chain

A question we often hear from packaging professionals is, “what type of specification data should I be managing?”

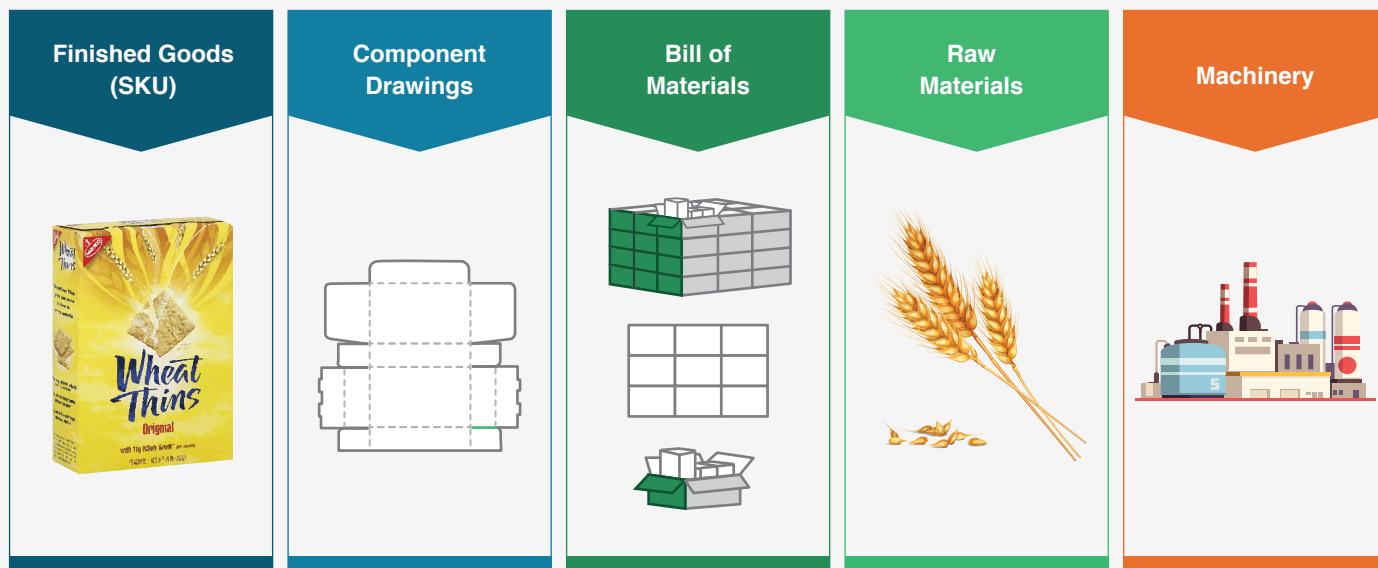
As a packaging professional, specification data is generated throughout the packaging lifecycle. We typically think of packaging data in three buckets:



It's critical that data is managed end-to-end. Today it commonly lives in silos, which makes it difficult for packaging engineers to optimize designs or track performance.

Specification data is first captured during development, when engineers

need to work with product development teams and suppliers to define the packaging requirements. Given the integral role suppliers play in creating packaging specifications, it's key to have them interacting in the same system where you are creating and maintaining your specs.



As the DNA of the value chain, packaging specifications are a critical part of the bill of materials (BOM) necessary to ensure delivery of products.

### An average packaging specification consists of the following:

- ✓ BOMs
- ✓ Dimensions
- ✓ Materials
- ✓ Graphics
- ✓ Vendor Information
- ✓ Client Critical Features
- ✓ Inbound Information
- ✓ Outbound Information
- ✓ Cost Analysis
- ✓ Audits
- ✓ History/Revisions

#### A Typical Bill of materials (BOM) Listing:

- Raw Materials
- Product Components
- Assemblies, Sub-Assemblies, or Processed Components
- Purchased Components
- Primary Packaging
- Secondary Packaging
- Tertiary Packaging
- Labor
- Unitizing Information
- Shipping and Loading

Specifications in this phase most often consist of dimensions, artwork, materials specs and so forth.

Then, packaging specification data is passed to systems like TOPS or ISTA PackSight, which generate more data around logistics or testing. With Specright, you can have all this data at your fingertips and easily use it in conjunction with other critical packaging systems.

