Building your Lightspeed OnSite (Pro) Catalog to Work with AdVision eCommerce*

If you're not sure what AdVision eCommerce is, [please read this first](#).

When building your Lightspeed OnSite (LS) catalog for use with the AdVision eCommerce (AE) system, there several key questions you should to keep in mind:

- How does AE's catalog structure differ from LS's?
- How will certain fields in LS be used in AE?
- And finally, how can your LS catalog be setup to allow for the fullest use of the advanced features in AE?

AdVision eCommerce's Catalog Structure vs. Lightspeed

How AdVision eCommerce manages and displays your catalog on the webstore is quite different from Lightspeed. Because of this, you should understand the differences to help build a catalog that will export from Lightspeed and import into AdVision as efficiently as possible.

Most business catalogs are constantly changing. To help provide a more efficient and effective management of your ever-changing catalog, AE's catalog management system does a lot of the work for you using pre-defined, custom characteristics, built specifically to fit your catalog.

In AdVision, products are not manually assigned to each category in your webstore. While Lightspeed requires you to assign a product to a category to have it show there (and only allows each product to be assigned to one category), AE has "smart categories" that determine what products show based on your custom characteristics that are assigned to each product and category. This allows for greater flexibility (and less work) when modifying or expanding your categories and products catalog.

Fields in Lightspeed that Translate into AdVision eCommerce

While AE does import most of the product information (like Title, Description, Prices, etc.) from your Lightspeed catalog, there are two specifics fields in LS that are used by AE to accomplish a lot of the characteristic definitions discussed above. Using these fields correctly is paramount if you wish to get the most out of your catalog in AE.

- **Family**
  The first field is "family". Each product in your LS catalog can have one family assigned to it. AE uses the family field to determine the brand for each of your products. This means that when building your LS catalog, you should use the family field to indicate what brand the product is. You may have multiple brands in your catalog or only one, but the family field should only be used to identify each product's brand.

  Please make sure to always spell the brand name the same way. For example, if you have several products that are of the Acme brand, make sure you don't spell it "Acme" for one product and "ACME" for another. This would cause the system to treat them as separate brands.

- **Class Name**
  The second field of utmost importance is "class name". This is a field that can have a great effect on how your catalog is imported and managed in AE, and if used correctly, can save you a great deal of time managing your catalog in AE. A well designed use of the class name field can also provide a more robust experience for your customer's when browsing your webstore.

  Each product in your LS catalog can have one class name assigned to it, but before you start assigning a class name to each product, you should develop a plan (that's how important it is). We suggest you review your entire catalog to identify each unique "type" of product you carry, making a list as you go. Once you've completed this list, then you can assign each class to the appropriate products.

  Developing your list of class names in a way that will best translate into the AE system can be difficult without a thorough understanding of how the system works, so AdVision does urge you to provide us with a spreadsheet of your catalog information before you start. We can review your products and provide you with a few examples to give you an idea of the types of classes we'd suggest for your specific catalog.

  As an example, let's take a hardware store's catalog. While the catalog may have categories like Hand Tools, Power Tools and Lumber, these are too generic for class names. Hand Tools has many different "types" of products. If you were to look in the Hand Tools category, you might find products like Hammers, Mallets, Caulking Guns, Hand Saw, Hacksaws, Pliers, Socket Wrenches, Crescent Wrenches, etc. These are the class names we want. They are specific enough to define the "type" of product, but not so specific that you're listing sizes, colors and the materials they're made out of. That's the trick to these class names; not too generic and not too specific.

  Again, if you need help getting the list of your class names started, let us know and we'll provide advice specific to your catalog. And just like the family field above, make

sure to spell each class name the same way. It shouldn't be "Hammers" in one row and "hammer" in another, as the system will treat those as two separate classes.

Although you don't need to know this when building your LS catalog, if you're curious, the "Class Name" you set in LS is used as the "Product Type" in AE. [Click here to learn more about how product types work in AE.](#)

Getting the Most Out of AdVision eCommerce with Your Lightspeed Catalog

As we've outlined above, using the family field for brands and developing a good strategy for your class names will allow you to utilize the more advanced features of AE.

The same characteristics that are used to determine what products show in each category also allow for automated advanced features, like related products. Based on the characteristics you've used to defined your products, the AE system can determine which products are related to other products based on shared characteristics. This means when a customer is viewing/purchasing one product on your webstore, other related items that they may also be interested in will be displayed. (Don't worry, if you recognize an opportunity to relate a product that the system isn't automatically relating, you can manually relate products to each other when needed.)

Not only will your catalog be easier to manage, but your customers will have a more fluid and robust browsing experience. But don't just focus on your product information. You should also pay attention to how your categories are setup. AdVision eCommerce allows for a much more thorough and advanced setup of categories, so YOU DON'T NEED TO SETUP YOUR WEB CATEGORIES IN LS. However, you should consider developing your list of categories (a category map) before or during the process of building your product catalog. We suggest examining similar webstores to determine the most intuitive structure for category browsing so it's easy for your customers to find what they're looking for.

Above all, don't be shy about asking our advice for your particular catalog. We have experience working with webstores in many different industries, and while you know your product better than we do, our advice may be helpful in presenting your catalog in the most effective way.