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# **Product safety, as seen by industry**

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Contribution by

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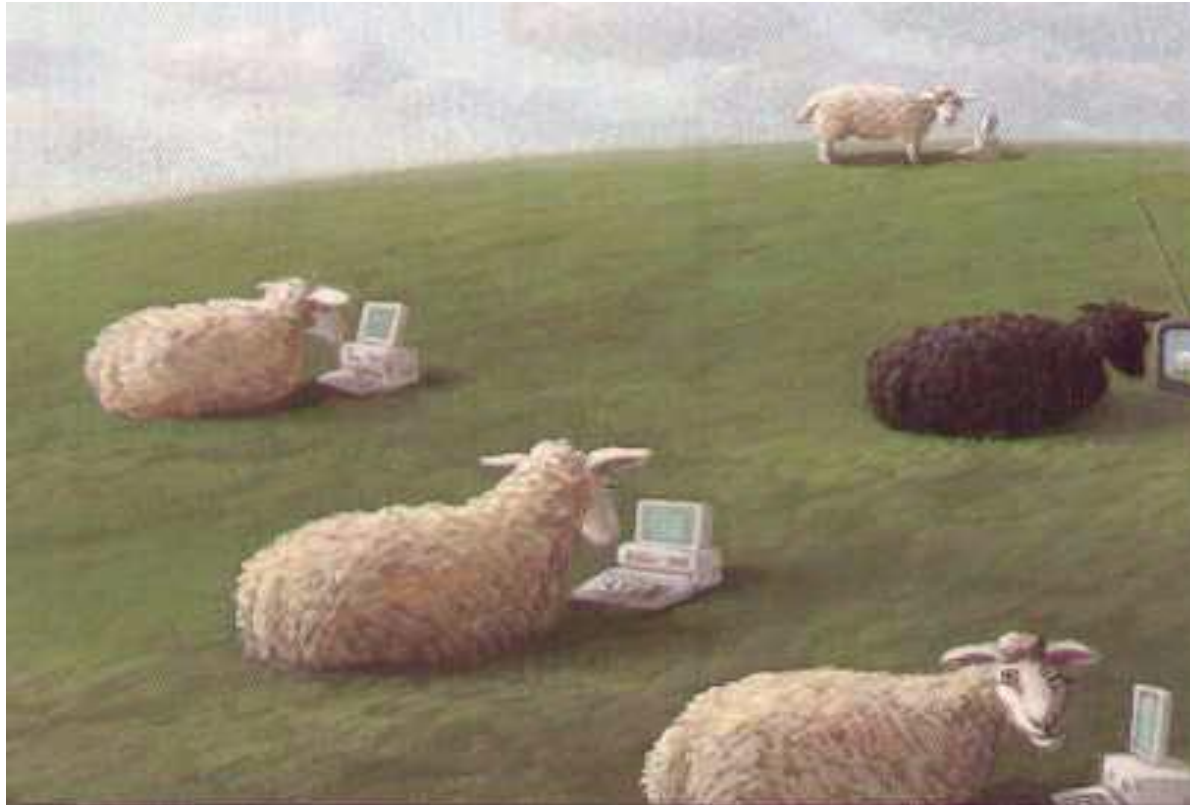
# Manufacturers want happy customers

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- Manufacturers want to stay in business over the long term
- Accidents and products of poor quality ruin their good reputation
- Manufacturers and consumers/users have a common goal