And when data flows seamlessly, packaging professionals can start to use specification data to drive next-level innovation instead of worrying about data entry and accuracy. This is why we believe Specification Management is the future of packaging.

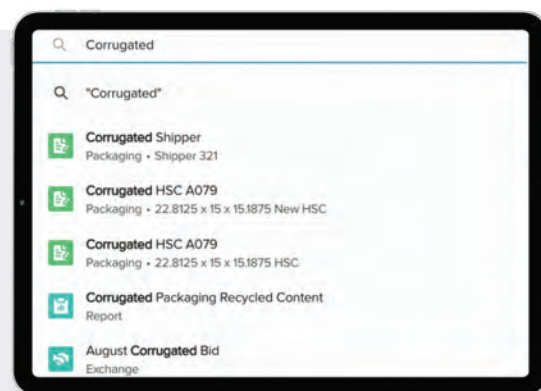
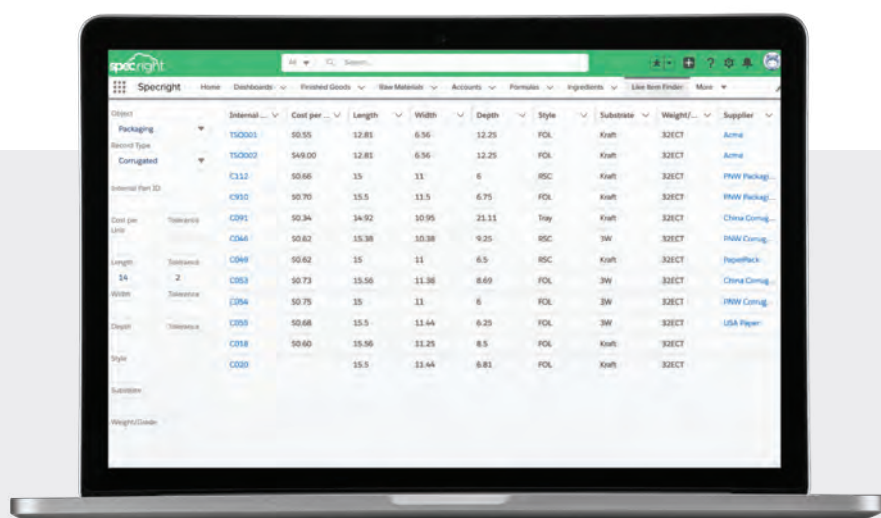
# 07

## Accelerating Packaging Development with Specs

An emphasis on speed to market is putting pressure on packaging teams and straining relationships with product developers.

To accelerate packaging development, packaging engineers need searchability, the ability to clone data, and access to templates to create new specs faster than ever. With Specification Management software, packaging engineers can easily search for existing specs to use in seconds.

Having a spec system that's searchable helps prevent SKU proliferation and drive cost savings by identifying and taking advantage of economies of scale.



Specright's Like Item Finder takes the tediousness out of spec creation.  
Easily search, clone and adapt existing specs.

In Specright, searching for packaging specs is as easy as Google search.

Maybe you need to create a new package that's slightly different than an existing one. Instead of manually copying the spec, you can instantly clone it - just like copying and pasting - and change what you need. This type of functionality can take hours and days off the packaging development process.

## CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL



*"We were using Microsoft Word and Outlook to communicate specifications and spec changes. **We are now using a flexible, fully searchable database with automated communication routing, full reporting and consistent template specifications for all packaging commodities.** This tool is saving our teams a lot of time and making the specification part of NPD much more efficient."*

**- Richard B., Oriflame**

Sometimes, you simply need to create a spec from scratch - that doesn't mean it should be a cumbersome process. In Specright, we provide hundreds of templates

for you to pick from, so you can quickly select a type of packaging, know what information you need, and track new packaging ideas as they progress.

According to a report by Forrester on the ROI of Specification Management, savings from improved product and package management productivity on Specright freed up over half the time spent manually tracking projects.



Material cost savings from order consolidation impacted

**10% OR MORE**

of purchased items.



Savings from improved product and package management productivity freed up

**OVER HALF THE TIME**

spent manually tracking projects.

