



Product feeds

What are product feeds?

A product feed is a CSV (comma separated values) file which contains your product database. For each product you supply information such as the Product Name, Product Price etc. Each value, or field, is separated by comma, tab or pipe.

An example of a CSV file

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
40	15778	Adopt a Dolphin	29.95	Adopt a Dolphin through Care for the Wild	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
41	15779	Adopt a Snow Leopard	29.95	Adopt a Snow Leopard and help Care for the Wild	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
42	15780	Adopt a Tiger	29.95	Adopt a Tiger and help Care for the Wild	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
43	15781	Adopt an Elephant	29.95	Adopt an Elephant and help Care for the Wild	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
44	15782	Airflow Adventures Undersea World	199	An enormous, inflatable playland awaits	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
45	72294	Airflow Bouncy Castle	139	Kids love bouncy castles, there is no two	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	14/07/2005
46	15783	Airship Bedroom Light	109	A most original and innovative design, th	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
47	15785	Amoeba Candlestick by Scabetti	12.95	The Amoeba candlesticks are earthenwa	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
48	15786	Amoeba Condiment Set by Scabetti	24.95	The Amoeba condiment sets are earthe	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
49	15788	Amoeba Swallow Vase by Scabetti	49.95	The Amoeba Swallow Vase is cast in a	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
50	15789	As Acre of Mars	19.95	As the saying goes Women are from Va	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
51	15790	As Acre of Moon	19.95	This is probably the most unique gift eve	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
52	200994	Animal Kiddle Pool with 50 Game D	15.95	On occasions a British summer can be	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	11/04/2007
53	15793	ArtWorks	18.95	Prepare to be amazed as you control yo	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
54	124799	Artworks Illuminator	11.95	Are you looking to light your home or of	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	07/03/2006
55	258505	Aqua Beads Art Deluxe Set	14.05	Beautiful bead pictures are simply a spr	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	11/04/2007
56	258596	Aqua Beads Art Picture Set Assort	5.95	Beautiful bead pictures are simply a spr	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	11/04/2007
57	15794	Aquasaurs	18.95	Aquasaurs (or Triops Longicaudatus) to	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
58	206565	Azoma Home Cow Hot Sox	19.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
59	206568	Azoma Home Hot Hugs - Dog	19.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
60	206569	Azoma Home Hot Hugs - Duck	19.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
61	206570	Azoma Home Hot Hugs - Giraffe	19.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
62	206571	Azoma Home Lavender Hotie	14.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
63	206572	Azoma Home Pink Hot Sox	19.95	Winter... It brings so many joys. Snow,	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	20/10/2006
64	15796	Azoma Soother Hot Wheat Bottle	17.95	By combining aromatherapy and warmth	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
65	15798	Astro Tri-Blader Bloomingang	14.95	If you've always fancied trying your ha	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
66	15800	Audi TT 6V Electric Car	249	It's already a legendary car on the street	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
67	15801	Avant Corner Shower Caddy	24.95	We've all been there, trying to balance	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
68	15805	Baby Date Mug	15.95	An attractive Tankard for new boys and	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
69	15806	Baby Georgian Tankard	18.95	Hallmarked pewter tankard made in She	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
70	15807	Bag of Light	21.95	Get carried away (l) with these funky pol	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
71	206639	Bakers Food Hamper	95	Send someone (or yourself) a little luxur	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	10/11/2006
72	206905	Bananagrams	14.95	Bananagrams is a FAST and FUN word	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	16/10/2006
73	15809	Bar Code Vase by Scabetti	49.95	In contrast to the flowing curves of the A	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
74	15810	Barbados Double Hammock with Gi	125	Barbados is the hammock for a relaxed	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
75	72296	Barbados Hammock with 2 x Smart	54.95	The high-quality Brazilian made Barbado	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	14/07/2005
76	15811	Barny Ball Zone	39.95	Pop up ball house complete with 200 pl	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
77	15877	Bath Bomb Factory	12.95	The Bath Bomb Factory is another part	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005
78	15812	Bathrobics Beauty Spa	24.95	The gorgeous Bathrobics products were	http://www.paidonresults.net/c/1000/FM10/1000/products/side	15/04/2005

CSV files have been around for a long time, dating back to the days of mainframe computing. For this reason, CSV files are common to all computer platforms, which means the likelihood of your existing software being able to export your products into a CSV file is high. If not, the format is simple enough to integrate with an export method into your system allowing you to offer your Affiliates a product feed.

Product feeds allow your Affiliates to create content or whole websites based around your products. Generally content created from product feeds converts better than traditional creative.

Products Feed at Paid On Results

Paid On Results offers its Merchants and Affiliates the most advanced and flexible product feed system available today. Its flexibility adapts to each Merchant's unique feed, which means bespoke feeds can be offered by Merchants to their Affiliates without limitation. We do however have a few recommendations and requirements which you should be aware of.



Product feeds

Required Fields in your Product Feed

We require the following fields to be present in a feed.

Product ID (or Product Reference)

This field should contain a unique reference for the product, which does not change for the lifetime of the product and is unique to that product. It is important that the product id is not re-used in the future.

Product Name

The product name should be one the customer would expect to see, for example if the product is a television, then an incorrect product name would be "TV", whereas "TOSHIBA 32C3030DB HD TV" would be correct.

Product Price

This is the full inclusive price the customer should expect to see when they visit your web site. It creates the wrong impression to the customer if for example the price they see on the Affiliate website is exclusive of VAT, but when they visit your site the VAT is included.

Product URL (or URL to Product)

This is the full URL to the product, we convert this link into an Affiliate URL for the Affiliate to use. If during your original integration you requested certain linking methods these will be applied by us automatically and do not need to be included in the feed.

