

Aftermarket Brand Code Table - Specification

Version 1.0.01

Revised: 07/09/2007

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Revision History

Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes Marked?
1.0	6/5/2007	First issue	N
1.0.01	7/9/2007	Remove "Z" as invalid code character	N
		Add definition of Brand / SubBrand	N

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1 Introduction

This document explains the structure, syntax rules and update procedures for the AAIA Brand Code table. This table was developed at the direction of the Technology Standards and Solutions Committee of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA) to provide a comprehensive, industry-wide, standard for the identification of automotive brands. Coded Brands can be referenced for a variety of purposes by business systems and e-commerce applications.

1.1 Objective

The objective of the committee was to provide the industry with a single coded standard for the identification of all product brands from all common categories and segments traded in the vehicle aftermarket. A widely available and commonly accepted standard reduces the cost and complexity of brand identification by allowing trading partners to exchange coded information electronically that expressed Brand uniquely and unambiguously. Business computer applications engineered around this table can express Brand electronically without human negotiation or interpretation – saving the time and costs involved.

1.2 Where Used

1.2.1 Product Information Exchange Standard (PIES)

The AAIA Brand Code Table is used in the Product Information Exchange Standard (PIES) to identify the Brand of product associated information applies to. The table is also helpful in identifying the Brand Owner and Parent Companies for the purpose of aggregating product information for multiple Brands that are sourced from a single company or corporation.

1.2.2 Aftermarket Catalog Enhanced Standard (ACES)

The AAIA Brand Code Table is referenced in the Aftermarket Catalog Enhanced Standard (ACES) to uniquely identify the Brand associated with the catalog application information found in the related file.

1.2.3 Other applications

The AAIA Brand Code Table is useful in any application where product information or other brand specific information is being exchanged electronically. These applications may include, but are not limited to: Product Images; Digital Assets such as Installation Instructions or Technical Specifications; Internet Parts Ordering transactions; electronic commerce transactions; shop and service transactions.

2 Structure

The AAIA Brand Code Table is a structured table with three levels of identification for each Brand / Sub-Brand. Each “Brand / Sub-Brand” is associated with one “Brand Owner” and each Brand Owner is associated with one “Parent Company”. Each of the three fields is assigned a unique 4-character alpha code. By knowing the Brand ID, the Brand Owner and Parent Company can be inferred by another party by referring to a current version of the table

2.1 Field Definitions

Field Name	Field Type	Example	Field Definition
BrandID	Text, 4 characters, Alpha, no Vowels	BBXR	The ID code assigned to the unique string of the Brand Name or Sub-Brand designation
BrandName	Text, 80 character, alpha-numeric	Champion Spark Plugs or Champion Iridium Spark Plugs	A unique non-repeating string representing the Brand or Sub-Brand name of a product traded in the vehicle aftermarket. Not limited to automotive or aftermarket Brands (ie. Toro (lawn mowers) and MOPAR (Chrysler). A Sub-Brand is a secondary

			level of product identification used to Brand a product with unique performance or physical attributes (ie. Champion Iridium Spark Plugs)
BrandOwnerID	Text, 4 characters, Alpha, no Vowels	BBFG	The ID code assigned to the unique string of the Brand Owner designation. This code may be used in more than one record for Brand Owners with multiple Brands and/or Sub-Brands
BrandOwner	Text, 80 character, alpha-numeric	Champion Spark Plugs	The Company or Division with ownership and responsibility for brand management of the Brand / Sub-Brand. This may be the same as the Brand Name. "Unknown" is allowed when the Brand Owner cannot be validated.
ParentID	Text, 4 characters, Alpha, no Vowels	BHSC	The ID code assigned to the unique string of the Parent Company designation
ParentCompany	Text, 80 character, alpha-numeric	Federal-Mogul	The Corporate Entity that owns the Company or Division related to the Brand or Sub-Brand. This value may be the same as the BrandOwner. "Unknown" is allowed when the Parent Company cannot be validated
RefDate	Date, 10 characters, MM/DD/YYYY	06/05/2007	The date this record was last updated

2.2 ID Codes

The ID codes in the Brand Table are 4-character alpha codes with vowels (A,E,I,O,U) exempt from the string. New codes are automatically generated from the next available letter, working from the least significant digit to the most. For example, if BBCY was the last ID code assigned, the next available code would be BBCZ. The next code to follow could not use letter "A" in the incremental fourth digit – therefore, the next code would be BBDB

Prior to July 2007 a number of codes were assigned with the invalid vowels described above. These codes were not superseded or replaced, reasoning that replacing the codes would be more confusing and disruptive that leaving them in the table. However, no new codes will be assigned with vowels.

