



What's New in ECinteractivePLUS®

Updated March 2024



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This document covers the latest enhancements for ECinteractivePLUS®.

2024 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2024. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

March

Essendant - Review and Rating: Added Rating Summary widget to the Search Results, Product Detail, and Compare pages. Also added Review widget to the Product Detail page. You must contact your Essendant™ account manager before using this feature.

January

Delayed Order Dates for Dated Shipments: Modified so the next business day after a non-delivery date is not available when placing an order. For example, if an order is placed on Friday, and Saturday-Sunday are marked as non-delivery dates, the next date that can be selected is Tuesday, not Monday. See the [Dated Orders](#) handout for more information.

2023 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2023. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

December

SPR Category Hierarchy for Search Pro: We activated the updated S.P. Richards category hierarchy for all S.P. Richards dealers using Search Pro. These changes are reflected in your ECinteractivePLUS header on the Home page and in ECinteractivePLUS Admin. The previous hierarchy only included four top-level categories while the updated hierarchy includes seven top-level categories. Please see the [S.P. Richards Categories](#) document for more details on the update, specific steps you can take to edit the category order display in your site preferences, and to determine if you need to manually update your category information in a few places.

November

Added State Delivery Fee: We added the ability to enable the Colorado state delivery fee on orders delivered to a Colorado address. You must contact your account manager before using this feature.

May

Added CAPTCHA Security: We enhanced the User Registration pages and the Credit Return Form by adding CAPTCHA security.

User Registration - Employee Number Dropdown Selections: We modified the option from 75-79 to 75-99.

April

Google Analytics 4: Google Analytics™ 4 is replacing Universal Analytics. On July 1, 2023, all standard Universal Analytics properties are no longer going to process data. In this software release, modifications to ECinteractivePLUS have been made to support Google Analytics 4. For more information on using Google Analytics, see the [Setting Up Google Analytics for Your Site](#) document. For information on migrating from Universal Analytics to Google Analytics 4, see the Google Help Center page [Migrate from UA to GA4](#).

Added CAPTCHA Security: We enhanced the Contact Us page by adding CAPTCHA security.

2022 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2022. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

December

Enhancement to ECinteractivePLUS Emails - Dealer's Email Server: We've added SendGrid® as an option to use your own email server to send ECinteractivePLUS emails instead of using the ECinteractivePLUS email server. This applies to all emails sent by ECinteractivePLUS, including order confirmation emails, product detail emails, eProcurement emails, etc. This feature resembles the eTarget Flyers feature that allows you to specify an email server for your marketing campaign emails. For more information, see [Updating Your SMTP Settings](#).

Essendant Inventory Awareness - Added to Approval Pages: We've added the Essendant™ Inventory Awareness to the Approval grid and Details pages.

S.P. Richards and SPR Canada - Search Results Attribute Go Button: We've altered the display of the Go button on the Search Results page for attribute filtering.

July

Essendant - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Added Title Tags & Meta Descriptions: We've added some SEO Title Tags in Site Preference parameters and SEO meta descriptions that add an advantage in search engine rankings. The browser tab title and meta descriptions have been applied to the search by category or keyword results page and product detail pages.

Approval Process - Approval Grid Page: When an approver approves orders from the Approval Grid page, the Approve button is disabled until the selected orders have been completed.

January

Credit Card Security: We added additional security to background processing for credit cards. Shoppers do not experience any changes to the current functionality as the security is managed behind the scenes.

Essendant Smart Search - Product Detail Page - SKU Group Drop-Down: We corrected an issue that prevented displaying thumbnail images in the SKU Group drop-down selection. This correction also includes displaying the SKU Group image on the main product hover over.

2021 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2021. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

December

New User Interface: A new user interface is coming soon featuring updated administration pages and features.

October

Approvals and Approval Forwarding: We corrected an issue that prevented selecting a user from the Approval Forwarding drop-down list.

September

Search Results - Grid View: We corrected the display for product images for Dealers using S.P. Richards™, SPR Canada and Office Depot as their primary wholesaler and for Dealer custom items. Additionally, we added a hover over on the description that will display the entire description to the shopper. Please note the grid view page uses the Standard size image whereas the list view uses the Thumbnail size image. Therefore, Dealers should ensure their custom items have a standard image in Admin/Custom Product Management.