# "There is a black sheep in every flock"



# Conformity assessment

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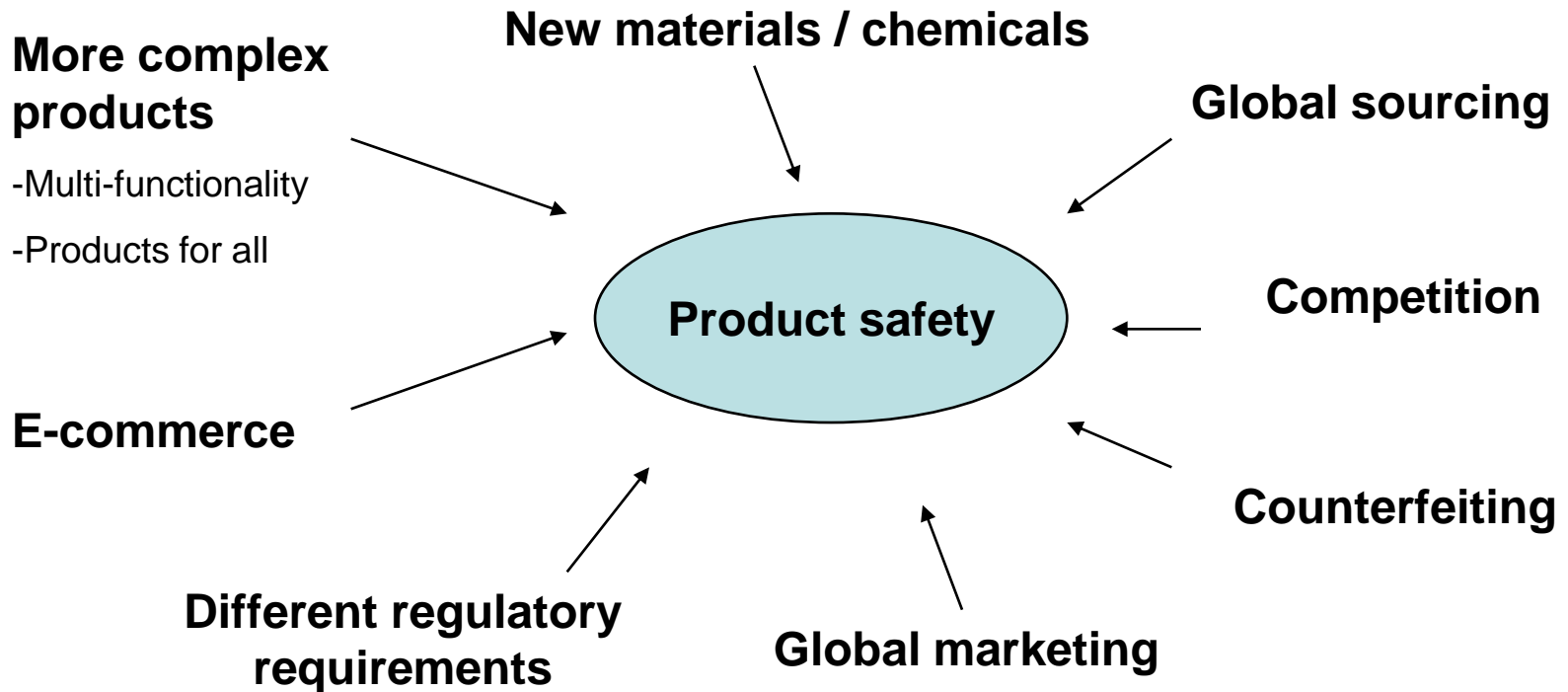
- Product conformity is companies' number one concern\*)
- Total regulatory compliance costs for companies estimated to be between 4% and 6% of GDP