Specification Management software takes the grunt work out of packaging so you have the tools to spend more time developing better, smarter packaging.



# 09

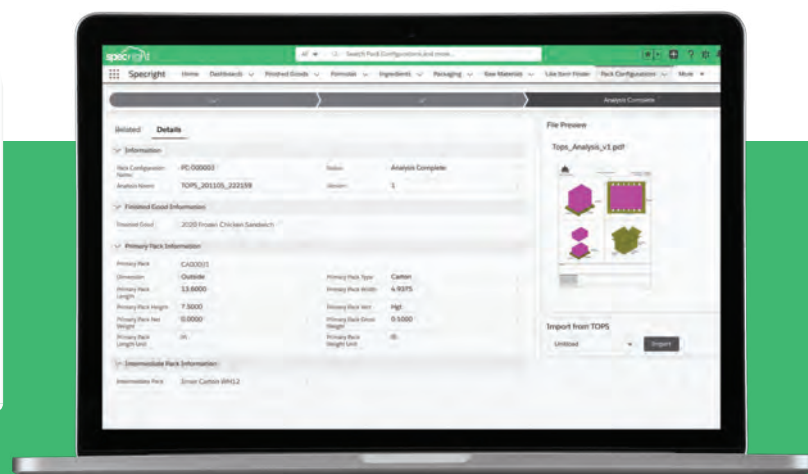
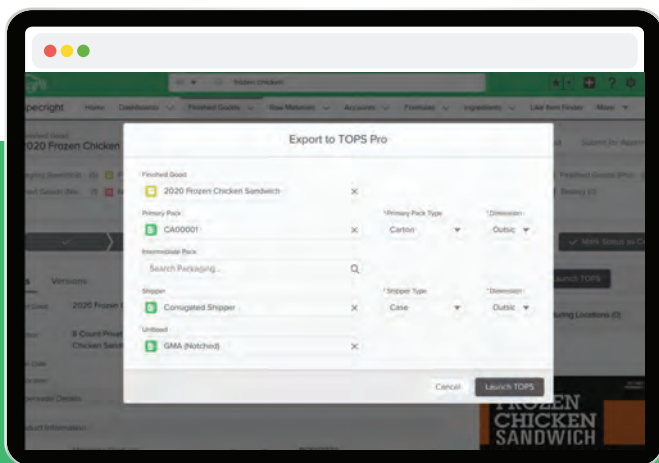
## Using Data to Optimize Distribution

Specifications are critical when it comes to optimizing packaging for distribution channels.

But a reliance on manual data entry into systems like TOPS, the leading palletization optimization software, makes it time consuming to determine the best way to ship products. TOPS enables companies to improve how products get packaged and palletized so more

product can fit in fewer shipments.

This ultimately saves companies money, reduces environmental impact and makes transportation more efficient. The easier it is to perform this analysis, the more often you'll do it - saving you more money.



## CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL

*"We can begin to focus on issuing specification packets with much higher accuracy in a shorter period of time."*

- Victoria C., KIND

Specright's Specification Management software enables you to instantly pass data from Specright to TOPS to generate designs in minutes instead of hours.

Furthermore, you know your calculations are accurate because of the integrity and quality of your spec data.

[Learn More About the Integration Between Specright & TOPS](#)

# 10

## End-To-End Digitization with ISTA PackSight

Another critical part of managing packaging data lies in testing.

After all, what good is packaging if it can't withstand the wear and tear of shipping? Many packaging engineers rely on standards from the International Safe Transit Association (ISTA) to ensure optimal performance.

One of the most important steps is simply picking the appropriate test and having the data you need at your fingertips to complete the test.

Traditional ISTA testing methods involved using pen and paper to track results - resulting in spending hours to assemble the final report.

That's why we partnered with ISTA to provide a solution. Specright powers and integrates with ISTA PackSight, a software platform that enables packaging and supply chain professionals to digitally perform ISTA tests.

### Benefits of Digital Test Protocols

Before PackSight, ISTA test protocols were typically printed out, completed by hand or documented in spreadsheets, and then stored for record keeping. Packaging engineers and lab technicians would sort through ISTA's available protocols, determine the right one based on the package type and requirements, print out their test plan, complete the test, and compile the report.

