

# Product Modeller

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Version 3.34

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Analyst Product Modeller

Software by **Chris Wilcock**

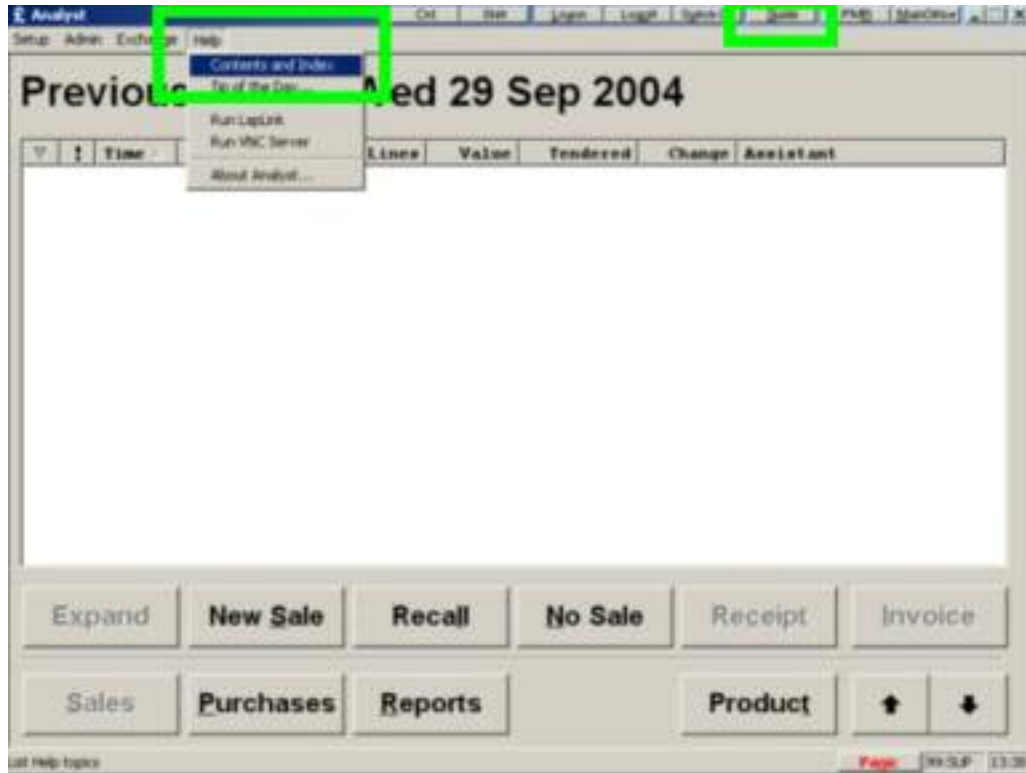
Documentation by **Ian Lynch**

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## Introduction

This is an abridged version of the Analyst on-line help which is accessible by clicking the **Guide** button at the top of the Analyst screen or selecting **Help** from the menu bar then **Contents and Index**.



This modules of this printed help file reflects the on-line help for Analyst Version 3.34 released in June 2006. Sections covered are:

- Analyst Product Modeller

Use the on-line help in conjunction with this manual for an up-to-date answer to your questions or call the CareDesk on 01254 833310 if you require more information.

Some of the images used may reflect an older version of Analyst but the procedure will be essentially the same. The on-line help is continually being updated and changes can be found on the What's New and Previous Releases pages of the on-line version.

If you find any errors, omissions or would like to otherwise comment on either this printed manual or the online help email Ian Lynch at [ianl@positive-solutions.co.uk](mailto:ianl@positive-solutions.co.uk)

