

Product families reference guide



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Overview

With *Product Families* from Bazaarvoice, you can establish relationships between products that let you display user-generated content (UGC) for one product on the display pages of other products in the same family. For any product that is included within a particular family, you can display reviews, questions, answers, and stories from other products in the same family.

Use Cases

Product Families are useful for addressing the following use cases:

- If the UGC that is submitted for a product of a particular color applies equally to all of the color variants, you can create a family that displays the relevant UGC for all product colors. For example, reviews of a blue MP3 player can be displayed on the Product page of a grey MP3 player of the same make and model provided the color of the MP3 player does not factor into the reviews.
- Some products are actually bundles of closely related products, like a bundle that consists of a digital camera and a memory stick. For such bundles, the UGC that is associated with an individual product can be displayed on the Product page for the bundled products. In these use cases, the Product pages of the individual products can continue to exclusively display their own UGC.

Product pages for bundled products must be represented by a product ID in your data feed even if they are not otherwise treated as actual products, like the individual products that comprise the bundle.

Product Families allow you to specify the direction in which UGC is shared. With product bundles, for example, you can display UGC for a MP3 player on the Product page of a bundled product – such as the MP3 player bundled with an armband holder – without being forced to display UGC for the bundled product on the Product pages of the related MP3 player or armband holder.

The following image provides an example.



Content Attribution

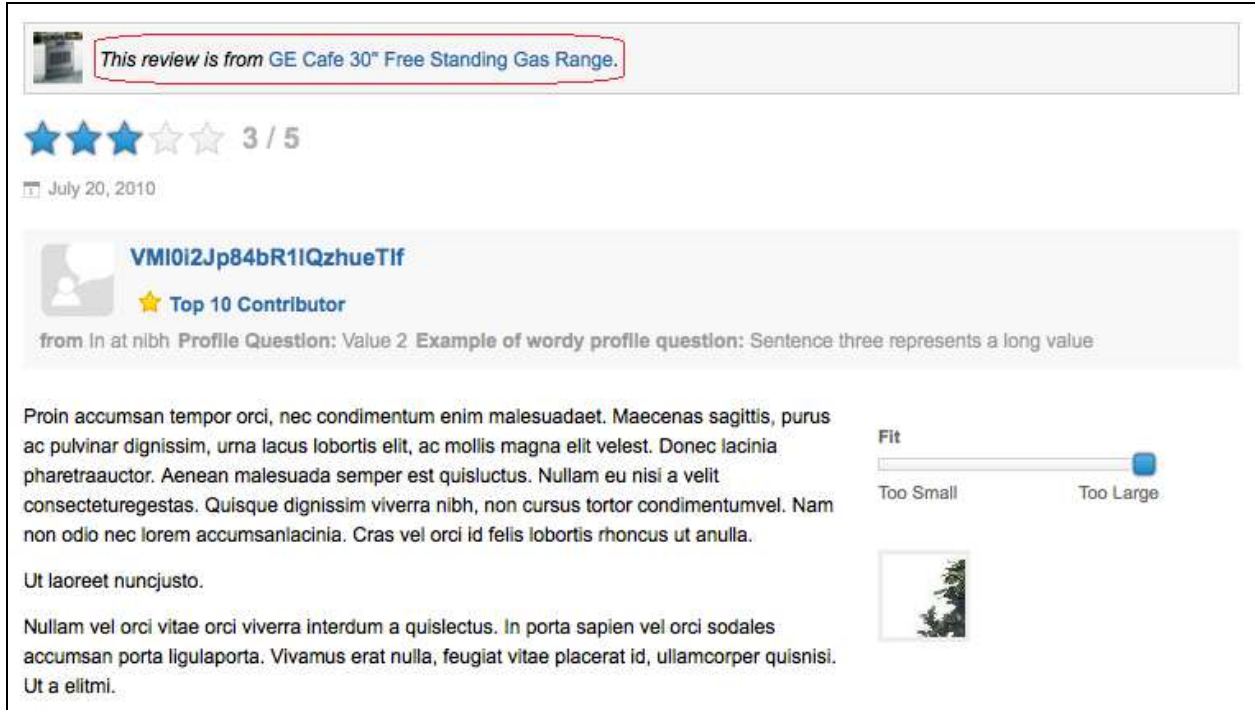
Product Families let you identify the source of a piece of UGC by displaying the following information about the product for which it was originally submitted:

