



## How the National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED) Uncovered \$2 - \$4Billion Annually for its Members by Using Customer Journey Mapping



### The Challenge

Erika TenEyck, a visionary leader at the National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED), has spearheaded a groundbreaking project to unravel the complexities of the product data journey from manufacturer to customer. This meticulous endeavor aimed to decipher the 'typical' data journey, account for variations across different types, sizes, and maturity levels of companies, and compare practices with other analogous industries.

TenEyck set out to examine the practices companies employ for product data development, integration, maintenance, and sunsetting. By partnering with Gold Research, a leading customer journey firm, this project established an important baseline of processes that had not been formally published for the industry, including a deep dive of best practices prevalent within and outside the industry. Her focus on collecting diverse member input, using effective KPIs, and leading the team to valuable outcomes is a testament to her strategic approach.

The ultimate objectives of this initiative were to enhance the profitability and efficiency of NAED members by pinpointing optimal opportunities to improve product data management and why such enhancements would be beneficial. TenEyck's project further solidifies NAED's role to determine critical industry issues, forge solutions with members, and identify 'low-



hanging fruit' opportunities and longer-term strategies for continued success.

## **The Solution**

Erika TenEyck at NAED initiated a comprehensive project with Gold Research to map the product data journey, profiling practices from manufacturers to customers. This detailed investigation aimed to alleviate inefficiencies, enhance business impact, and understand the practices employed by NAED members for managing product data. It sought to understand the data journey across various companies and industries as well as quantify the steps and actions taken by different manufacturers and distributors.

TenEyck, her NAED team, and Gold Research's Chief Journey Mapper, Greg Tucker, undertook a rigorous research and analysis approach involving mainly qualitative insights. It began with a core group of industry experts who served on the task force throughout the entirety of the project. Their initial observations were followed by extensive online virtual interviews with a diverse range of journey users, including manufacturers, distributors, manufacturer reps, customers, non-members, and external experts. These discussions were guided by an approved discussion guide, focusing on crucial discovery areas such as product data creation, cross-company communication, integration, and the impact of data errors.

The insights from these qualitative interactions were invaluable to tell the story of product data in the electrical distribution industry. . Factor analysis, gap analysis, and Importance x Performance matrices were used to analyze the data. The large sample size provided a comprehensive dataset, allowing for granular analysis of practices and maturity across company size, industry, and user segments.

## **The Results**

The project's impact was multi-dimensional. Firstly, it provided a clear understanding of the product data journey, processes, and practices. This clarity enabled strategic alignment and communication within NAED, and its members, and paved the way for identifying and implementing best practices. This was captured in a polished, professional product data journey map that engaged a wide variety of manufacturer and distributor leaders at all levels.

Secondly, it uncovered and prioritized opportunities for improvement. By understanding key personas and specific stages of the product data journey, TenEyck could identify the practices that offered the most potential for improving business impact to validate with the task force. Five key recommendations for manufacturers and distributors were identified to encourage immediate action.

Finally, the project quantified the "Moments-of-Truth" and "Friction Factors" in the product data journey and identified business and financial impacts to drive prioritization. **It uncovered the "true cost" of poor product data management – estimated to be \$2 Billion - \$4 Billion annually for all electrical distributors alone, not counting impacts to ecommerce sales.** Establishing KPIs and metrics facilitated an effective system to monitor progress and measure results.

### **Testimonial:**

This study conducted with Gold Research brought to light the importance of precise product data and underscored its importance in members gaining operational efficiency, enhancing customer experiences, and increasing sales. The impact of the "Journey Map of Product Data" is significant. NAED is fortunate to have manufacturers, distributors, and allied partners who have dedicated numerous resources to improve those processes, and their input served as a great starting point to discuss next steps. We look forward to sharing more on the impact of product data with another follow-up study with Gold Research that will be released shortly.



- **Erika TenEyck, Director of Business Intelligence Programs & Insights, National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED)**

### **Client Recognition:**

We are delighted to share the news that Erika TenEyck, Director of Business Intelligence Programs & Insights at the National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED), was pronounced the **winner in the "Researcher of the Year"** end-client category at the Quirk's Marketing Research and Insight Excellence Awards Ceremony.

Erika was selected for this prestigious award for her path-breaking work in leading NAED's Journey Map of Product Data study, which focuses on the industry's transition to digital in response to new technologies and changing customer expectations. The results of the study

not only provided a highly informative journey map but also revealed that the current state costs the industry billions - a minimum of \$2 - \$4 billion dollars!

This study conducted with Gold Research brought to light the importance of precise product data and underscored its importance in members gaining operational efficiency, enhancing customer experiences, and in increasing sales. The impact is significant, and we are ecstatic for Erika and NAED's success."

- **Nitin Sharma, CEO, Gold Research Inc.**



The Marketing Research and Insight  
**EXCELLENCE**  
AWARDS  
*powered by* **QUIRK'S**

---

# WINNER