

Retek® Demand Forecasting 10.0



Release Notes



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When contacting Customer Support, please provide:

- Product version and program/module name.
- Functional and technical description of the problem (include business impact).
- Detailed step by step instructions to recreate.
- Exact error message received.
- Screen shots of each step you take.

Contents

RDF functional enhancements	1
RDF 10.0 integration enhancements	3
Assumptions	3
RMS to RDF diff integration impacts	4

RDF functional enhancements

Functional enhancements for RDF 10.0 were originally completed to RDF 9.5:

Feature / Function	Benefit
Sales filtering algorithms	To adjust past sales data for sales lost due to out-of-stock conditions. Also, algorithms that can adjust past sales to remove outliers.
Like SKU/ Like Store	Very beneficial in forecasting for new SKUs. Using the “like SKU” association can use the forecast for an existing one as the forecast for the new one.
Daily forecasting improvements	Daily forecasting is critical in grocery, this enables grocers to better manage perishable product. New for 10, we will be able to combine daily and causal forecasting.
Profile-based forecasting with average demand as input.	Gives you a new way to use our profile-based forecasting. Instead of having the system calculate the average demand and spreading using the profile, users can set an average value manually.
Approval by alert	“Approve by alert” enables users to conditionally approve a forecast, that is, approve as long as the global “approval alert” did not trigger for this product. New to this version is the ability for users to select different alerts for different products.
Usability enhancements	Simpler administration and maintenance workbooks and easy to understand approval selections.
Causal forecasting enhancements	Two improvements for 10. Causal will work with daily forecasting to take into account the days the promotion was on. Causal forecasting will use the seasonal methods to produce baseline forecasts. In addition, we will be able to export the baseline (i.e. non-promotional) forecast and the promotional forecast.

Feature / Function	Benefit
Interactive forecasting	RDF 10 will include a workbook that gives users the ability to generate forecasts interactively. While this feature will have some limitations in production use, it will be a great tool for users to do “what-if” analysis. It will also be extremely useful in product demonstrations.
Cumulative Interval enhancement	To support the Dynamic method of replenishment, RDF outputs not only the forecast but also an estimate of the Standard Deviation. There can be issues in calculating this number when the forecast is low and we use aggregation & spreading (which improve forecast accuracy). In this next version we have implemented a fix to the problem.
Neural Network Forecasting	For version 10.0 we will make the first step towards integrating our neural network technology into the forecasting solution. By this we mean that neural network algorithms will be fully integrated from a technical standpoint, but the NN forecasting will not be enabled in a standard implementation of RDF 10.0. Initially, it is only available to clients interested in jointly funded development to adapt the technique to their specific problem. The reason for this positioning is that NN forecasting is not as automatic as the time-series algorithms. It requires additional training and configuration to use properly. Furthermore, the first implementation this new technology will likely involve some unanticipated challenges. The impressive capabilities of this technology will be developed over several custom implementations before being presented to the market place as a mature solution. The sales pack outlines the problems for which NN provides a superior solution and estimates of the custom development costs.

RDF 10.0 integration enhancements

The scope of Retek 10 was to duplicate the base integration that exists in Retek 9.0 between RDF and RMS.

In Retek 10, RDF is receiving Product and Location Hierarchy information from RMS via the RIB ETL. The Calendar Hierarchy, which was formerly imported from RMS will now need to be generated in RPAS. It will be necessary to verify that the generated hierarchy is consistent or synchronized with the RMS calendar hierarchy.

In Retek 10, many of the batch programs from RMS to RDF were updated; however the purpose/function of the programs remain the same.

In Retek 10, only slight changes were required to support the batch exports of data from RDF to RMS.

Assumptions

- Location Hierarchy - The import from RMS into RDF does not distinguish between forecastable and non-forecastable warehouses.
- Calendar Hierarchy - The RPAS calendar generator will be required to support automated calendar hierarchy creation. This is in place of the calendar hierarchy upload that was formerly used.
- Product Hierarchy - There will no longer be separate extracts for staple skus vs fashion styles/skus. One interface based on new item master for Retek 10.0.
- Product Hierarchy and RMS data file feeds - A base implementation of RMS supports a 19-digit item number; however the data model allows for a 25-character item number for custom implementations. RDF 10.0 only support a 24-character item number. If the integration program that imports item numbers encounters a 25-character item number, it will truncate the last 5 characters for input purposes and add 5 spaces back when the information is exported. This would need to be considered for custom implementations.
- Product Hierarchy and RMS data file feeds - A base implementation of RMS would support digits and dashes as valid characters within the item number. RDF 10.0 RPAS technology do not support dashes as valid characters. The integration program that imports item numbers into RPAS map dashes (-) to underscores (_) for item numbers and then handle the reverse mapping on the export. If RMS was customized to support additional characters or formats, this integration would need to be reviewed.
- Product Hierarchy - Although new item master supports multiple item differentiator types including color, size, flavor, scent and pattern, only color and size are supported for the integration from RMS 10.0 to RDF 10.0.
- Product Hierarchy and RMS data file feeds - Differentiator identification fields may contain special characters that RPAS does not support. Therefore, No DIFF_IDNT field will have more than 6 of its 10 characters be characters that cannot be accepted by Acumate. For example, a diff ID of *****ABC would not be permitted.

- Product Hierarchy - The New RMS 10.0 Item Master contains flexible levels that can be assigned by product. The RMS 10.0 integration to RDF 10.0 only sends transaction level items and assumes everything is tracked at the sku level. References to the style number and style description are stored at the sku level.
- SKU: IF Item Level = Transaction Level AND (Transaction Level = 1 OR 2)
 - STYLE: IF Item Level < Transaction Level AND (Item Level = 1 AND Transaction Level = 2), use style reference information.
 - DUMMY STYLE = IF Item Level = Transaction Level AND Transaction Level = 1, use dummy style reference information
 - Other level combinations (UPCs) are disregarded by the integration program.
- Daily Sales from RMS 10.0 – One file each will be written for regular ('R'), promotional ('P'), and clearance ('C') sales.
- Weekly Sales from RMS 10.0 - One file each will be written for regular ('R'), promotional ('P'), and clearance ('C') sales.
- Daily Sales Forecast from RDF 10.0 – The location field on the exported data file has the last 10 characters of the 20 character field truncated to support the 10-character location field in RMS. Because the location field is 10 characters within RMS and populated in RDF by RMS, there is no risk that data will be truncated during this process. If changes are made to the RMS location length, these programs will need modification.
- Weekly Sales Forecast from RDF 10.0 - The location field on the exported data file has the last 10 characters of the 20-character field truncated to support the 10-character location field in RMS. Because the location field is 10 characters within RMS and populated in RDF by RMS, there is no risk that data will be truncated during this process. If changes are made to the RMS location length, these programs will need modification. Domain creation is driven by the RDF 10.0 application. If RDF 10.0 will be integrated with RMS 10.0, domain creation needs to be coordinated during implementation. If the customer would like to use RDF 10.0 to generate forecasts taking stock outages into account, utilization of the RMS 10.0 stock outages file will need to be configured at implementation.

RMS to RDF diff integration impacts

No integration enhancements have been made to RMS version 10.0.