



HOW TO TIDY UP YOUR INVENTORY MASTER DATA

INTRODUCTION

The integrity of inventory master data files is essential to the success of any inventory improvement project. It is not uncommon for organisations' files to contain insufficient and inconsistent data; particularly in relation to item descriptions. This article discusses a methodology for the development of master data protocols, particularly in relation to descriptions. Generic examples are used through the article.

TYPICAL ISSUES RE MASTER DATA FRAMEWORK

Following are a few examples of typical master data issues:

1. Inconsistent description frameworks. For example "*Filter, Oil*" vs "*Oil Filter*" for the same types of items.
2. Incomplete descriptions. For example "*Filter*". The description contains no other catalogue detail.
3. Incorrect or duplicate Commodity Classes and Sub Classes. For example, two identical entries may exist for an item under different item no's in different Commodity Classes.
4. Inconsistent use of description fields (Description 1 and Description 2). For example, Description 2 is sometimes used as an overflow for the item description and sometimes used as a field for detailing cross references or item substitutions.
5. Inconsistent use of the Search Text field. This can typically be an abbreviated description, an item family or a simple replication of Description 1.

IMPROVED MASTER DATA FRAMEWORK

A defined process should be adopted to establish the master data framework for each item type. Firstly, a method is needed to group items.

The process described below uses UNSPC standards to establish the description framework elements (prompts). Using the standards in this way ensures the following:

- The appropriate level of detail to include in the description
- Consistent application of description protocols for similar items
- A method of ensuring typographical errors are minimised during the transformation process

For most item types the UNSPC standards will suggest multiple prompts to develop the description. This prompt definition process is only required to be completed once for each significant item class. Once agreed, it is applied to the whole family of items.

See process flow below and contact SCSA at s.macpherson@scsa.com.au



Master Data Clean Up Process for Descriptions and Commodity Classes

