

Effective **July 28, 2025**, FCP will reject submissions that do not align with the guidelines below for creating accurate and descriptive Product Names and Product Descriptions in catalog submission.

## Overview



GSA catalogs enable buyers to find and purchase needed products. Vague, non-descriptive Product Names and Product Descriptions that repeat part numbers and contractual terms make it hard to find needed items. FCP will begin validating these attributes in submitted Product Files to improve data quality, enhance the buyer experience, and align with commercial best practices for e-commerce platforms. These changes affect all vendors who use the FCP Product File to submit and manage their catalogs.

## Product Names: Use At Least 3 Words, No Part Numbers



Product names **must contain a minimum of 3 words** and cannot include manufacturer or vendor part numbers. Since buyers search by keywords (e.g., laptop, desk, etc.), **product names** should be descriptive, clear, and meaningful to customers. Names have a **40 character** limit.

- **Prohibited:** Product names can't include manufacturer or vendor part number.
- **Best practice:** Brand + Model + Product Type + Key Features/Attributes
  - **Do this:** "Dell 27 Inch 4K UHD Computer Monitor"
  - **Not this:** "Monitor"

## Product Descriptions: Use At Least 10 Words, No Promotional Language or Contractual Terms

Descriptions **must contain a minimum of 10 words**, focus on **product features** and **specifications**, and help customers understand what the product is. Descriptions have a **1000 character** limit.



- Avoid promotional terms and phrases (e.g., Best Deal, Limited Time Offer, Save Now, Free Shipping, Discount) that are not relevant to describing the specific product being sold.
- **Best practice:** Include descriptive qualities like product type, function, key features, unique uses, and specifications (e.g., color, size, material). Consider spelling out uncommon acronyms and abbreviations.

## Examples of Adequate Product Descriptions

Vendors should include the following elements as applicable, within the 1000-character limit.



Element	Example
Product Type	This insulated travel mug...
Function	...keeps beverages hot or cold for hours.
Key Features	Leak-proof lid and convenient carrying handle.
Use Case	Perfect for commuting, office, or travel.
Specifications	16oz, stainless steel, black [available in other colors, see options]

## Benefits

Federal buyers consistently identify low-quality product names and descriptions as significant pain points in finding products they need. Clear, descriptive names and descriptions typically result in **increased sales for vendors** as customers can find products and make informed purchasing decisions.

The changes will:



- Improve searchability of products
- Enable buyers to make more informed purchasing decisions
- Create a more consistent and professional shopping experience
- Help distinguish similar products from one another

## Product Name & Description Attribute Summary

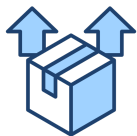
The following table summarizes the new Product Name and Description attributes.

Criteria	Product Name	Product Description
Purpose	Enable buyers to quickly find relevant items in listings and search results	Educate, inform, and persuade buyers of product value
Tone	Concise, factual	Informative, natural, persuasive
Length	40 characters	150 to 1,000 characters
Keywords	Include top 1 to 2 key search terms only	Use keywords naturally throughout description

Formatting	Avoid punctuation other than dashes (-) or commas (,)	Use paragraphs or bullet points
Include	Brand, product type, size, color, spec	Function, benefits, features, materials, fit, compatibility
Avoid	Marketing claims, full sentences	Seller info, links, exaggerated language

## Product File Specific Validation Issues & How to Resolve

Once the new rules take effect, FCP will validate and return error messages when the rules are not met. The validation checks and error messages you may encounter are summarized below, along with suggestions for fixing.



Business Rule & FCP Validation	Error Message if Not Met	Suggestions on How to Fix the Issue
Product names must be at least 3 words, delimited by spaces, to include brand, model and/or product type (No promotional language)	item_name must be at least 3 words long and clearly identify the product. Revise the entry to include 3 descriptive words that are product-focused such as Brand, Model, or Product Type (no promotional language)	Add specific terms such as the <b>brand name</b> , <b>model number</b> , and <b>product type</b> (e.g., "Sony WH-1000XM5 Headphones").
Product names cannot match the <b>Manufacturer Part Number</b> (MPN)  Product names cannot match the <b>Vendor Part Number</b> (VPN)	item_name must not be a part number. Item name must be at least 3 words long and clearly identify the product. Revise the entry to include 3 descriptive words that are product-focused such as Brand, Model, or Product Type (no promotional language)	Replace the part number with a descriptive name, including <b>brand</b> , <b>model</b> , and <b>product type</b> . Avoid codes or SKUs.  Similar to MPN: Avoid using VPN codes. Use clear product descriptors like brand, model, and type (e.g., "HP LaserJet Pro Printer").

Business Rule & FCP Validation	Error Message if Not Met	Suggestions on How to Fix the Issue
Product descriptions must be at least 10 words, delimited by spaces, to include Brand, Model, Product Type, and key features	item_description must be at least 10 words and clearly describe the product in detail, including Brand, Model, Product Type, and key features (e.g., color, size, material). Avoid promotional language.	<p>Ensure the item description is detailed and includes at least 10 words. Incorporate <b>key details</b> such as the <b>brand, model, product type</b>, and <b>key features</b>.</p> <p>Example: "Sony WH-1000XM5 Wireless Headphones featuring Noise Cancelling, Black color, and Comfortable over-ear design."</p>

## Other Issues?



If the problems you encounter aren't included above, please check the following resources on [catalog.gsa.gov/help](https://catalog.gsa.gov/help):

- Vendor User Guide: Getting Started
- Vendor User Guide: Managing a Products Catalog
- Vendor User Guide: Managing a Services Catalog
- Frequently Asked Questions

**Still have questions?** Reach out to [vendor.support@gsa.gov](mailto:vendor.support@gsa.gov) or log into [catalog.gsa.gov](https://catalog.gsa.gov) to access Office Hours information on the help page.