As packaging became more and more complex, it became increasingly difficult for packaging engineers to select the right test.

Furthermore, compiling test reports could take hours. With each protocol consisting of roughly 8-52 pages, packaging engineers had to keep track of where they were in the testing process to move through protocols. One missed step could result in an inaccurate test.



With Specright, packaging professionals can seamlessly pass data to ISTA PackSight and quickly complete and generate test reports using a mobile device, tablet, or computer. This cuts down the time it takes to complete tests from hours to minutes and also ensures the accuracy through a guided test selection process.

And with the rise of more complicated and nuanced test procedures such as 6-Amazon.com-SIOC or 6-SAMSClub, PackSight takes the guesswork out of testing.

Packaging engineers can now rest assured that their designs are compliant and test information can easily be shared to any necessary stakeholders.

## CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL



*"We love that PackSight goes step by step, reminding us of the exact parameters we need to go by and what goals the package must meet. Nothing slips through the cracks."*

- Mark B., Concept Packaging

[Learn More About ISTA PackSight, Powered by Specright](#)

# 11

## Using Spec Data to Drive Continuous Improvement:

# Tracking Packaging Performance & Supplier Quality

Once your packaging goes from design to production, you need to track quality and performance.

Today, most packaging professionals are communicating with suppliers in spreadsheets and emails, which makes it hard to identify issues. We hear stories every day about companies receiving an incorrect item or bad batch – and the negative financial and reputational impact it has on their business.

**The solution? Automating and dashboarding packaging data to minimize losses.**

For example, with Specright you can automate COA reporting for better exception handling and set alerts so manufacturers can immediately identify non-compliant goods.

For further traceability, you can tie COAs to high-level product data like lot codes, so if a product is noncompliant, all affected goods can be traced and corrected within a few clicks.

# CUSTOMER TESTIMONIAL



*"We use the reporting features to analyze our data and drive projects related to product innovation or quality management throughout our entire supply chain. Managing our data has allowed us to start transitioning from being reactive to proactive in our processes."*

**- Jenn B., Soylent**



You can track and initiate critical quality issues such as Supplier Corrective Actions and create reports and dashboards to see where and when something went wrong.

This is the epitome of using packaging data to drive your business decisions.



# How to Get Started with Specification Management

We get it – change can be daunting. Many of our users tell us stories about systems like SAP that weren't designed to manage packaging specs, took years to implement, and never delivered on results.

Here's one example:

*"I have said to my IT colleagues, why do you keep giving us systems to use (think ERP...) that were designed for humans to hate and not want to use! Those big name ERPs were designed by humans but not for humans! Specright is right away, different. You can see the user friendly and intuitive layout from the start."*

- Rod P., Johnson & Johnson

One of the core tenets of Specright's Specification Management platform is that it's easy to use:

*"Now it takes me longer to draft an email to my co-manufacturers than it does to actually run the report and export the quality data to send them, it's literally the click of a button."*

- Jenn B., Quality Manager at Soylent





If you've read this far – thank you. Having worked in the packaging industry for over 20 years I know how busy you are and how much work you have to do.

I founded Specright to give packaging professionals time back to make amazing things.

For too long, packaging has been last in line – but I'm confident that tools like Specright can help you work smarter, not harder and drive the innovation needed in this day and age.

**And if you're ready to explore how you can take your packaging development to the next level with Specright, we're here to help.**

Thanks for reading,

**Matthew**

## ABOUT MATTHEW

Matthew Wright has been in the packaging industry for over 25 years. Prior to founding Specright, he held leadership positions at International Paper, Temple Inland, and rightPAQ — a packaging company he co-founded. He has also been involved in leading multiple M&A deals in the packaging industry. He sits on the Packaging Advisory Board at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and is the founder & CEO of Specright.

## ABOUT SPECRIGHT

Specright is the first purpose-built platform for Specification Management. Whether it's packaging, raw materials, formulas, products, or machines, Specright helps companies digitize, map, and take action across their supply chain to reduce costs, increase profitability, and drive sustainability.

For more information, visit: [www.specright.com](https://www.specright.com).

