IS-Retail Overview

**Differences Between Articles and Materials**

In the case of the Retail solution, the central object in all logistics processes is the article, whereas in industry it is the material. Retail and industry have different needs in terms of the corresponding master data and maintenance options. For example, to optimally process all its fashion processes, retail needs variants (such as color and size). Industry, however, uses bills of material for special requirements in the area of production planning. Due to the large number of articles in the retail industry, master data maintenance must also be integrated into processing.

To best support the different processes in retail and industry, ECC provides different maintenance transactions for materials and articles. Unlike the material master, the article master contains the following additional points:
- Specific additional data is integrated, for example, purchasing info records, listings and sales price calculations.
- Several organizational levels, for example, sites and distribution chains, and for generic articles several articles, can be processed online in one single maintenance transaction.

In the material master you can process only one material or one plant at a time, but in the article master the system transfers data from higher levels to the dependent levels, provided you have not maintained these differently. For example, the system transfers data from a generic article to all its variants. It also transfers data from reference sites to individual sites.

**Standard Functions Used in SAP Retail with Articles**

The following standard functions can also be used with articles. However, not all functions support retail-specific processing of generic articles (for example, matrix maintenance).

We recommend that you do **not** use materials and articles in SAP Retail at the same time. The functions listed here were tested as part of individual customer projects, using the existing conditions and system settings.

If there are times when you really cannot keep to this recommendation, ensure that you enlist the help of experienced SAP consultants in your project and plan and execute comprehensive tests.

- **Materials Management (MM)**
  All functions are available.

  In SAP Retail there are two stock overviews for articles and materials.
  - Standard stock overview (transaction **MMBE**)
    It is also possible to use the batch stock here to make selections.
  - Retail stock overview (transaction **RWBE** for article selection)
    It is also possible to use merchandise categories here to make selections.

  Batch management can generally be used with single articles. However, some Retail functions (for example, allocation tables, store orders) do not take batches into consideration.

- **Sales and Distribution (SD)**
  All functions are available.

- **Production Planning (PP)**
  - PP bills of material with individual articles and variants of generic articles.
  - Product groups

  You can assign articles or materials to a product group that you have created with transaction **MC84**.

  - Product cost calculation

  The product cost calculation can also be used as the basis for sales price calculations. You can use the special procurement key for the calculation (for example, for calculation data from another site).

- **Material requirements planning (MRP)**

  You can also use the special procurement key for requirements planning, for example, for production in another plant.

- Planned orders
- Conversion of planned orders into production orders
- Production order confirmation
- Discreet production of single articles and variants of a generic article
- Variant configuration with make-to-order production without variants subject to inventory management
- Repetitive manufacturing

Constraint: You must use the standalone transaction C233 to create production versions for articles.

- **Service Management (SM)**
  All functions are available.

- **Quality Management (QM)**
  All functions are available.

Constraint: You can only access the maintenance screen for QM check data for articles using the standalone transaction QA08. The display is integrated into the article master.

- **Foreign Trade**
  - Intrastat/Extrastat
  - Preference processing (vendor declaration)
  - Letter of credit processing for export
  - Foreign trade forms (T1, T2, export declaration)

- **Tax handling for Brazil**
  Additional tax and categorization fields are needed for goods movements in Brazil. These fields cannot be maintained in the article master, but can be easily integrated into a user-specific article master.

### Standard Functions Not Supported in SAP Retail

SAP Retail supports the special function for handling generic articles in Materials Management and Sales and Distribution only, not in any of the other standard areas.

SAP Retail does not support the following standard functions with articles: You can therefore only use these functions for materials:

- **Variant configuration with inventory-managed variants**
  You can only use variants of a generic article in the variant configuration as an item in the super bill of material. You cannot use generic articles in bills of material.

- **Long-term planning**
  You cannot maintain specific data for long-term planning for articles.

- **Co-product production**
  You cannot create specific data for co-product production (for example, apportionment structure for costs) for articles. You can map production transactions with by-products in the bill of material, using articles with a negative quantity.

- **Foreign Trade**
  - Legal controls
  - Preference determination
  - Letter of credit processing for import
  - Forms: Single registration, collective registration

- **Production resources/tools**
  You cannot maintain specific data for production resources/tools for articles. Instead, you should use materials.

- **Material ledger**
  SAP Retail does not support the material ledger. This is due to the likely performance problems that would occur when dealing with a large number of articles in many stores, and compatibility problems between certain retail-specific valuation procedures (value articles, RMA) and the...
material ledger (see also customer message 11192/2002). An enhancement would then be needed in the article master and the material ledger (sales values must be updated in the material ledger and the data structures and the update must be extended).

- **Valuation levels above the plant (company code).**

To do this, extensive enhancements may be required in the article master and in other areas.

- **Plan article changes (change service)**
- **Revision level for articles**
- **Manufacturer part number management**
- **Proportion unit, active ingredient unit of measure**
- **Creation of articles using the CAD interface**
- **Inflation handling for South America**

Special handling tool for South American countries that require a revaluation method once a particular inflation rate has been exceeded. To do this, article valuation data must be updated in a table for this purpose (**Inflation MBEW**, same key as **MBEW**). You cannot currently maintain this data in the article master.

- **Requirements planning areas**

If a system is primarily a retail system you can generally not activate any requirements planning areas, not even for materials. The article master does not provide any segments for requirements planning parameters.

For information on deactivation within a Retail system, see Note 163001.

- **Transaction parameters and planning parameters (process manufacturing)**