

## PDS INTERPRETATION AND RULES GUIDE

Version 5

February 2026

### PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This guide provides interpretation and usage guidance for the ASA Product Data Standard (PDS). It supports consistent implementation across manufacturers, distributors, and solution providers by clarifying how existing definitions and templates should be applied when ambiguity exists.

This document does not introduce new required attributes or replace the Data Dictionary. It clarifies how existing definitions, templates, and governance guidance should be applied.

### INTERPRETATION PRECEDENCE

- The Data Dictionary defines the authoritative meaning of each field.
- Templates illustrate expected structure and usage.
- Examples are illustrative and do not override definitions.
- For transactional fields, ERP and system constraints take precedence over marketing guidance.

### PRODUCT LIFECYCLE STATUS INTERPRETATION

Lifecycle status reflects manufacturing and orderability, not inventory position.

Active – Currently manufactured or sourced and orderable through normal channels.

Discontinued – No longer manufactured or sourced but may remain available or supported for a limited time.

Obsolete – No longer manufactured, orderable, or supported; retained for historical reference only.



## COLOR FAMILY – INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE

Color Family is an interpretive construct intended to improve product discovery, analytics, and reporting across the PHCP and PVF ecosystem. It is designed to normalize how color-, material-, and finish-related information is categorized without altering existing transactional or descriptive requirements.

Color Family is not a required attribute under the Product Data Standard and does not replace detailed finish, material, coating, or specification fields defined elsewhere in the Data Dictionary.

This guidance is provided to support consistent usage when organizations choose to implement Color Family voluntarily.

## GOVERNANCE POSITION – FEBRUARY 12, 2026

The ASA Data Governance Board reviewed and approved the architectural intent and structural model for Color Family on February 12, 2026.

Color Family is defined as an interoperability construct designed to normalize broad color and material groupings across the PHCP and PVF ecosystem. Its purpose is to support cross-manufacturer alignment, analytics consistency, and structured categorization.

Color Family is not intended to function as an e-commerce filtering taxonomy and should not be treated as a direct substitute for search logic, merchandising logic, or website navigation structures.

Organizations may implement additional filtering logic within their own systems. However, the Color Family construct within the Product Data Standard exists to promote interoperability and normalization, not to prescribe digital merchandising strategy.



## COLOR FAMILY HIERARCHY

When implemented, Color Family should be structured using a two-level hierarchy.

### Level 1 – Color Family

Represents broad, stable groupings that reflect material type, coating class, plastic family, or industrial color usage.

Examples include metals and alloys (Stainless Steel, Copper), coatings (Galvanized, Epoxy Coated), plastics (PVC, PEX), and industrial or system colors (Red, Blue, Yellow).

### Governance Constraint – Level 1 Size

Level 1 values are intended to remain stable and limited in number. The target range is approximately 15–17 values. Expansion beyond approximately 18 total values should require formal governance review.

Implementers should use “Other” where appropriate rather than introducing new Level 1 values without governance review.

### Level 2 – Color Detail

Represents specific finishes, treatments, grades, system identifiers, or industry descriptors associated with a Level 1 family.

Level 2 values may expand over time to reflect industry practice.

## APPROVED ATTRIBUTE SEPARATION MODEL

The following structural model was ratified by the Data Governance Board:

- Color Family – Controlled attribute representing broad, stable groupings.
- Decorative Color – Optional, free-form attribute representing aesthetic color variations.
- Finish – Separate controlled attribute.
- Material – Separate controlled attribute.

Color Family must remain distinct from Finish and Material attributes. Mixing or collapsing these attribute types undermines clarity, reduces interoperability, and creates downstream ambiguity.



When ambiguity exists, attribute separation takes precedence over consolidation.

## COLOR FAMILY IMPLEMENTATION RULES

The following operational rules apply when implementing Color Family:

### Dominant Visible Color

Color Family should reflect the dominant visible characteristic of the finished product.

### Metallic Classification

Metallic products should be grouped appropriately within established metallic Level 1 groupings rather than creating finish-based variants at Level 1.

### Clear and Transparent Items

Transparent or translucent products should be classified under Clear at Level 1 when appropriate.

### Multi-Color Products

Multi-Color should only be used when a product is distinctly multi-tone or composed of visibly distinct color components. Minor internal components should not drive multi-color classification.

### High-Visibility Products

High-Visibility is not a standalone Color Family value.

High-Visibility items should be classified using:

- The applicable base color (e.g., Yellow, Orange), and
- Reflective as a Finish attribute.

### Incremental Implementation

Organizations may implement Color Family incrementally by product category. Full catalog conversion is not required before beginning implementation.

## DESCRIPTION FIELD ROLES AND CONSTRAINTS

Description fields serve different purposes. Transactional descriptions should align with ERP constraints. Marketing descriptions may be richer where supported.



### Capitalization Standard

The standard product description field should follow headline-style capitalization (commonly referred to as Chicago-style capitalization), where principal words are capitalized and minor words remain lowercase unless leading.

This formatting requirement applies to the controlled product description field defined in the standard.

### ADOPTION STATUS DEFINITIONS

For governance tracking and reporting purposes, adoption status is defined as follows:

#### Contributor

Organization participated in development of the PDS but has not yet begun implementation.

#### In Progress

Organization has formally committed to implementation and is preparing systems, mapping, or resources.

#### Partially Implemented

Organization has implemented PDS structure for one or more product categories but has not completed full implementation across intended scope.

#### Fully Implemented

Organization can transform and deliver its product data in accordance with the PDS structure and templates across its defined scope.

Adoption status should be based on objective capability rather than intent or marketing claims.

### ALLOWED VALUES AND CONTROLLED LISTS

Where the Data Dictionary defines allowed values, only those values may be used. Free-text substitutions are not permitted unless explicitly allowed.



## CHANGE AND VERSIONING PRINCIPLES

Clarifications and documentation improvements may be published as part of routine maintenance.

Structural changes, including new attributes or enforcement of controlled value lists, follow established governance review processes.

Interpretive constructs such as Color Family may evolve over time to reflect industry usage.

### Documentation History

February 12, 2026 – Governance clarification published formalizing the architectural intent and attribute separation model for Color Family following Data Governance Board approval.

External industry color strategy research informed development of the Color Family framework.

