



## Welcome!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Partner Connections*, Trade Service's newest communication tool. Why *Partner Connections*? Two fold.

First, we hear from customers that the product and pricing information that we provide is integral to the success of their business. We're their partners, helping them make connections, and do business, with their customers.

Secondly, we recognize that we need to do a better job communicating with you to ensure your satisfaction. We need to help you get the most from our products and develop new tools to improve your productivity and profitability. A key component of this is helping you understand how our services can enhance synchronization between you, your customers and your manufacturers. And in the process, we'll ask for your input on new endeavors.

For over 77 years Trade Service has served the needs of distributors, their manufacturers and their customers. As we celebrate our success, we recognize that we need to do more. *Partner Connections* is just one way we'll try to add additional value to you.

If there are any topics you would like us to cover, just let us know. Click [here](#) to make suggestions.

Tony Dubreville  
President, Trade Service



## Distributor Input Drives Success

We have an active [Distributor Advisory Group](#) (DAG) which consists of 12 distributors, including two members of national chains.

The role of the DAG is to provide industry insight, share recommendations, provide beta sites and help guide future product development. Our success is built upon being responsive to our customers. We observe industry trends, talk to customers about their challenges and use our DAG as a sounding board. One of our goals is to continuously refine our products to ensure they remain relevant while developing new tools to help distributors, manufacturers and their customers grow their businesses and enhance profitability.

An example of this is our recent effort to identify products in our database that are [Energy Star](#) rated, a growth market for many distributors and an important point of differentiation for a number of manufacturers. We've identified over 16,000 SKUs. We're adding functionality to [TRA-SER®](#), our product and pricing software for contractors and distributors, to highlight these products.

## Keeping the Channel Connected

- 631 manufacturers
- 1,300 brands
- 750,000 items with images (JPEGs & PDFs)
- 750,000 items with technical attributes
- 50,000 new SKUs added per month
- 10 new manufacturers added per month (average)

## Reaching Your Customer

- 20,000 contractor desktops

## Commodity Codes: What Are They and Why

Over the past month there has been much industry discussion about commodity codes. These codes, developed by Trade Service in 1968, are an efficient means for grouping similar products.

A requirement every electrical distributor has is the need to group inventory items into meaningful product classes, or categories. This enables essential report generation such as sales activity, what and how much to stock, what to discontinue stocking, profit by product, etc. This also facilitates the establishment of pricing matrices that enable profit maximization.

Commodity codes are used by distributors and contractors. They are not designed to infer that manufacturers are commodities, as each SKU that is categorized retains its descriptive information. Commodity codes group like products together. For example, did you know that there are 42 different designations for electrical conduit?

Click [here](#) for more on the value and usage of commodity codes.

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