Publishing Platform for Retail

What's New

Version: 9.2.x

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Overview

Publishing Platform for Retail version 9.2 contains the following product enhancements.

Product enhancements

This section provides an alphabetical list of products and an overview of the enhancements made to existing functionality for those products.

- Batch Manager
- Central SignShop
- Designer
- Mobile In-Aisle Workforce
- Publishing Platform
- Web dSignShop and Publishing Platform Manager

Batch Manager

Batch Manager 9.2 includes updates and enhancements to the following areas.

Batch Manager

- Removed the ActiveX Control message displayed when viewing pages in Batch Manager and Central SignShop. The message only displays when attempting to preview or print.

- Added the ability to automatically assign templates to imported signs, or change template assignments for existing signs using the new Template Assignment Rules feature. You can now apply template assignments to signs from the Signs & Labels tab in Batch Manager. You add, edit, delete, and preview template assignments from the Template Assignment page of Publishing Platform Manager.

- Added rule conditions to template assignments. Adding rule conditions allows you to apply templates to a specific group of signs, such as signs for one category within a department.

- The full page is now utilized when modifying a batch. The popup window was removed.

- Added the ability to copy a sign to an existing batch. A new Copy Signs button was added to the Signs & Labels tab.

Batch distribution

- Batches are now blocked from being centrally printed until distribution is complete. The values in the Source column now have "_Ready" appended when distribution completes. If you publish output centrally, you can use this value to determine which batches are ready for publishing.

- Added corporate level settings to include or exclude store-specific pricing during distribution, and the ability to allow users to override the setting. The following two settings were added to the appSettings configuration file, located in the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM directory.

  - **Distribution_ShowAreaPriceModeOption**. This setting determines the availability of the "Include store-specific pricing" check box when distributing a batch. A TRUE value shows the check box and a FALSE value hides the check box.

- **Distribution_PriceMode**. This setting determines whether to use a SignItem to SignItem copy for pricing, or to use store-specific price values for each ItemID in the ItemPrice table. An Item value indicates to use SignItem to SignItem pricing. An Area value indicates to use store-specific price values.

- Added settings to prevent batch distribution from occurring if the effective date has not been reached. The following two settings were added to the appSettings configuration file, located in the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM directory.

  - **Distribution_ConfirmDate**. This setting restricts batch distribution if the effective date has not been reached. This setting has values of TRUE or FALSE.

  - **Distribution_LeadTimeDays**. This setting determines the lead-time, in days, if the Distribution_ConfirmDate is set to TRUE. When setting the Distribution_ConfirmDate configuration value to TRUE, the batch distribution fails unless the Distribution_LeadTimeDays setting value, plus the current date, is greater than or equal to the batch effective date. For example, a lead-time of 3 indicates three days in the future.

- Added columns to the Batches page to provide the ability to track where a batch originated, where the batch was distributed, and whether or not the batch distributed successfully. The following columns were added to the page: Last Distribution, Last Distribution Status, Queued Event, and Source Batch ID.

Distribution history

The following distribution history enhancements were added to allow you to track where a batch originated, where the batch was distributed, and whether or not the batch distributed successfully.

Distributed Batches page

- Changed the title of the Distributed Batches page to Distribution History. This allows you to compare the distribution queue with the distribution history.

- Added the following columns to the Distribution History page: Last Distribution, Last Distribution Status, Queued Event ID, and Source Batch ID.

- Added the ability to expand a distribution event to view event details. The rows now display an expand (>) icon.

Distribution Queue page

- Added the following columns to the Distribution Queue page: Batch ID, Queued Event ID, Status, and Target Batch ID.

- Added the following two buttons to the Distribution Queue Page: Purge and Change Status.

- Added the ability to expand batches in the Distribution Queue to view sign details. The rows now display an expand (>) icon.

Item Library

- Added the ability to import items from an existing spreadsheet into the Item Library. This enhancement is beneficial for customers that do not have access to the database.

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Sign Library and item groups

The following enhancements are included in the Sign Library extension, available with the 9.0 and 9.2 releases.

Sign Library

- Added a new Sign Library as a repository of signs that you can reuse in multiple batches over time. The original version of the sign is retained in the Sign Library even if the sign is attached to multiple batches. Changes made to the attached sign only impact the original version.

Item groups

- Signs in the Sign Library contain item groups. You use item groups when you want to display a summary of items on a sign rather than the individual items. A relationship is maintained between the group and the items. This allows your store system to identify which signs are available for an item, even though they are not specifically displayed on the sign.

