



Wait, We Need to Add *HOW MANY* New Items?? How Z File Processing Can Help

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WE1 Editor's Note: In JD Edwards, there have always been several ways to perform a task in order to achieve the same results. When it comes to moving mass numbers of records between JDE and an outside source, you might be considering the new Orchestrator Studio, if you have it installed. If not, there is still the tried and true Z file, a very slick batch process to assist you with inbound interoperability. This article provides the details specific to importing the Item Master, Branch Plants, and related files and provides a complete understanding of the process end to end.

Introduction

There is no getting around the importance of the Item Master, Branch Plant, and related files; they are the backbone of the JD Edwards Inventory Management system. These files affect just a few minor things, like Procurement, Sales Order Processing, Warehousing, Manufacturing... Okay, you get the idea.

So, the Item Master and Branch/Plant maintenance programs include a bewildering array of tasks, sub-tasks, row exits, form exits, and other "worm holes" to accommodate the item attributes needed to handle the critical business processes listed above.

All those maintenance screens are not a huge deal if you are adding, say, 20 or 30 items. But then, there are...

...corporate acquisitions, anyone?

It seems as if many industries today are buying up companies or adding product lines roughly every 15 minutes. Now, instead of 20 or 30 items, we could be talking hundreds or thousands. Our minor new item entry task has just become a data entry marathon!

Z Files to the Rescue!

Happily, there is a batch maintenance process that handles large numbers of records needing a new home in JDE's item data tables. The fancy name is "Inbound Inventory Interoperability", a.k.a. "Z files", so that is how we will refer to them going forward.

Objectives

By the end of this article, you will know:

- What Z file processing is.
- The minimum fields needed to add new Item Master and Branch/Plant records.
- How to manually enter Z file records.
- How to process Z file records to Production data tables.
- How to identify and correct bad records.
- How to use Excel to handle large volumes of records.

What is Z File Processing?

First, a definition is in order. Again, Z file processing is more formally known as "interoperability". Quoting from Oracle's *JD Edwards EnterpriseOne Application Fundamentals - Interoperability*:

"The interoperability function provides an interface that facilitates exchanging transactions, both inbound and outbound, with external systems."

Let's expand on that a bit. Even a robust ERP system like JD Edwards does not meet 100% of business needs all the time. Point of Sale systems, third-party payment systems and reporting tools are just a few of the reasons we might need to do data imports and exports.

So, interoperability allows this to be done in the background, without interrupting transaction processing within JDE!

- Inbound interoperability is a series of interface tables, batch upload programs, and interactive edit programs that bring data into JDE.
- Outbound interoperability does just the opposite, exporting data out of JDE to an external system.

Since our task is to load new item records into JDE from outside of the system, we will be focusing on the inbound interoperability process.

What Objects Do We Need?

The Z file recipe includes a series of data tables and interactive and batch processes with a dash of MS Excel and grid importing thrown in. Figure 1 shows the objects we need to import external item data and then load it to the Production Inventory System data tables.

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