What Distributors Need to Know about the IDEA Connector Launch

On January 31,2020, the new IDEA Connector will go live to over 6500 distributor locations with updates being fed daily by the IDW. Distributors will gain access to IDEA Connector's Production Environment on February 14, 2020 to verify their migrated extracts and custom maps before they are fully cutover in a phased approach from the IDW to IDEA Connector beginning March 22, 2020.

The IDEA Team is working to ensure a smooth launch. If you are a distributor customer, you'll receive communications on your cutover date and what you'll need to do to prepare.

Key dates

- **January 30:** IDW suspended from 6pm until 12am EST. At midnight the IDW will be back online and all IDEA customers operate the IDW as normal on January 31st.

- **January 31:** IDEA Connector Live

- **February 1–7**: IDEA to verify data migration from IDW to IDEA Connector to ensure 250+ million attributes have transitioned properly

- **Feb 8-13:** All Manufacturer information submitted to the IDW from January 31st – February 8th will be processed by IDEA Connector and this modified data will be also be verified by IDEA

- **Feb 14:** Read only access to the production environment of IDEA Connector with mirrored IDW data updated daily for manufacturer and distributor communities to validate data.

Full access to a training environment to practice some of the new functionality and sharpen their skills.

Completely rebuilt, the new IDEA Connector platform provides improved flexibility, data validation and access for distributors to access manufacturer-supplied product data.

This master data management platform enables distributors to improve their operations, productivity and service their customers better.

Training needed for IDEA Connector

- Attend the IDEA Connector Q&A webinars held every Thursday from 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET.
- Complete training on the IDEA Learning Portal (all company users)
- Log into IDEA Connector and complete the suggested exercises (all company users)

IDEA's transition to the new platform is designed to be as seamless as possible. IDEA will migrate each customers' product data, authorizations, custom maps, data extract requests and account profile information to IDEA Connector.

Distributor internal checklist for IDEA Connector go live

- Validate your users with Sherri Thorne, Director of Client Solutions sthorne@idea4industry.com
- Make note of IDEA's new FTP address for accessing your folders and files.

- If you have a system that automatically drops or retrieves files to/from IDEA's FTP site, a) Contact Sherri Thorne for your new credentials b) contact your IT department to begin the conversation about switching to the new credentials.

Distributor activities to complete in IDEA Connector

Setup

- Add new contact
- Create new FTP folder and give authorization

Authorizations

- Review authorizations
- Request company auth from manufacturer
- Request class
- Request price sheet

Search and View Products

Extract data

- Create a custom map
- Create a product set

- Create a data transfer profile

- Create an extract using above

Extras

- Create a preference (don't set as global)

- Create a saved set

- Create a saved Search

- Export Data

What can distributors expect with the new IDEA Connector?

- Amped up data syndication and analytics capabilities

- More flexibility with multiple data formats and access options (including API to API)

- Categorized content with transparency on product data source

- Supplier-specific net pricing files for distributors

- Validated data based on wholesale industry eBusiness standards, ensuring quality and consistency

- Customized data extraction settings and price sheet options for specific suppliers

More information

IDEA will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available.

[View the IDEA Connector FAQ here.](#)