Single-item and multi-item signs

Single-item signs

- The new Quick Add option allows you to add multiple items from Item Library to a batch by using the keyboard to enter the item. To add items to the batch, type a unique identifier, such as a UPC number, press ENTER, and repeat the process until all items are added. You can also add multiple items from Item Library to a batch as signs by selecting from a list.

- Added the ability to add, edit, and delete items in Item Library.

- Added a preview pane to the sign edit form. You can edit data in the form and view the sign immediately without navigating to a separate page.

Multi-item signs

- Added a multi-item sign edit form. You can create and edit multi-item signs from this new form.

- Added the ability to expand a multi-item sign row in the Signs & Labels page to view the associated items. Now, when viewing single-item and multi-item signs in the same batch, multi-item sign rows display an expand (>) icon. Single-item signs or a multi-item sign with no items display no icon.

Template Assignment Rules

- Automatically assign templates to imported signs or change template assignments for existing signs using the new Template Assignment Rules feature. You add, edit, delete, and preview template assignments from the Template Assignment page of Publishing Platform Manager. You apply assignments to signs from the Signs & Labels tab in Batch Manager.

- Added rule conditions to template assignments. Adding rule conditions allows you to apply templates to a specific group of signs, such as signs for one category within a department.

Central SignShop

Central SignShop 9.2 includes updates and enhancements to the following areas.

Central SignShop

- Removed the ActiveX Control message displayed when viewing pages in Batch Manager and Central SignShop. The message only displays when attempting to preview or print.

Central SignShop configuration

- Configure logging location for Central SignShop publishing activities. This enhancement provides a central location for analyzing logs. The following settings were added to the appSettings.SqlServer configuration file located in the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM directory.

  - **CentralPrintBatchActivity**. SQL query that logs Central SignShop batch publishing activity. The query can log the batch name, batch ID, event, batch type, effective date, expired date, area, area type, template, and number of copies.

  - **CentralPrintActivityLog**. SQL query that inserts data into the AVPublishingActivity database.

Central Automated Print

- Added an internal status to batches to identify the job run state. This prevents duplicate batch runs when a batch is already in progress.

- Log Central Automated Print (CAP) print requests. The print requests are logged in the database and displayed in the Central SignShop Job History page. The AddAVJobRequestQuery and the UpdateAVJobRequestStatusQuery settings were added for this enhancement.

- Created an activity logger library to log the publishing activity from CAP.
  Note The ActivityLogger is a binary library that deploys with the product. The library is used internally by different modules to log to the database, as appropriate.

- Added the ability to view more details regarding CAP jobs and publishing activity. Updates were made to the AVPublishingActivity, AVJobRequest, and the AVJob tables, located in the [*drive*:]\Program Files\AccessVia\PublishingPlatform_9_2\Data\SQLServer\TableData directory. The details are not exposed in the user interface.

- Added the ability to configure output media settings in the CAP configuration file. This allows for the printing of different media types within the same batch.

- CAP creates a Job Definition Format (JDF) file to provide verification that output generated correctly at the Print Service Provider. You can build a JDF file on a per store basis. The GenerateEnvelopePerStore setting was added for this enhancement.

- Added time stamps to log entries in the console to determine the amount of time that passed between log entries. The time stamps are in local time, based on the server.

- The FTP Failure Address box in the Settings page was moved from the FTP settings section to the Email Settings section. A message is sent to this address if the FTP transfer fails. The message body contains the exception details.

- Any CAP print request that fails can now be resent for a configurable number of times. A new "Maximum retries" box was added to the Settings page, and a MaxJobRetryCount setting was added to the configuration file.

- Output path validation was added to ensure that CAP does not run if it cannot access the print server output path.

- Added batch and sign count indicator prior to job execution. When clicking Run Now on the Settings page, a message displays the number of batches and signs that meet the selected criteria.