# Product Modeller

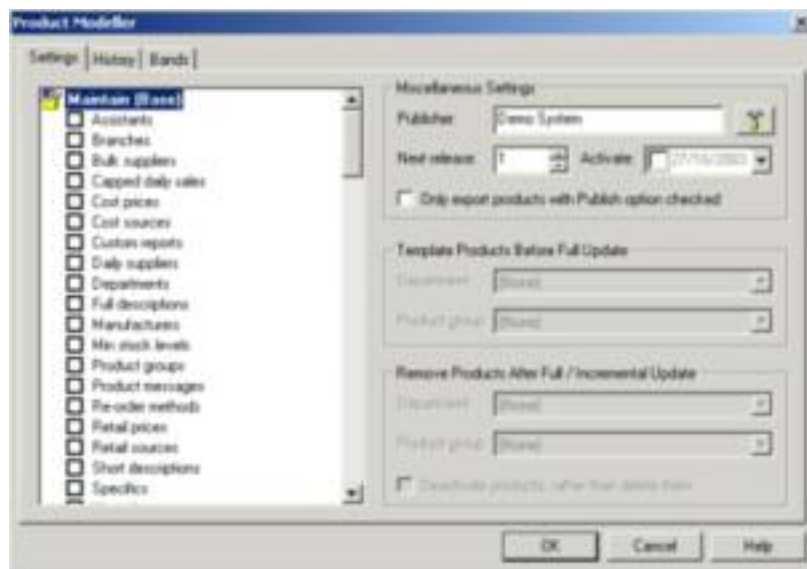
## What is the Product Modeller?

The Analyst Product Modeller is a separate module of the Analyst suite of products that is responsible for maintaining databases across multiple branches running Analyst PoS, PMR or IPS. The modeller would run at a designated head office and be maintained by your staff. They will produce a model database, to which all other instances of Analyst in your business would refer.

Analyst Product Modeller sits with Analyst PoS and allows you to use the familiar and usable screens and features of Analyst PoS to maintain your model database. Periodically you will build an update for your branches which they will collect over modem to be applied to their system.

To activate the Product Modeller you will need to contact the Sales department on 01254 833300 to discuss the licensing of Product Modeller and also the purchase of BatchCOM which is the communications package which allows branches to dial into the product modeller to receive the updates.

Once registered, the Product Modeller is launched from the **Admin** menu of Analyst PoS.



There are three tabs across the top:

- Settings. This is where the Product Modeller is configured to update certain fields and elements of the remote systems.
- History. The history of published updates and their uptake by remote branches can be examined on this tab.
- Bands. Branches within the system can be set to operate within specific price bands on this tab.

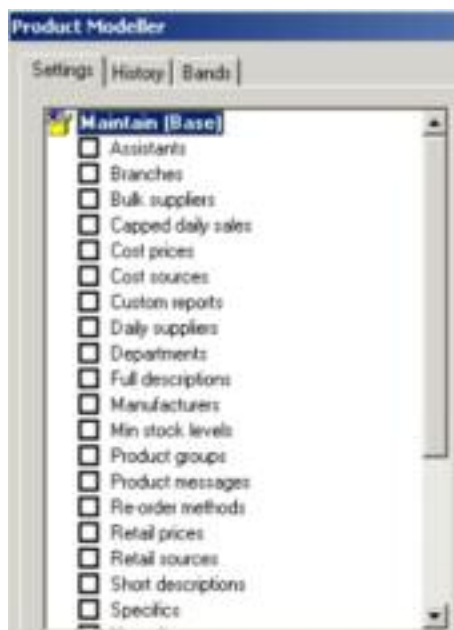
## Settings

On the left side of this screen an option exists for each field or setting which can be exported from this model system to update the branches.



The list is separated into sections; to maintain, synchronise and control the base system, the EPOS and the PMR. The 'Base' system refers to all the elements of the system and database which are common to the Analyst Suite of products.

Within each of these section there are options for the fields to control.

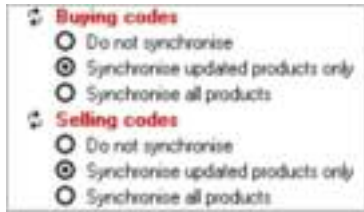


In the Maintain section of the list you can select which parts of the model system are to be sent to the branches. The Maintain (Base) is concerned with the core of the database whilst the Maintain (EPOS) and Maintain (PMR) are program specific sections depending on the software being used in the branches.

To mark a field to be maintained by the model place a tick in the box next to the field name by clicking in it. By selecting a field in the maintain section, all information associated with that field will be transmitted. So if departments selected, the list of

departments in the model is transmitted along with all margin and VAT settings. The Maintain section will add and update items to the branch database.

