All companies today face complexity and disparity, as products combine mechanical, electrical, electronic, software, and sensor components. These challenges make it critical to begin the process of PLM digitalization.

PLM digitalization is no longer avoidable. To enable forward thinking, the goal should be to achieve a single, connected "system-of-systems" view of product data across the enterprise, whether the underlying systems are PLM, ERP, CAD, or something else.

The perils of a disconnected world are dire. The cost for companies that fail to pursue connected PLM is high. Connected PLM users have a shorter development cycle, while disparate PLM users rely on sub-optimal ad hoc applications for PLM, missing out on the ability to accelerate their product lifecycle.

There is light at the end of the tunnel. Best-in-Class firms have blazed a trail to success through PLM best practices. They are creating a single, connected view of product data across the enterprise and the supply chain.

The Best-in-Class are moving to connected PLM faster. They are more comprehensive users of PLM capabilities, and are more committed to collaboration and producing and sharing consumable product data with stakeholders, partners, and customers. They also ensure they have both on-premise and cloud-based options for PLM.

The Best-in-Class suggest a threefold path to success on this journey: Getting your digital house in order, avoiding the perils of the disconnected PLM environment, and maximizing performance with connected PLM.