CentralAutomatedPrint configuration file

Refer to the following list for more information regarding the previously mentioned settings. These settings were added to the CentralAutomatedPrint configuration file located in the [*drive:*]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM\bin directory.
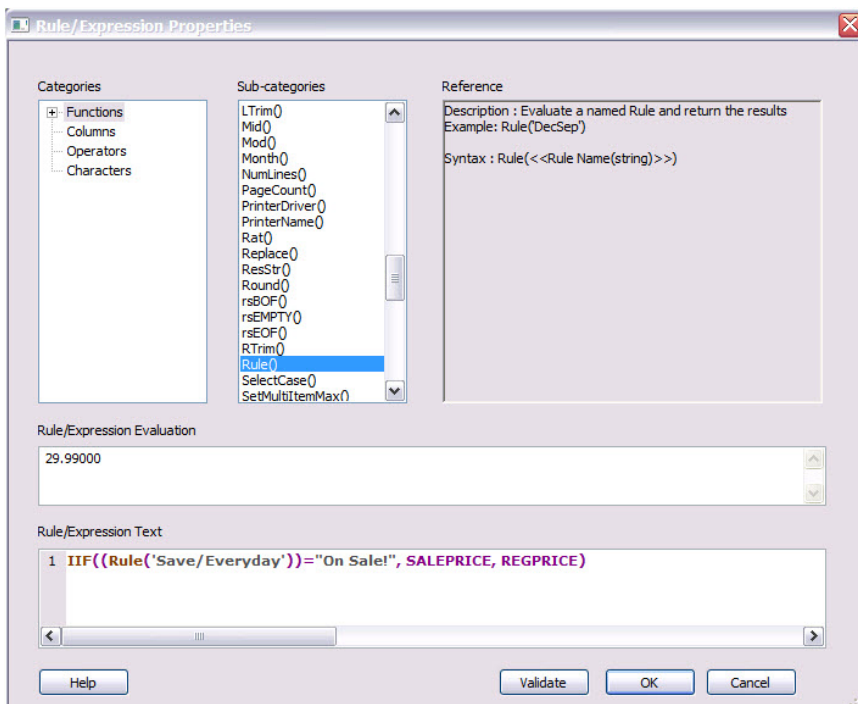
- **AddAVJobRequestQuery**. SQL query that specifies the data to log in the AVJobRequest database table when a print request is made. The query can log the job ID, server name, user name, session, status, template name, paper name, print query, and number of copies.

- **GenerateEnvelopePerStore**. Specifies whether to publish the JDF XML output by store, in addition to generating the single JDF file for all stores. The setting values are TRUE and FALSE. A TRUE setting specifies to publish the output by store. A FALSE setting specifies to generate a single JDF file for all stores. The default is TRUE.

- **MaxJobRetryCount**. Specifies the maximum number of job retries. The default is 0, which specifies no retries.

- **OutputProcessingTimeWarningThreshold**. Specifies the number of seconds allowed for output processing before logging a warning in the event log. The default is 5 seconds, indicating that the output must finish within 5 seconds.

- **QueryExecutionTimeout**. Specifies the number of seconds allowed for the execution of a SQL query before it is terminated. The default is 1800 seconds.

- **QueryExecutionWarningThreshold**. Specifies the number of seconds allowed for the execution of an SQL query before logging a warning. The default is 1 second.

- **UpdateAVJobRequestStatusQuery**. SQL query that updates the status column in the AVJobRequest database table based on the requestID returned from the AddAVJobRequestQuery query.

Designer

Designer 9.2 includes updates and enhancements to the following areas.

- Enhanced Designer performance. You may notice the greatest performance improvements on databases with a large number of rules. Specific performance improvements were made in the following areas.

  - Saving of a template or layer

  - Copy or pasting of elements on a template or layer

  - Opening the Data Source dialog box

  - Opening the Rule Properties or Expression Properties dialog box

- Added the Properties Explorer pane to the Designer. This dynamic pane allows you to view and update the selected element's properties, such as data source, font, and size, from one location.

- Added Font, Size, Placement, Special, Name, Edit Text/Data, Data Source, and HyperLink to the right-click options when selecting an element.

- Added Delete to the right-click options when selecting a template or layer from the Portfolio Explorer.

- Added the ability to view the current font size of an element in the Element Viewer.

- The following issues were resolved when using the Scale to Fit variable size option.

  - The tracking value in one element now has no effect on other elements.

- Text no longer shifts when printing GDI+.

- The ability to increase the line wrap number of characters when expanding a bounding box is now disabled for Scale to Fit with line wrap elements.

- The correct sizes are now used when manually setting the major and minor unit character options for a price element.

- Resolved an issue that sometimes caused Designer to close. This occurred when a template or layer contained a frame and you attempted to delete a long expression and then save.

- Added a new `Rule()` custom formula, known as a UDO, that allows you to evaluate a global rule within an expression. Refer to the following example.

- The following multi-item template settings were added to the AVDesigner configuration file in the [*drive*:\] ProgramData\AccessVia\PublishingPlatform_9_2\Program directory and the Promos configuration file in the [*drive*:\] inetpub\wwwroot\AccessViaPrint_9_2\Web_dSignShop directory.

  - **MultiItemHeaderIncludeInCalc**. This setting value determines inclusion of multi-header row data for calculations in custom formulas, known as UDOs. The setting values are YES or NO. A NO value indicates that the header row item (the "0" row in SignItem) does not have price point data and is not included for calculations in UDO functions. A setting value of YES indicates that the header row item has price points related data and to include for calculations in UDO functions. Depending on setting, header row data is used to calculate Max and Min in UDO functions in SetMultiItemMax and SetMultiItemMin.