DDMS®/DDMSPLUS® - Advanced Contracts: You can now add DDMS/DDMSPLUS Advanced Contracts in the Contract and Laundry Lists Admin page.

August

Search Results - Grid View: The Grid View in the current UI is the first step towards ECI's goal of a completely new UI in 2022. The Grid View will be the default view on the Search Results page once released in ECinteractivePLUS. The shopper will be able to toggle between the Grid View and the List View. The last view the end-user selected will be the view displayed the next time the user accesses the site.

IE11 - End of Support: Microsoft® is discontinuing support for Internet Explorer 11. Although your shoppers can still use IE11, they may experience abnormalities in the future that ECI and Microsoft will not support. If you experience any abnormalities in your shopping experience, it is recommended to use an alternate browser, such as Chrome, Edge, Safari or Firefox.

Order History & JumpTrack Delivery Information & Signatures: We improved the JumpTrack® delivery information and signatures display in Order History for dealers with multiple ECinteractivePLUS sites.

July

Spotlight Items - Product Description with Special Character for Registered®: We corrected the display of the special character used with registered trademarks on spotlight items.

HP Rewards Signup Link: We changed the HP Rewards signup link on the Edit Profile page to use the new HP Signup Page.

Approvals - Add Items to an Order: We corrected the issue when a shopper adds an item to an approval order with a quantity ordered greater than 1.

June

NET1™ Connect: This update to the newest NET1™ software provides new improvements for additional credit card security using vaulting and tokens with no visual changes to the shoppers' experience. For dealers using DDMSPLUS® Point-of-Sale, this version uses an EMV device that supports a PIN bypass feature with easy installation.

Web Specials – Intermittent 403 Error: We corrected the occasional 403 error when accessing product details from the web special rotator on the Home and various other pages.

May

eProcurement – Purchase Orders with Invalid Items: We corrected an issue in the eProcurement purchase order when an item in the middle of the order is invalid.

Contracts Laundry Lists with Automatic Subs Using the DDMSPLUS Pipeline: We corrected contracts and laundry lists with automatic substitutes when using the DDMSPLUS pipeline for communication to DDMSPLUS.

User Registration Emails – Dealer's Email Server: We changed the User Registration emails sent via the dealer's email server to use the Site Info Sales email address instead of the SMTP settings.

Essendant Inventory Awareness – Items on Favorites Not Showing In Stock: We corrected the calculation used for dealer custom items on favorites lists when using Essendant Inventory Awareness with Dealer Quantity On Hand.

April

Admin – Catalog Combination Index (CCI) Viewer Page: We added the ability to export the list of products associated with a Catalog Combination Index (CCI) to a CSV file.

Order Approval Emails – Original Buyer Approval Emails: We modified the verbiage used in the Order Approval emails that are sent to the original buyer when order limits are exceeded. The verbiage was changed from "The order has exceeded your order limit and has been placed on hold" to "The order has exceeded your order limit and has been submitted for approval."

HP Rewards Program: We reinstated the HP Rewards program (formerly HP PurchasEdge) using the same functionality as previously featured.

Rewards – Points Expiration Emails: We corrected an issue so that Points Expiration emails do not fail to send to the shopper.

March

Essendant SmartSearch – Use Essendant Dealer eCatalog in Global Catalog Groups: We improved the user flow on the Essendant Content Management page in the various filter tabs to make the page easier to use. Additionally, we added the ability to export a saved product set to a CSV file. For more information, see [Essendant eCatalog](#).

Essendant SmartSearch – Product Detail Page – SKU Group Display: We enhanced the Essendant SKU Group Display to display dealer custom items. Dealer custom items must be set up at Essendant.

Checkout – CCH Taxing in DDMSPLUS: We improved the checkout process to display the tax information from DDMSPLUS using CCH Taxing when a shopper modified the shipping address on the Checkout Edit (Edit Order Details) page.

February

New User Registration – Streamline Registration Process: We consolidated the three pages in the user registration process into one page to streamline the process and eliminate issues when a shopper does not complete the registration.