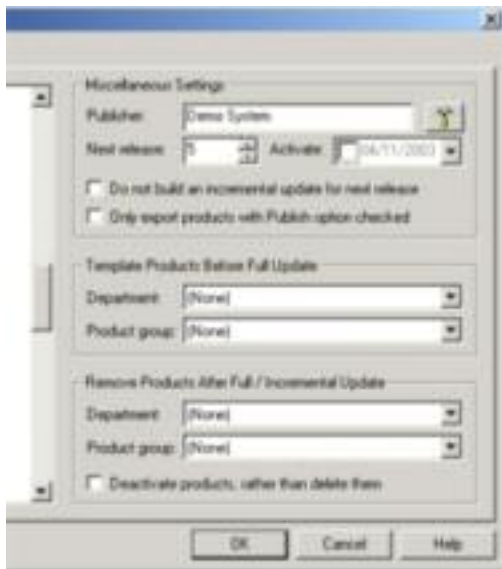
By selecting the corresponding option in the Synchronise section, any additions made in the branch database that do not match the model will be deleted. The option to synchronise is only available on fields which are being maintained.



There is a slight difference in the Buying and Selling code section of the synchronise section. The "Do Not Synchronise" option will not remove any extra codes that do not exist in the model. "Synchronise Updated Products Only" will only remove superfluous codes from products already contained within the update. To "Synchronise all products" would remove all codes from the branch system that are not present in the model. This last option should be used infrequently as the size of the update is increased significantly when it is selected.

The Control section of the list allows the model to impose configuration settings upon the branches. If for example the Description Search option is marked to control the branches, all settings in the Description Search section of the model's System Configuration will replicated on the branch systems.

The right side of the Settings tab contains more configuration options for the updates.



In the Miscellaneous settings the publisher is the name of your organisation. Once entered this must not be changed as branch systems will only accept updates from the same publisher as their initial import of data.

The button next to the publisher field highlighted in the image is the Build button. By clicking this, the next update will build.

The release number is the sequential number used for each release. This can be modified if necessary but generally shouldn't need to be. You need to publish updates with sequential numbers as branch systems cannot jump up through updates.

The activate field allows you to specify a date when the update will apply. The update can be downloaded well in advance and only upon startup of the branch system on the specified date does the update apply.

The first check box gives the option to not produce an incremental update for this update. This will force branches to perform a full update.

The final option in this section allows you to restrict the update to publish only those products in the model database that have the Publish field checked in their record.

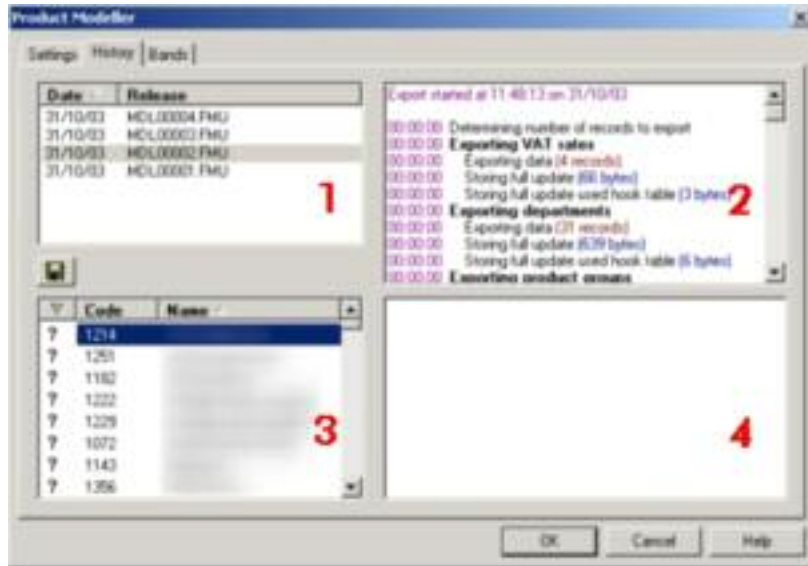
The remaining two boxes of settings allow mass changes to be made on the branch system before and after the update is applied, although the templating option is only available when the incremental update is suppressed. These are typically used to remove unwanted or erroneous products from branch systems en masse during the update procedure.

