



Implementing Promo Standards with Sweda

What is Promo Standards?

Promo Standards is a series of standards that have been written to guide Suppliers & Distributors on development of common web services.

Is this a Cloud Service like Office 365 or Amazon where I can sign up and begin exchanging data with Suppliers and Distributors?

No. Promo Standards is not a service. It's simply a series Web Services or APIs that document suggested ways to exchange data. Think of Promo Standards as an instructional guide that details ways to assemble a product so it can be used. Each documented standard has its own set of instructions that provides developers details on how they can write code and develop interfaces to communicate using a common set of attributes.

What if I don't have a developer or someone who knows how to build a Web Service or API?

There are several Service Providers in the Promotional Products Industry who can develop services that integrate into your ERP or Ordering Systems. The active list of Service Providers is on the home page of the promostandards.org website.

What are the various Standards that have been written so far?

- Inventory - Get real-time inventory information
- Order Status – Retrieve current order status
- Order Shipment Notification – Get order tracking and shipment details
- Product Data – Search and retrieve attributes & data for products
- Product Media – Retrieve images and videos for products
- Product Pricing & Configuration –Generate a PO with correct product pricing
- Purchase Orders (Beta) – Send a electronic PO data to a Supplier for order processing
- Invoice (Beta) – Send electronic invoices to a Distributor

Why is Promo Standards so important?

Data can be exchanged quickly and easily between Suppliers & Distributors, reducing transactional friction, eliminating data discrepancies, and most importantly improve the customer's overall experience.

What types of transactional friction or data discrepancies can be reduced by adopting Promo Standards?

Every day, Suppliers, Distributors, and End-Customers experience many types of information delays. From product pricing discrepancies, to incomplete purchase orders, incorrect style numbers, unknown decoration costs, unclear imprint locations, and incorrect color variants. With Promo Standards in place, these errors are greatly minimized.

An example of how this daily friction adds up for a Supplier

- A purchase order is received but there's an issue with something on the PO.
- We call and leave a message for the customer.
- We email the customer.
- We don't receive an immediate response.
- It might take 24 hours before we find the Account Executive responsible for the order.
- In the meantime, the customer's expectations are that we still deliver this order in 3 days from the original order date.
- It now becomes a rush order we have to send to the Production Floor.
- Due to the rushed nature, there may be errors that are not caught before the order is completed.

Sweda recently tracked the number of calls that were generated to their Inside Sales team with customers asking for various updates or the Inside Sales team reaching out to the customer

- Over a 2 week period, there were on average 432 calls a day regarding mistakes on purchase orders.
- There are 260 working days per year.
- That adds up to \$112,320 in time spent handling calls related to errors on purchase orders.
- That's 786,240 minutes or 13,104 hours of lost selling time!

Why is Promo Standards so important to the overall industry and why should you participate?

With the popularity of consumer-focused online ordering systems, the B2B Promotional Products industry is changing rapidly every day.

Distributor Account Executives barely have time to spend 30 minutes with their Supplier inside counter-parts. Customers want simplicity and a sense of ease and confidence that their orders are being accurately sent and received.

By Distributors integrating their own Ordering Systems with Suppliers by leveraging Promo Standards web services, an Account Executive can more quickly find an item, look up the inventory, create a purchase order, send it to the Supplier, and have confidence that their order is going to be fulfilled correctly and delivered on time without the need for them to follow-up.

When this happens, your teams can spend their time creating more relationships and proactively selling!

How do I get started?

First, decide if you have internal developer resources who can develop these web services. If so, go to www.promostandards.org and register to Create a New Account. Once your account is created, you can look for Suppliers who you want to begin integration with. Each Supplier has listed the services they have available. These are called Endpoints. You will need to request credentials from the Supplier for to access their data.

If you do not have an internal developer available, you can reach out to several Service Providers that have pre-built services that they can integrate into your systems for you. There is usually a fee involved, so please review the options that make sense for your business.

If you have any questions, you can email David Jackson (pss@swedausa.com) our Director of Information Technology, with any questions. To view the Standards Sweda has live and a Roadmap for future releases, please go to https://www.swedausa.com/en_us/page/Integrations.