Essendant SmartSearch – Use Essendant Dealer eCatalog in Global Catalog Groups: We enhanced the Essendant Content Management page by adding additional filters for vendor drop-ship items and special-order items. For more information, see [Essendant eCatalog](#).

January

Pay Invoices – Add Search Filters (DDMSPLUS Dealers Only): We added search and filter capabilities to the Pay Invoices page, such as searching by invoice number, invoice date range, P/O number, balance total, and more. We also added an option to include zero-balance invoices. This feature requires DDMSPLUS version 3.21.

S.P. Richards SearchPro – Home Page – Category Display: We modified the Home page so categories can display vertically, including an option to select specific categories to continue displaying horizontally in the category zone. For more information, see [S.P. Richards Categories](#).

Essendant SmartSearch – Inventory Awareness: We enhanced the Essendant Inventory Awareness feature to add an option to include other wholesalers' Quantity On Hand via DDMSPLUS.

Note: When using this enhancement, you must update your Essendant Vendor Supply Options in the back-office system so the Essendant inventory counts are not doubled on the front-end site. For more information, see the Updating Vendor Supply Options heading in [Essendant Inventory Awareness](#).

Essendant SmartSearch – Use Essendant Dealer eCatalog in Global Catalog Groups: We improved the Admin Essendant Content Management page to display additional messaging, and added the ability to view items that have been added and deleted during the synchronization process. For more information, see [Essendant eCatalog](#).

Standard Search/Advanced Search – Search by Manufacturer: We corrected searching by manufacturer in standard search and advanced search when no product attributes were found.

Laundry/Contract Lists – Filter by Category: We corrected an error when a shopper removed the category filter used when searching through contract and laundry lists.

Order History - Order Detail Page - Back Button: We corrected an error when a shopper clicked the Back button from the Order Detail page.

2020 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2020. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

December

Essendant SmartSearch – Use Essendant Dealer eCatalog in Global Catalog Groups: Because Essendant is increasing the item assortment for SmartSearch, ECI has added a new option to create a master eCatalog file for Essendant. The dealer eCatalog file is a comprehensive list of items specific to each Essendant dealer based on each dealer's unique set of price plans.

Dealers can create customized product sets from the eCatalog file by using filters such as brand, category, Essendant Facility, and product attributes, to include or exclude items. These products sets will eventually replace the static Essendant catalogs that are now less relevant given the increasing SmartSearch item assortment. Over time, the static catalogs will be retired, and the product sets will be used to create Catalog Groups and CCIs. For more information, see [Essendant eCatalog](#).

Maximum Quantity and Maximum Dollar Parameter at Account Level: We enhanced the maximum quantity and maximum dollar parameters to allow separate values at the account level in Account Management.

S.P. Richards SearchPro - Product Detail Page – Overview Tab: We removed the Overview tab when there is no content available.

Checkout Page and Attention: We corrected the display of the default Attention on the Checkout page when the shopper is not allowed to modify the Attention or the shipping address.

Approval Orders - Orders Pending Approval - Locked: We corrected an issue with Approval orders remaining locked after an approver uses the Edit Approval Order option.

Approval Orders - Denied Orders: We corrected an issue with Denied orders showing Pending Approval when the original buyer modifies the denied order but doesn't submit the order for approval.

November

Essendant SmartSearch – SKU Group Variations on the Product Detail Page: We enhanced the Product Detail page to display a list of items within the same SKU group (aka Product Family) for participating SmartSearch dealers. Items in a SKU group are typically product variations in size, color, or other attributes, and are always the same brand.

Web Specials and Spotlight Items: We improved the use of web special and spotlight item pricing to only use the pricing if the shopper is viewing the web special and/or spotlight item.

Product Detail Page – Email Message: We corrected the symbols for spaces and other punctuation in the message section of the email sent from the Product Detail page.

Quick Order and Manage Favorites Lists – Your Price: We corrected the display of Your Price in Quick Order and Manage Favorites when the page is refreshed.

October

Pay Invoices – Disable Payment Confirmation Emails: We added the ability at the site level to disable the confirmation email when a customer pays invoices.

eProcurement – UNSPSC from Essendant SmartSearch: We enhanced the eProcurement process to first use the UNSPSC code from the Essendant SmartSearch response before it checks the ECinteractivePLUS database or uses the default in the eProcurement license.