\*) Commission survey on the Quality of the Union's Regulatory Environment, 2001



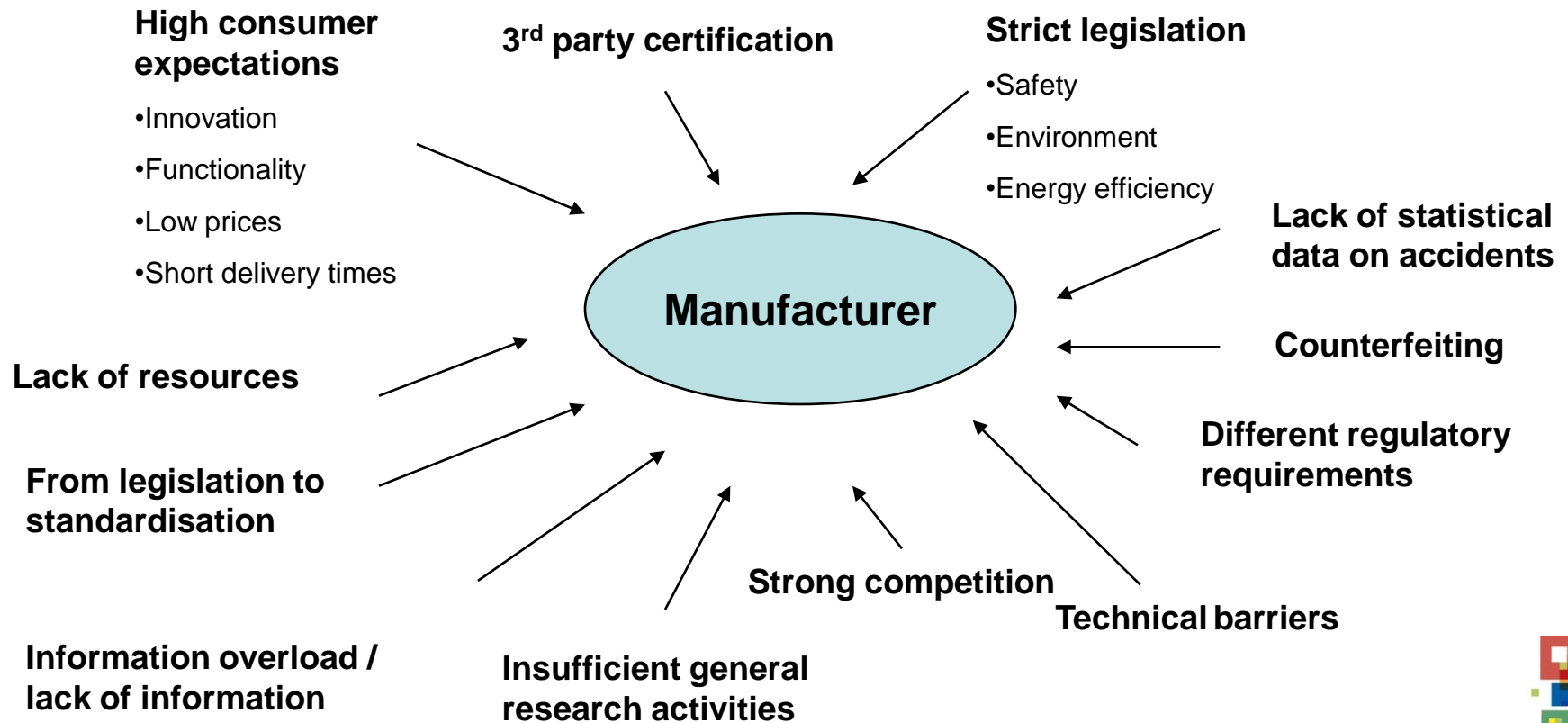
# Global challenges

- Technical issues



# Global challenges

## • Societal/political issues



# Safe products - a shared responsibility

- Legislators to make high quality and easy-to-understand legislation
- Product safety is a global concern
- Manufacturers to produce safe products
  - and to demonstrate their conformity with the requirements
- Certification bodies (when required) to assess conformity in a competent and consistent way



## ... a shared responsibility

- Importers and distributors to check that manufacturers fulfil their obligations
- National authorities to enforce legislation correctly and to ensure efficient market surveillance
- Consumers to make informed choices and to use products with common sense and according to the user instructions





# How to deal with product safety?

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- There is no one answer: it depends on the sector and nature of products, the size of the company, sourcing policy etc.
- It is a huge task...
- Some are not capable, though well-intentioned... They need help – not stricter legislation
- Some are in bad faith – More market surveillance is needed to catch such ‘black sheep’



# Third-party testing and certification...

- Required by regulation
- De facto required (by the market)
- Voluntary
  
- Does it ensure product safety?
- Stricter legal and certification requirements put more burdens on well-intentioned manufacturers, but do not solve the problem of rogue traders and counterfeit products



# Business recommendations

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- Be pro-active and not only reactive!
- Find the *reason* in order to better target interventions
- Set up statistics of accidents
- Establish common, global regulatory objectives so that international standards can be developed
- Set up efficient mutual recognition programmes
- Ensure better information and training to both the economic operators and the consumers
- Let the possible use of third-party certification be the choice of the economic operators
- Establish cross-border cooperation in pro-active activities and risk-assessment



# Interventions and responses

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- Establish efficient post-market surveillance, and include customs authorities
- Fight against counterfeiting
- Set up efficient cross-border cooperation (bilateral and multilateral) and exchange of information
- Establish efficient notification procedures and database for products presenting a serious risk
- Introduce penalties



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**Thank you for your attention!**