How do Matrix Definitions Work?

Inventory Management · https://retailedge.com/docs/how-do-matrix-definitions-work

Matrix definitions can be created from the Matrix Definitions menu item on the Tools menu.

Number of Possible Matrix Dimensions

Matrix definitions consist of two rows of 100 user definable matrix items. You can create a 1 dimensional matrix, 2 dimensional or 3 dimensional matrix.

Examples of Matrixed Items

For example, if you want to create a group of sized and color items for a particular item style you might create a matrix definition called Size/Color. On the first row you might put the sizes (Small, Medium, Large, etc.) and on the second row the colors (Blue, Red, Green, etc.). Or for clothing stores you might use Waist, Inseam, Color.

Then you would create a matrix parent item in inventory (e.g., Shirt). When creating this item you would select the Matrix Definition called Size/Color. When you press the Quantity tab for the item, you will see the Matrix Definition will have created a grid where you can assign quantities for each size and color combination. When you save this item, RetailEdge will create an item for each item assigned a quantity in the grid. These will have the Style number in the SKU appended by the appropriate size color (i.e., Shirt~Small~Blue, Shirt~Medium~Red, etc.).

Why Use Matrices

Using Matrices does a couple of things

1. Allows you to create a number of size/color items in one step.
2. Allows you to see the quantities of size/color items quickly by looking at the quantity tab of the parent item.

Since the matrix definitions are only loosely associated with the sized items you should be careful if you want to change a size on a >matrix definition. For instance if you call one of the sizes Blue, and then change it to Blu, RetailEdge will display the quantities for the item with Blu and when you next create an item from this matrix will create items with Blu in the SKU and not Blue. The Blue item will still be in inventory but will no longer be a part of this matrix group and will essentially be orphaned. If you have no sales or receiving history for the Blue item, you can simply delete it. However, if you do have history you should merge the two items using the RetailEdge Merging Utility from the Tools menu item.

This loose association of the Matrix definition has the advantage though of allowing you to quickly drop items from a matrix definition. This can help you to keep your Matrix definitions less cluttered as new styles are created and manufacturers/vendors stop selling the old styles.

How Many Matrix Definitions Should I Create

Any number of matrix definitions can be created. Some businesses create generic matrix definitions like the example above. Some businesses create vendor specific matrixes that have vendor specific colors. Some businesses use only one dimensional matrixes because the color of an item does not provide them with useful sales information and they can use the part/color field in the purchase order to let the vendor know what item they are purchasing.

Matrix definitions are a powerful tool, but users need to be aware of how they work before they start using them. If you are unsure about how this works, You should change over to the demo database that is preinstalled with RetailEdge and try it on some of the demo SKUs before doing it with your real data.