Admin Merchandising Dashboard – Image Alt Tag: The Image Alt Tag field for the Theater Slide Show and Banner Ads in the Merchandising Dashboard is now required. The Image Alt Tag text is a short description of the image and is used by accessibility tools (like screen readers) to describe images to the visually impaired. It also displays if the image fails to display on the user's screen, and may be helpful for search engine optimization (SEO).

Product Detail Page – Category Breadcrumbs: We corrected the missing category breadcrumbs on the Product Detail page for custom items accessed via the Spotlight Items page.

Admin Text Editor – Image Manager – Choose Image: We corrected the missing Choose Image URL in the Image Manager of the Admin Text Editor.

September

S.P. Richards – Include Discount % or Dollars Saved by Item: Dealers using S.P. Richards as their primary wholesaler have an option to include either the discount percentage or dollars saved by item on the Search Results and Product Detail pages. The discount percentage or dollars saved by item also display on various list pages, such as Favorites, Contracts, Web Specials, Items Recently Viewed, etc. Dealers have the ability to customize the text used with the pricing. For more information, see [Display Item Savings](#).

August

Essendant – Inventory Awareness via SmartSearch: Essendant enhanced their SmartSearch to include Essendant facility inventory counts in search requests. Additionally, optional dealer parameters can be included in the search request that filter or bury out-of-stock items in the search and navigation results.

Dealers can also include their stocked inventory counts which are merged with the Essendant inventory counts. This feature is an alternative option to use instead of the current Wholesaler Quantity On Hand via DDMS/DDMSPLUS. For more information, see [Essendant Inventory Awareness](#).

ECinteractivePLUS Acsellerate CXintelligence Dashboard: We modified the Select Account dialog box when accessing the Acsellerate CXintelligence dashboard so it defaults to the shopper's assigned account from Customer Management. Previously, it defaulted to the first account in the list of accounts for which the shopper was authorized.

Accessibility Statement in Footer: ECI has been making changes to the ECinteractivePLUS e-commerce sites to start bringing sites towards increased compliance with WCAG 2.0, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and over the course of the last year many changes have been made to the e-commerce sites.

While changes are ongoing and will continue throughout the life of ECinteractivePLUS sites, ECI's compliance third party has supplied us with a Web Accessibility Statement that we will include on each Dealer's ECinteractivePLUS e-commerce sites. The statement will be added to the footer of the website next to the Privacy Policy link. The link will take a user to a separate page which contains the statement.

If there are questions concerning WCAG 2.0, please visit <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>. If you have questions concerning the statement, please email us at wcag2.0@ecisolutions.com.

For more information and to view the statement being displayed, [click here](#).

Site Maintenance – Runtime Error: We corrected an intermittent runtime error when using the Unscheduled Maintenance or Scheduled Maintenance options.

July

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): ECinteractivePLUS uses search engine optimization (SEO) to promote your website's visibility on the internet and bring more traffic to your site. SEO allows users of web search engines like Google and Yahoo to find your site more easily than websites that do not use SEO. Your site's optimized information includes product details and a customizable site description linked to your Home page. For more information, see [Search Engine Optimization](#).

Admin Parameter Maintenance for Contracts and Laundry Lists: We modified the Admin Parameter Maintenance page to allow dealers to mass change customers from one Contract or Laundry List to another.

Merchandising Products – Ranked Items Icon on Product Detail Page: We corrected the missing ranked item icon from the list of items in the various tabs on the Product Detail page.

Approval Orders – Long P/O (Only in IE11 Browser): We corrected an issue with the IE11 browser when the Short and/or Long P/O is required for the approver and not the shopper. The approver can add the Short and/or Long P/O, but upon approval, the shopper sees a message that the Short and/or Long P/O is required.

June

Added CAPTCHA Security: We enhanced Account Registration, Contact Us, Credit Return, and the Rewards Questions dialog box by adding CAPTCHA security.

Orders Pending Approval Emails - Email Link Color Modifications: We modified the email link color in the header of the Orders Pending Approval email.

