

# **Availability Request**

**Mercateo AG**

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## Table of Contents

1. Availability request.....	3
1.1. Inventory .....	3
2. Availability files.....	3
2.1 Definition of CSV files .....	4
2.2 Definition of XML files .....	4
2.3 Transmission of files.....	5
3 Real-time availability request.....	6
3.1 Sequence of the real-time availability request .....	6

## 1. Availability request

Availability can be indicated for all items in the Mercateo shop. Customers tend to respond very positively to the indication of available items, and would prefer suppliers offering an availability indication over other suppliers not offering this convenience if the item is sold by several suppliers. Customers may also place purchase orders for a larger quantity of the item than what is currently in stock. Customers may also place a purchase order for an item where the availability is set to "0"; these items will be shown as "0 items in stock".

Availability of items will continuously change as a result of sales or deliveries. Thus, to show the customer the correct, currently available, quantity of items in stock, inventories must be updated at regular intervals. Availability is an additional piece of information and cannot be provided in the catalogue. Catalogues must be updated separately.

For availability request, Mercateo AG offers its suppliers several options: data interchange by means of CSV or XML files transmitted via FTP (file transfer protocol) as well as a HTTP request. For legal reasons, availability data must not include any prices, regardless of the version selected. The supplier selects a version which would then be used for the availability request.

### 1.1. Inventory

The quantity available can be determined with different levels of accuracy. Mercateo offers its suppliers the following options to indicate the quantity:

- Precise number: The precise number of available items will be shown in the shop.
- Cut-off number: The precise quantity is indicated up to a certain limit value such as 100. All items of which a higher number is available will be assigned the value of 101. This value will be agreed between the supplier and Mercateo.
- Scaled number: The numbers shown are not precise numbers, but rather scaled numbers such as 0, 1, 5, 10, 20 or 50. In each case, the actual quantity is rounded down to the scaled value. The scales will be agreed between the supplier and Mercateo.

Please note that no distinction will be made between the various versions in the shop.

The most accurate indication possible is very useful for the customer as this may have an effect on their buying decision. Selection of a version is agreed between the supplier and Mercateo.

## 2. Availability files

With this version, the supplier transmits its availability files to Mercateo in the format of CSV or XML files respectively. The FTP is used for transmission. The files will be processed by Mercateo.

## 2.1 Definition of CSV files

The CSV files of the supplier merely hold the item number and the inventory of the items. The item number is also called "SKU" - "Stock Keeping Unit", "Supplier Article Number" or "SupplierAID".

**The file will have the following structure (format):**

“Supplier article number” (SUPPLIER\_AID); “current inventory” (QUANTITY)

### Example for the content of a CSV file

```
00010151;7
00010169;18
00010452;4
00010482;0
00010591;4
00010593;7
00010649;30
```

### The following applies:

- Data records are separated from each other by means of a line break (CR-LF (Chr(13),Chr(10))).
- Data fields (columns) are separated by means of a semicolon.
- Each data record is composed of two data fields (columns).
- Thousand separators are not used.
- UTF-8 is used for encoding.

The file will be named according to the naming scheme **availability-data-catalog-companyID.csv**.

The company ID will be communicated to the supplier during the induction phase, and generally corresponds to the catalogue number of the supplier. The file name of "availability-data-catalog-123.csv" would stand for a CSV file of the "Sample" company with the company ID of "123".

## 2.2 Definition of XML files

The XML files of the supplier merely hold the item number and the inventory of the items. The item number is also called "SKU" for "Stock Keeping Unit", "Supplier Article Number" or "SupplierAID". The following applies:

- The XML declaration is `<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>`.
- The items are listed in the "CATALOG\_ITEM\_LIST" element that appears once in each file.
- Each item is contained in a "CATALOG\_ITEM" element.

- Each "CATALOG\_ITEM" element contains precisely one "SUPPLIER\_AID" element and one "QUANTITY" element.
- The item number is included in the "SUPPLIER\_AID" element.
- The available quantity is included in the "QUANTITY" element.
- UTF-8 is used for encoding.

### Example for the content of an XML-file

```
<CATALOG_ITEM_LIST>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>42510</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>1</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>00101</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>2</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>665068</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>4</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>3188T</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>1</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>6874</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>9</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
  <CATALOG_ITEM>
    <SUPPLIER_AID>22336A</SUPPLIER_AID>
    <QUANTITY>10</QUANTITY>
  </CATALOG_ITEM>
</CATALOG_ITEM_LIST>
```

The file will be named according to the naming scheme **availability-data-catalog-companyID.xml**.

The company ID will be communicated to the supplier during the induction phase, and generally corresponds to the catalogue number of the supplier. The file name of "availability-data-catalog-123.xml" would stand for a XML file of the "Sample" company with the company ID of "123".

## 2.3 Transmission of files

The CSV or XML files respectively are transferred via FTP. The access data will be communicated to the supplier in the induction phase. If the files are compressed in a ZIP archive, it will be possible to significantly reduce the file size for transmission. The frequency of data transfer will be agreed with the supplier. For the customer to always have current data in the shop, the availability file should be updated at least once a day. Shorter time periods from of as little as thirty minutes are also feasible.

### 3 Real-time availability request

It will be possible to map the real-time availability of the catalogue items in the item detailed view. Provide us with a link at which the item number is requested and the quantity (inventory) is fed back.

#### 3.1 Sequence of the real-time availability request

In this procedure, Mercateo retrieves the availability data for the items required through customer request only. Availability will always be as current as the data of the supplier on its web server. The supplier will be responsible for the accessibility of his web server. HTTP is used for the "external link" procedure. The following requirements apply to the returned value:

- Upon request of the item number through HTTP, a number must be fed back.
- The number fed back is equal to the stock level.
- The return value is a positive integer (including zero).
- The return value will be fed back in the first line.
- Return values in the formats of "Yes", "No", "Availability is..." cannot be processed by Mercateo.

Example for real-time availability request:

Example link: A script is accessed by the browser, for example:  
<http://suppliername.de/availability?exampleItemNumber>

A CSV document must be created, and it must include the item number and inventory.

Name:/var/www/avlbt.csv

#### Content:

```
7-11;123
7-12;415
8-34;12
```

#### Sample script:

```
#!/bin/sh
echo "Content-type:Ãtext/html"; echo
RESULT=0
if [ -z $1 ]; then
    RESULT=0
else
    RESULT="/usr/bin/egrep "$1\" /var/www/avlbt.csv | /usr/bin/cut -d';' -f2"
fi
if [ -z "$RESULT" ]; then
    echo 0
else
    echo $RESULT
fi
```

Sample timestamp at the beginning of the file: TIME;2004-10-26 15:44

