

PRODUCT & PRICE INFORMATION FORMAT

Overview

Establishment of a standard format for exchange of product and price data is the first major project of the NFPA Distributor Council. The Distributor Council focused on data exchange format because of its promise to drive cost from the channel, help maintain margins and serve customers more efficiently and effectively.

The NFPA Distributor Council review options for a standard format and chose to recommend use of the most recent version of the Product and Price Information Format (PPIF) originally created by the Power Transmission Distributors Association (PTDA) and Bearing Specialists Association (BSA) in 1998. The NFPA Board of Directors is reviewing the Distributor Council's recommendation at its June 2006 meeting.

Designed to supersede both ANSI X.12 832 and custom manufacturer pricing formats, the Product & Price Information Format (PPIF) is a single-format, single-program system that can be easily installed and used by manufacturers, distributors and OEMs. The ASCII format eliminates the need for significant software expenditure by users and may be transmitted via mail, e-mail or the Internet.

Benefits of PPIF utilization include:

- Allowing manufacturers to supply and distributors to receive price updates in a single standardized format.
- Improving operating efficiencies and accuracy by eliminating manual re-keying.
- Reducing transaction costs, administrative costs and time needed to transmit and upload updates.

PPIF Version 2.0

The most recent version of the PPIF, version 2.0, was developed in 2005 by a joint PTDA-BSA Task Force to address compliance issues and requests for enhancements. PPIF v. 2.0 includes:

- Expanded field definitions and comments to address confusion over correct use and/or interpretation.
- Improved nomenclature to flag new, obsolete and price-on-request (POR) products.
- New fields for minimum order quantity, conditional price multiplier, conditional invoice price, and user-defined use.

The following field names have been revised to better match common industry terminology and/or address confusion over correct content:

<u>N*</u>	<u>Original Field Name</u>	<u>Revised Field Name</u>
S4	Custom Price Multiplier	Special Invoice Price Multiplier
S5	Custom Invoice Net Price	Special Net Invoice Price
S7	Published Distributor Invoice Price	Published Distributor Price
S15	Pricing Group	Pricing/Discount Group 1
S16	Discount Group	Pricing/Discount Group 2
S27	Superseded Catalog/Item	New/Superseded Catalog or Item Number
S28	Superseded UPC Number	New/Superseded UPC Number
S32	Distributor Custom Part Number	Distributor Part Number
S45	Unit of Measure	Dimension Unit of Measure
H1	Media Run Date	Supplier Run Date
B15	Group Code	Pricing/Discount Group Code

*S = Standard Format Records, H = Header Records, B = Price Break Records

Supplemental Documents

PPIF supplemental documents also have been revised and significantly expanded to:

- Clarify format use requirements.
- Describe Read Me requirements and recommended content.
- Provide examples of acceptable PPIF usage.
- Describe how to convert PPIF data to Microsoft® Excel or Microsoft® Access.

PPIF Endorsers

The format currently is endorsed by the following:

Associations

American Bearing Manufacturers Association
Association for High Technology Distribution
Bearing Specialists Association
European PTDA
Power Transmission Distributors Association

Distributor Software Providers

Computer Insights, Inc.
Prelude Systems, Inc.

PPIF Limitations

While the PPIF is an excellent tool to transmit data and data updates, certain issues will continue to require discussion and negotiation as part of the ongoing distributor-manufacturer relationship. Items that fall into this category include:

- Whether new manufacturer product lines and/or products will be carried by the distributor.
- Information not provided in the PPIF by the manufacturer but desired by the distributor.
- Appropriate advance notice of updates.

Any and all decisions regarding pricing and product information, other terms of sale, informational updates and the use of all or portions of the data remain the sole domain of individual vendors and purchasers.

Questions and Future Revisions

Questions about the PPIF or suggested enhancements to future versions should be directed to Pete Alles (414-778-3350; palles@nfpa.com).