  - **MultiItemOrderIDStartsAt**. This setting specifies the starting number for multi-item sign template element object spin order. The setting also specifies the starting number for multi-item ID in the sign item table. Both should start at the same value. The setting values are 0 or 1.

- Updated the utility used for exporting templates between environments to accommodate long expressions, custom formulas associated with templates. Long expression names now include the

template name. The export will duplicate and rename or re-identify long expressions during the export process.

Expression Builder

- Added the Expression Builder, a new tool for creating custom formulas known as UDOs. This new tool simplifies the process by allowing you to choose from a categorized list of UDOs and uses color highlighting to guide you through the construction of a valid UDO.

Mobile In-Aisle Workforce

Mobile In-Aisle Workforce 9.2 includes updates and enhancements to the following areas.

- Added the **TemplateAssignmentMode** configuration setting to allow for the automatic assignment of a template based on the SKU or UPC code entered or scanned. The following two values are available for the configuration setting.

    - **ItemLibrary**. Assigns a template based on the SKU or UPC code. The ItemLibrary value determines the availability of the Default Template option in the Template list.

    - **LastUsed**. Requires the user to select a template from the Template list. The Default Template option is not available in the Template list when the value is set to LastUsed.

- Enhanced configuration and publishing options for digital signs for the 9.0 and 9.2 releases. A new Publish button was added to Mobile In-Aisle Workforce. You can publish to a digital sign by tapping the button, scanning the SKU or UPC, and tapping Add and Publish Item. The enhancement also includes the ability to add another item to publish, preview or modify the batch, or re-publish the sign.

- Enhanced print options to allow users to select a printer based on available store-specific devices or to scan a code attached to the printer to select that device. Also added an option to automatically print a sign when added to a batch.

- Preview a sign after adding to a batch and editing the contents. Users receive confirmation that a sign was added to the batch. A Preview or Modify button allows them to review and make changes to the sign prior to printing.

- Added more detail when performing a price check. Users can view the UPC code, name, price, sign description, and sign preview.

Publishing Platform

Publishing Platform 9.2 includes updates and enhancements to the following areas.

- Publishing Platform now supports Microsoft SQL Server 2012.

- Reorganized the appSettings file to make the settings easier to locate to customize the product. The appSetting file is located in the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM directory.

- Added three new settings to the appSetting file, located in the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM directory, for alternative access to help documentation. Online product help is accessible in the application or through the Perceptive Customer Portal. However, the following settings were added to allow users the ability to access a local version of the help content. A link was also added to the footer of the Publishing Platform suite of products to allow users access to help documents specific to their organization.

- **HelpURLRoot**. Specifies the location for the local version of the help content. The default directs users to the online help. To use local help, you must change the setting value to reference the [*drive*:]\inetpub\wwwroot\PPM\PPM_Help directory.

- **CustomHelpURLText**. Specifies the text for the footer link.

- **CustomHelpURL**. Specifies the URL for the footer link. To direct users to help documentation specific to your organization, you must change the default setting value.

- Resolved an issue that caused printing failures for Microsoft Windows XP-based computers using dual-core processors. The issue occurred when Print Control attempted to install previously installed fonts.

Java print support prototype

Enhancements were made to develop a prototype that provides clients with a single print solution, regardless of operating system. These changes will allow you to publish a sign from Microsoft Windows, Mac OS, or Unix/Linux operating systems. Contact an AccessVia sale professional for more information.

Publishing Platform Manager

- A message details the steps needed to use the Print Control with Microsoft Internet Explorer 10 and 11 when protected mode is enabled.
  Note Protected mode is enabled by default in some security setting zones for Internet Explorer.

- Added the ability to automatically assign templates to imported signs, or change template assignments for existing signs using the new Template Assignment Rules feature. You add, edit, delete, and preview template assignments from the Template Assignment page of Publishing Platform Manager. You apply assignments to signs from the Signs & Labels tab in Batch Manager.

- Added rule conditions to template assignments. When applied, a basic rule exchanges one template for another and updates all signs linked to the original template. Adding rule conditions allow you to apply templates to a specific group of signs, such as signs for one category within a department.

Web dSignShop

Web dSignShop and Batch Manager

- Compatibility mode is now turned on by default in Web dSignShop and Batch Manager when using Microsoft Internet Explorer 9 ,10, and 11.

Web dSignShop and Publishing Platform Manager

- You can now override the engine default Print Spooler name using a SETSPOOLER switch. This allows you to print signs and labels in stores using both laser and thermal printers.