2.2.1 What is a Brand

A **Brand** is the name used by a Brand Owner to uniquely identify a line of trade items or services. The Brand Name is recognizable by the consumer of the product or service. Due to the requirement for uniqueness in the Brand Code table, some Brand Names may be modified with descriptors and not represented exactly as registered. The purpose of the table is to provide a unique code that can be understood to represent a Brand of product without confusion with any other Brand. For example, the Brand name "Champion" is commonly used in business. The Aftermarket table has extended the descriptors to Champion Spark Plugs and Champion Parts Rebuilders to yield unique entries.

A **Sub-Brand** is a second level of Brand identification that often refers to a product grade or performance characteristic within a Brand. Sub-Brand is the primary differentiating factor that the Brand Owner wants to communicate to the consumer or buyer. Examples would be Champion Iridium Spark Plugs and Champion Copper Plus Spark Plugs. These are both product lines traded under the Champion Brand name.

2.2.2 Why Alpha

Alphabetic codes were chosen for use in this table to make economical use of digits and provide codes in a familiar form to aftermarket professionals. The four alpha characters with five exempt letters will yield a maximum of 160,000 possible code values – certainly enough for the intended use of the Brand table. A similar universe of possible values using numeric codes would have required six digits.

2.2.3 Why Exempt Vowels

Vowels were exempted from the ID codes to avoid the possibility of spelling words with the codes and creating potentially embarrassing or inappropriate strings.

3 Data Rules

3.1 Uniqueness

There must be no duplicates in the BrandName field. Therefore, Brand names may be extended until they are unique. For example, multiple companies have a Brand named “Champion”. In the AAIA Brand table these names are extended to make them unique – Champion Spark Plugs, Champion Parts Rebuilders, etc.

3.2 Case & Punctuation

All entries will use Title Case except where branding dictates otherwise. Periods and Commas will not be used unless branding dictates otherwise. ASCII values for Register and Trade Mark symbols are allowed as special characters when requested by the Brand Owner.

3.3 Private Brands

Private Brand entries will be the responsibility of the Brand-owner and it is understood that they may choose to list the Brand Name as the Brand-owner and Parent or they may choose to list the Retailer’s name as the Brand Owner and Parent.

Examples

BrandName	BrandOwner	ParentCompany
CARQUEST	CARQUEST	CARQUEST
Duralast Platinum	Duralast	Duralast
DRIVE RITE	Advance Auto	Advance Auto

3.4 Obsolescence

Codes of brands no longer marketed or belonging to companies that are no longer in business will remain in the table indefinitely because product may survive in the market and commerce requirements may continue.

3.5 Unknown Values

The ParentCompany and BrandOwner fields are populated with “Unknown” if a valid value is not known. If the Brand Owner petitions for an update to the record these unknown values may be populated and coded.

4 Maintenance & Updates

4.1 Industry Portal

AAIA maintains a Portal at <http://parentsupplierbrand.pricedex.com/> where industry can download the most current version of the table and submit and manage change requests and additions to the Brand Table. **ALL requests for changes and additions to the Brand Table must be submitted through the Portal.**

All change requests are listed as “Pending” until the Validation Process is complete. Pending change requests are not included in the table download from the Portal. Following successful validation, change requests are no longer Pending and are added to the “Live” version of the table. The table is updated “real time” and all approved changes are included in the next download from the Portal.

Change requests of fewer than 25 items will be reviewed for coding and publication in one business day under normal circumstances. Bulk submissions (those of 25 or more items) will get a response estimating the time required for review within one business day under normal circumstances. A utility for uploading bulk requests in a structured file format is available.

4.2 Validation Process & Rules

An e-mail address is required with every change request submitted through the Portal. An e-mail is sent to the address provided, requesting approval of the change as presented by the Portal. A second message is sent to AAIA indicating that a change request is pending approval and validation by the association.

If a request is made by someone other than the Brand-owner, AAIA will make efforts to validate the request with the Brand-owner as long as the Brand-owner is known. It is understood that this additional step will impact the 24-hour turn-around time.

AAIA will check for the following conditions in the request:

- Uniqueness – the request should not create a duplicate record in the Brand Name field
- Case – the request should be formatted in Title Case unless the Brand identity requires different case
- Punctuation – no periods or commas are used unless required for Brand and corporate identity
- Spelling – correct spelling of normal word use will be ensured

4.3 Publication & Availability

The most current version of the Brand table is available online from the web site at <http://parentsupplierbrand.pricedex.com/> . All changes approved by the AAIA are reflected in the table real time.

The table is published as a tab-delimited ASCII text file, compressed using WinZip. The field names are included as the first row of the file.

5 Support

Technical Support and additional information about the Aftermarket Brand Code table are available from the Standards & Technology page at www.aftermarket.org or by writing to technology@aftermarket.org