

- Use product attributes with part numbers
- Minimum maintenance requirements
- Define hierarchies of attributes
- Define attribute families
- Attribute matrix displays
- Enquire and plan using attributes

Introducing Answer Extended Product Attribute Processing

Use Answer Extended Product Attributes Processing to resolve the issues between warehouse/picking personnel and purchasing/sales/planning personnel regarding part numbers.

Warehousing/picking personnel require a part number to putaway, pick and despatch against but the purchasing, sales and planning personnel think in part attributes i.e. styles, colours, sizes, seasons, shades, types, a combination of these and so on, not in part numbers.

Historically, for every part number Answer has always had 10 feature/attribute codes available with user definable prompts and values. All the necessary validation was carried out during part set up. However, the set up would have been one part at a time and could be time consuming. For example, if you have 5 colours and 10 sizes all within 1 style there will be 50 parts to set up. This is no longer the case within the Extended Attributes Processing module.

This module ensures that these requirements are met with the absolute minimum of maintenance.

Define your attribute hierarchy

Choose any logical hierarchy combination to suit your business environment. Season/Style/Colour/Size or Style/Type/Colour/Size and so on.

A maximum of ten different attributes, within a nominated hierarchy, can be defined and managed; a minimum of two must be created.

The attribute hierarchy is grouped within an overall attribute category, giving you the flexibility to have multiple attribute hierarchies if your business deals with a wide range of products with no common hierarchies.

Each attribute has a level, a type, a description and a screen label/prompt.

Each attribute can have an unlimited number of values, all user defined or alternatively it can be associated with an attribute group, which itself contains multiple values.

For instance, if the attribute was called 'SEASON', it could be level 1, a description of 'Season Code' and a screen label of 'Season'. It could have various attributes including:

'SUM', Summer; 'WINT', Winter, and so on.

You could then create an attribute group called 'SEASONS' for example. This would have the previous attributes (SUM, WINT) within itself. Therefore, if those attributes were to be used multiple times there would be less maintenance required.

Another attribute at Level 2 could be 'STYLE' with appropriate descriptions and screen labels.

Once the Attribute Category and Attribute Hierarchies and values have been defined and appropriate values assigned, either directly or via the use of Attribute Groups, you are ready to create the associated part numbers.

When you are ready to dynamically build the Part Numbers that represent the attributes and hierarchy details, these can be based on set rules. For example, the first two characters of the part number are fixed as 'LG'. The next six will be numeric and incremented starting from 10 by 1 each time. Therefore the first part number generated would be: LG000010.

Define your attributes family

There is an Attribute Family Construction process available to create the various values each attribute hierarchy element can have.

An Item Attribute Part Configuration capability can also be assigned to any attribute level. This capability enables common data to be defined, which can be inherited by the derived/created part numbers.

This data, for instance, covers Analytical Data, Volume and Weight, Cost and Selling, Retail Analytical data, Comments for Buyer, Retailer, Merchandiser and more, Purchasing and Branch Allocation.

Structures can be created, validated and exploded to show the number of different combinations and part numbers that would be created based on the details defined.

The explosion can be reviewed and unnecessary part numbers can be excluded or the product descriptions changed. Once satisfied, you can create the part numbers based on the details with one click.

A facility to provide bulk maintenance of parts that belong to certain attribute hierarchy values.

Thus, season 'WINTER', style 'COAT' may contain 150 part numbers for size and colour but can be updated using the Manage Products by Attribute Facility.

As part of the setup and review process, a 'matrix' style display can be viewed at any point in the build process, where appropriate.

Item Attribute definitions can also be mapped into associated Sales Order Processing Pricing/Discounting hierarchies. For instance, in the season 'WINTER', style 'COAT', all colours and sizes are the same. This can be simply mapped so that it is reflected when Sales Orders are entered and/or maintained.

All data/attributes for each new part, other than part number and product description, will be inherited from the base generic model part.

The status of a family construction and explosion can be easily checked at any time.

Use the attributes day to day

Day to day processes initially cover the creation of Sales Orders, Purchase Orders and Inventory Centre Transfers using previously defined attribute hierarchies.

The Attribute Matrix Display program can be used for review and to create Sales Orders, Purchase Orders or Inventory Centre Transfers based on the action selected.

Using this one program, creation of orders is made easy.

The Attribute Matrix Display program can also be used for the quick entry of cycle count quantities.

Enquire and plan using attributes

Many of the standard Answer enquiries have had a new 'front end' created so that they can be entered using the various elements and values of the defined attributed hierarchy.

The 'front end' selection criteria are similar to either the attribute family hierarchy construction screen or the explosion screen. From there you will be able to drill off to the existing enquiries.

It is scheduled for development that planning percentages will be utilised against the various attribute levels, values, attribute groups within a hierarchy.

New screens will be created to transform a requirement into the allocated percentages for attributes within the appropriate rounding rules.

This will build a standard Answer Forecast Demand Table that can be utilised in the MPSP, MRP and CRP processes of Answer.

Example of a product attributes screen:

Work with Product Attributes IA01S01 Work With Product Attributes 1.3

Attribute Category Description Hierarchy code(s) exist

Template

Uses template Effective from To

Hierarchy | Attribute Value Groups | Part construction | Advanced

Hierarchy Definition

Level	Attribute Type	Description	Screen Label	Structure building control
1	MANU	Manufacturer	Manuf	<input type="checkbox"/> Must use a group in structure
2	MODEL	Model	Model	Default group <input type="text"/>
3	SIZE	Screen Size	Size	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow new values <input type="checkbox"/> Privileged only
				<input type="checkbox"/> Automatically allocate value codes

Attribute Values

Value	Description	Short	Part Number Contribution	Part Description Contribution	Seq
ALBA	Alba	ALBA	AL	Alba	1
BUSH	Bush	BUSH	BU	Bush	2
GRUN	Grundig	GRUN	GR	Grundig	3
PANA	Panasonic	PANA	PA	Panasonic	4
SANY	Sanyo	SANY	SA	Sanyo	5
SHRP	Sharp	SHRP	SH	Sharp	6
SONY	Sony	SONY	SO	Sony	7
TOSH	Toshiba	TOSH	TO	Toshiba	8