Product Description

This is the full product description. If this contains HTML code you can choose to remove this yourself, or we can automatically do that for you. You can include two separate product descriptions if you wish, one with HTML and one without and we can offer both to Affiliates.

Product Image URL

This is a URL to the image of the product. It should be a link to the largest possible image you have available. For example, if you show a small image on your web page with a link to a "zoomed" version of the product, then we should have the URL to the "zoomed" image. Another innovation we offer is that we download all images from the Merchant, and re size them to a standard set of sizes for Affiliates. It is therefore best for us to start re sizing from the largest possible image you have. If you have multiple images for each product then you can include them all in additional fields.

Product Category

This is the category the product is found in on your web site. If you have a multi-path category structure, for example, Men's > T-shirts, then you should use the full category path in your field.



Product feeds

Additional and Optional Fields

If you have additional data for each product beyond our required fields you can also include these in the product feed. The Affiliate has the option of using these fields or not, so it makes sense to include everything you can and let the Affiliate choose. Here are some suggestions to fields you may want to include, if you have them available.

Brand Name

This is almost a required field as most Merchants do offer this. For example this would be the brand of clothing or manufactures name of the product.

Gender

This is a necessity for clothing or fashion Merchants, this is the gender which is the product is intended for, different options may be Male, Female, Unisex etc.

Sales Rank

This field allows the Affiliate to sort your products in order of there most popular or best selling, ideal for creating top-20 style content units. Sales Rank is such as important field it is covered in its own PDF download which is available from Paid On Results.

Original or RRP Price

If you're selling the product cheaper than its recommended retail price then you can include the RRP price in an additional field. Alternatively if the price has been reduced from a previous price then you can include the previous price in this field. The contents of this field should always be higher than the Product Price field.

Short or Summary Description

In addition to the required Product Description field, if you have any additional descriptions you may wish to include them in this field. For example, some Merchants use a shorter summary description on their product listing page, but show the full description elsewhere. These could be useful for Affiliates, they are also good for using in Content Units and should be included if possible.

Unlimited Possibilities

Due to the flexibility of our product feed system you can include any field you wish within your feed. This provides the Affiliate with the option to use these. Other fields may be 'Product Colour', 'Release Date', 'Product Rating' and indeed any others you deem important. If you have it for your website, then Affiliates may find it useful for theirs. You can discuss additional fields with your Paid On Results Accounts Manager.



Product feeds

The CSV format

Field Order

You may arrange the fields in your CSV file in any order. However it is important that once your product feed is initially imported that all subsequent imports retain the same field order. If you need to add additional fields at a later date they should be added to the very end of the current fields.

Also removing a field after integration breaks the format, so it is essential to leave the field in place but remove the contents of the field for each product.

Please inform Paid On Results in advance of any changes being made. The feeds are imported and processed automatically on a daily basis. Changes may affect this and prevent an update for that day.

Separation Character

Each field in your CSV file needs to be separated by a single character, traditionally this is a comma. This means that any field which contains a comma, (such as a product description), requires the application of quotes to the start and end of that field, this allows the system to identify the comma used to separate the fields from a comma which exists in the description. You may find it easier to use a tab, or pipe to separate fields, as it is less common for these to be included in your product data itself.

Line Breaks

Traditionally each line in the CSV format would be a single product, with no line breaks. However, when including product description these sometimes span multiple lines. You can replace the new lines with the characters `\n` which we will then turn back into line breaks. Alternatively, you can include quotes at the start and end of the field, then if the description breaks onto multiple lines we can join them up with the line breaks in place.



Product feeds

Your Product Feed

Delivery Method

In order to integrate a product feed we require you to host the product feed on your site, so we can download the feed daily. Once we have the URL to the feed we should be informed to any changes to its file name or location. The URL should not be given to Affiliates, it is simply for us to download from, Affiliates then in turn download the feed from us. Each update you make to the feed should overwrite the same file so the URL to the feed does not change.

Feed Updates

It is vital to have updated feeds regularly. It is worth investing the time now to create a system where a feed is generated daily. Badly out of date feeds will be removed. It creates a bad customer experience to see one price on an Affiliate website only to then visit the Merchant to find the price has increased. Products which have been removed from your site should be removed from the feed. You may keep out of stock products in the feed if you plan on getting them back in stock, otherwise they should be removed.

Dealing with multiple categories

If a product exists in more than one category on your website, then it may be useful to include the multiple categories in your feed. The Category field can only contain a single category, so you will need to repeat the product in your feed multiple times, once for each category, each time only the category field for the product should change, all other fields should remain the same. If using this method it is important that the Product ID field is the same each time the product is repeated in the feed, so Affiliates who only want a single product can still have that, as the Product ID is will prevent duplications.

The next step

Once your product feed is ready you should inform Paid On Results with the URL where we can download the feed. Your feed will then be imported to our system and a URL made available to Affiliates. We make daily downloads of your feed automatically to ensure we provide Affiliates with the latest feed that includes any updates or changes you have made.

If you have any questions, please contact Paid On Results support, or your Account Manager.



Product feeds

Next Generation Content Units

Content Units are plug-in content for Affiliates to use on their web sites. Similar to a traditional banner advert and as easy to use for Affiliates, they are generally based around promoting products from the Merchant and have a much greater flexibility in terms of what you can do over other types of creative. Content Units use your product feed.

In January 2007, Paid On Results launched the Next Generation of Content Units. Instead of the static units of the past, these new Content Units are dynamic and provide interactive content. Based on the latest Web 2.0 technology, they are at the cutting edge of Internet technology. Once your product feed is in place you may qualify for our Advanced Content Units to be created for you.

You can find out more about Content Units at <http://www.contentunits.com/>