ECinteractivePLUS Emails - Dealer's Email Server: You can use your own email server to send ECinteractivePLUS emails instead of using the ECinteractivePLUS email server. This applies to all emails sent by ECinteractivePLUS, including order confirmation emails, product detail emails, eProcurement emails, etc. This feature resembles the eTarget Flyers feature that allows you to specify an email server for your marketing campaign emails. For more information, see [Updating Your SMTP Settings](#).

Alternates/Substitutes – Display Alternates When Price Is Lower Than Original: The Display Alternates When Price Is Lower Than Original parameter has been enhanced to allow the dealer to select this setting for qualified specific sub types, including Substitute, Preferred, and Like settings. Previously, this box applied to all settings. It has been enhanced to allow you to select it for only the settings you specify. This parameter has also been enhanced in Domain Management. For more information, see [Alternates and Substitutes](#).

eTarget Flyers - Displaying ?? for Regular Price and Save Amount: We corrected the intermittent display of ?? instead of the cents value for the regular price and sale amount on eTarget flyers.

May

S.P. Richards - Anonymous Analytics: Dealers using S.P. Richards as their primary wholesaler now have the option to send anonymous analytics shopping data to S.P. Richards. Anonymous Analytics is the same as Campaign Analytics, but it does not include personally identifiable information (PII). Please contact your S.P. Richards account manager for more information.

S.P. Richards - Removal of No Assembly Required Icon: The No Assembly Required icon was removed from the search results, product detail, and other list pages as requested by S.P. Richards.

Recurring Order Log - Export Data in CSV Format: We enhanced the Recurring Order Log on the Admin site to allow the user to export the data to a CSV file.

eProcurement - UNSPSC from S.P. Richards SearchPro: We enhanced the eProcurement process to first use the UNSPSC code from the S.P. Richards SearchPro response before it checks the ECinteractivePLUS database or uses the default in the eProcurement license.

Quantity on Hand Not Showing Out of Stock for Quantity of Zero: We corrected the display for Quantity on Hand to show Out of Stock for items with a quantity of zero. Previously, it was using the parameter for blank quantities.

April

S.P. Richards SearchPro – Search Results – Attributes and Filter Modifications: We added the ability to select multiple filters in the search results, in addition to user-interface changes to collapse and expand the attributes.

Opt-Out Option Improvements for eTarget Flyers: We improved the Opt-Out option for eTarget flyers.

March

S.P. Richards SearchPro – Product Detail Page – Remove Details Tab: We removed the Details tab because the same information is available on the Technical Specs tab. We moved the Catalog and Catalog Page information to the Technical Specs tab.

Product Detail Page – Reinstate Email Feature: In a recent release, we removed the shopper's ability to email product information from the product detail page due to security concerns. With this release, we are reinstating the feature with enhanced security using a reCAPTCHA feature to deter bots. We also added an additional parameter to disable the email feature at the site level. For more information, see [Product Detail Email Link](#).

S.P. Richards SearchPro – Search Results – Special Characters: We removed the ASCII characters that displayed for special characters such as ™ and ® in the attribute list on the Search Results page.

February

Authenticated Users – Checkout Flow – Enhancement (DDMSPLUS): We added additional parameters to customize the Checkout landing page. Dealers can elect to take the shopper to the Edit Order Details page instead of the default Review Order Details page. The parameters are at the site, account, and user level for customizing. Additionally, we added a parameter (if enabled) that provides the ability for shoppers to select payment options on the Review Order Details page. Shoppers can still select payment options on the Edit Order Details page as they do today. This enhancement is currently only available for single-department orders. For more information, see [Checkout Flow](#).

Essendant SmartSearch – Personalized Marketing Zone on the Search Page: Essendant enhanced its SmartSearch to include personalized marketing zones. In this release, a personalized marketing zone (banner ad) will display on the ECinteractivePLUS SmartSearch results page in between the 3rd and 4th item if more than 4 items are displayed. Dealers can disable personalized marketing zones by page at the site, account, and user level. The personalized marketing zone content is driven by Essendant using various contextual information such as the placement of the widget and user behavior. For more information, see [Essendant Personalized Marketing Zones](#).