To do this set all products to be templated into a department or product group which has no products assigned to it in the model, such as a 'Unwanted Products' department. The update will then apply and assign all products within the update to their correct department and product group. The remaining items left in the initial group can then be regarded as surplus items and can be deleted, or set inactive, by the bottom box of settings.

## History

The second tab in the Product Modeller is the History tab.





As the name suggests, these panes display information about the publishing and application of updates from the model system. They have been numbered in the image below for ease of explanation.



In pane 1, all updates built are displayed with their name and the date created.

The export report for the update highlighted in pane 1 is displayed in pane 2. These are the messages that are displayed when the update is generated.

Pane 3 displays the update status of the branches for the update highlighted in pane 1. Each time they apply an update the system at the branch produces a report. This update report is deposited with product modeller when the branch system next dials into the model system. The icon next to each branch name indicates whether the branch system has applied the update and how successful it has been. The icons are as follows:

-  Update successful
-  Update successful but with some warnings. Check the import report.
-  Update failed
-  Unknown. The branch system has not dialled into the model system since attempting to apply the update.

Pane 4 displays the update report from the branch and updates highlighted in panes 1 and 3. If any warnings are indicated in pane 3, more details can be found in this report.

# Bands

The third tab of the Product Modeller allows branches to be placed into price bands.



Products can be assigned a range of retail prices in the Model tab of the product editor on the model system. The settings on this tab of the product modeller determines which price each branch will charge. This can differ on a branch by branch basis to account for geographic, demographic and local competition factors.



Each item can have up to eight retail prices assigned in addition to the default retail price on the Details tab of the product editor. When the update is applied to a branch system, the branch will search through the price bands in the order specified in this section until a price is found. If no prices are found or the \* (asterisk) is reached in the band sequence the default retail price on the details tab is used, even if that price is zero.

Normally the price bands would be structured to either increase or decrease from 1 to 8. This allows for uniformity across the range of branches.

### Changing price band sequence

By default the sequence starts with the \* (asterisk) so the price on the details tab is used. To change this and set the price band sequence highlight the branch you wish to change. The current sequence is highlighted in the sequence editor below the main pane (outlined in green in the image below).



To move the position of a price band, click the appropriate number in the sequence editor and use the left and right shuffle buttons to move the position of that band in the sequence.

### Replicating price band sequences

To help speed up assigning price band sequences, the sequence of one branch can be copied to other branches. Highlight the branch with the sequence you want to copy and press and hold the **CTRL** button. Now highlight the branches you wish to copy the sequence to and click the **Copy** button on screen (outlined in red in the image above).

## Technical Details

### Branding

Following the initial download or priming of a branch system, the database becomes 'branded' to the publisher name specified in the settings tab of the Product Modeller. Any attempt to update the branch system from a different publisher will result in error and the rogue update will not apply.

### Update Procedure

When the updates are built by the system using MDLBUILD.EXE they reside in the \ANALYST\DATA\MDLBUILD folder on the model system. Each publication will produce a full update with the filename MDLxxxx.FMU (where xxxxx is the release number padded to 5 digits) and an incremental update which reflects the changes between this full update and the previous full update with the filename of MDLxxxxx.IMU.

When the branch contacts the model for an update, BatchCOM will assess the current update level of the branch and deploy either the appropriate number of IMUs or single FMU, whichever is the smallest total download, to update the system to the current release.

The xxxxx update number is the release number the FMU or IMU will update the new system to after the update has been applied. So if a branch is on release 25, BatchCOM will deploy release 00026 and greater to the branches.

When downloaded to the branch system, the update resides in the \ANALYST\DATA\SECUPDAT folder on the master terminal. These are applied immediately by launching MDLUPDAT.EXE if the activation date of the update is unspecified or has expired. If the activation date is sometime in the future, the update will be automatically applied when Analyst launches on the master terminal on the morning that matches the activation date of the update.

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