January

eProcurement – PO Queue Error Transaction Log – Enhancement: We added the ability to filter the PO Error log by PO # and/or Date Range. This enhancement includes the ability to delete specific PO Error log transactions. This may be beneficial to dealers that manually enter the failed orders into the ERP. Using the delete function would eliminate accidental re-submitting of failed POs which could cause duplicate orders in the ERP.

Manage Credit Cards & Users with a Single Department: We corrected an issue where a shopper could select from multiple departments to modify or add credit cards even though they were limited to a single department.

2019 Enhancements

The following enhancements were released in 2019. Enhancements are listed according to the month in which they were released.

December

Essendant SmartSearch – Enhanced Manufacturer Content: Essendant enhanced its SmartSearch to include enhanced manufacturer content that displays on the Product Detail page under the tabbed items or product information.

Essendant SmartSearch – Personalized Marketing Zone on the Home Page: Essendant enhanced its SmartSearch to include personalized marketing zones. In this release, a personalized marketing zone will display on the ECinteractivePLUS home page under Spotlight Items. Dealers can disable the personalized marketing zones by page at the site, account, and user level. The personalized marketing zone content is driven by Essendant using various contextual information such as the placement of the widget and user behavior. For more information, see [Essendant Personalized Marketing Zones](#).

About Us - Manage Site Contacts – Enhancement: We added the ability to add more than one email address in Manage Site Contacts used with the Contact Us feature. Emails will be sent to all contacts on the list.

Guest Shoppers Checkout – Enhancement: We added the ability for a guest shopper to request/create a user/account using the same information from the checkout confirmation page. The current Customer Registration parameter in Site Preferences will be used during the new registration process.

Coupons and Promotions – List of Items: We corrected an issue when a promo code is configured in DDMS/DDMSPLUS to allow only one free item out of a list of multiple items. The user was able to add multiple free items if they selected the items quickly.

New User Registration – Email Confirmation – Missing the State: We corrected the confirmation email to include the state with the address.

eProcurement – Dealer Order Confirmation Emails: We researched the intermittent issue of an eProcurement dealer order confirmation referencing the guest shopper's communication settings. Orders are processed for the current account.

November

Essendant SmartSearch - Search Suggestions: Essendant enhanced its SmartSearch for search suggestions to be filtered against one or more item lists to ensure all search suggestions displayed generate results if selected by the user. Previously, the list of search suggestions displayed was the same for all users.

Essendant – Filters in Search Results: We added the ability to select multiple filters in the search results from Essendant's SmartSearch.

eProcurement - License Management Page - Contracts: We corrected some assigned/unassigned contract display issues in the eProcurement license management page.

Credit Card Management Page - Card Type Selection: We corrected an intermittent issue when a user selected a different card type. The card type did not change or was changed to American Express.

Pay Invoices - Sort Results by Date: We corrected the Sort By Date option to sort the column with a date format instead of a number format.

October

Shared Cart - Delete Shared Cart: We added the ability for an owner to delete a shared cart. A notification email will be sent to the contributors when a shared cart is deleted.

Shared Cart - Transaction History Log: We added a transaction history log to the shared cart feature. The history log contains information such as when a shared cart was created, items were added, and when the shared cart order was submitted.

September

Shared Cart: With the Shared Cart feature in ECIinteractivePLUS, shopping carts can be shared among multiple shoppers. Shoppers who are set up as a shared cart owner can create a shared cart and invite contributors to add items to the cart. Contributors do not need to be a registered shopper for the site to add items to the cart—all they need is a valid email address. When the cart is complete, the shared cart owner reviews the cart and places the order. For more information, see [Shared Cart](#).

Essendant SmartSearch - Personalized Marketing Zone on Product Detail Page: Essendant enhanced its SmartSearch to include personalized marketing zones. In this release, a personalized marketing zone will display on the ECIinteractivePLUS product detail page in the previous Product Recommendations zone. Dealers

can disable the personalized marketing zones by page at the site, account, and user level. The personalized marketing zone content is driven by Essendant using various contextual information such as the placement of the widget and user behavior. For more information, see [Essendant Personalized Marketing Zones](#).