- Name
- Image
- Link to the Product page

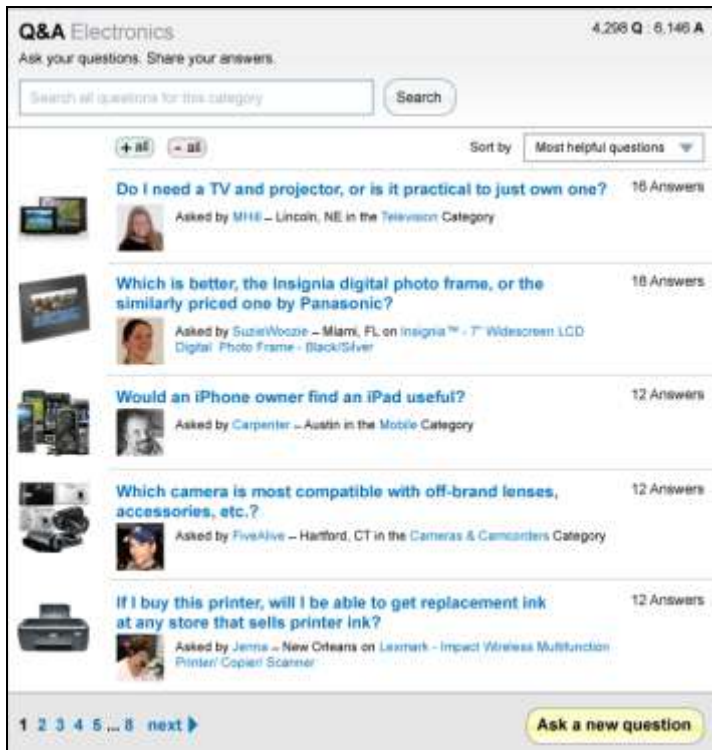
The attribution statement in the following image identifies the name of the originally reviewed product.



The attribution sentence for reviews appears directly above the review content, as the following image shows.



The attribution sentence for questions appears in the question signature block, in the same manner that it is rendered in Content Rollup for Ask & Answer, as shown by the following image.



SEO and Relevance Sorting

When products are included in families (for example multiple colors of the same MP3 player), content native to a specific variation of a product will be weighted more heavily as part of the sort algorithm. This results in content native to a specific product appearing higher in the list than content that is from other variations of the product. Bazaarvoice developed this technology to reflect the best user experience – users typically want to access reviews about the product they are reading about and newest content.

In addition to improving user experience, this feature also has a positive SEO impact. Because the specific order of content displayed is unique from product to product in a family, search engines will perceive the content as repurposed and not duplicated. The amount of uniqueness will depend on the volume and flow of native content to the products. Note that content rendered server-side via SVI/Smart SEO is sorted the same as content rendered via JavaScript.

Example

In this example we will consider an MP3 player offered in two colors:

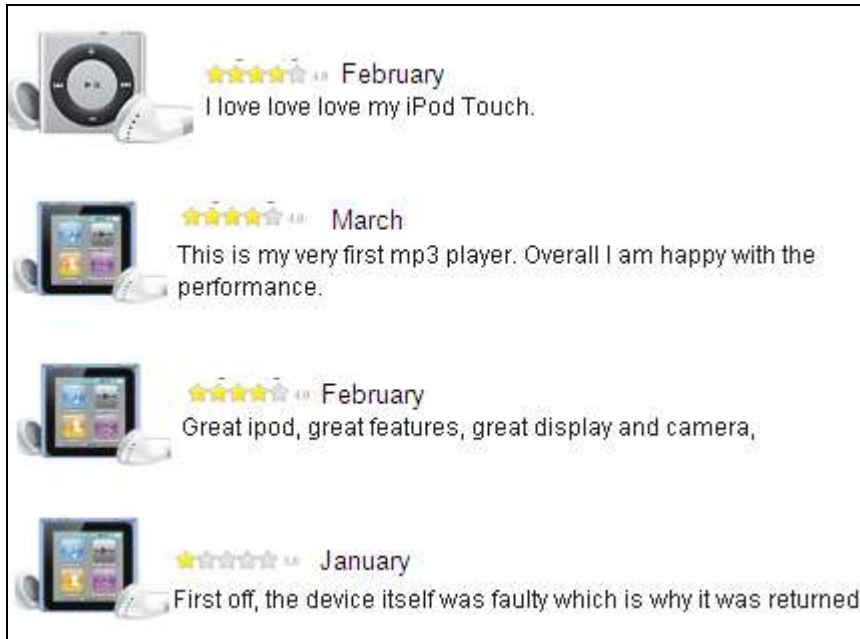
- A blue MP3 player with three reviews
- A grey MP3 player with one review

When Product Families is implemented, both products will have four reviews each. With SEO & Relevance Sorting enabled, the reviews for each MP3 player will be sorted with the native content over the past 45 days displayed at the top of the list.

The following image shows the order of reviews for the blue MP3 player:



The following image shows the order of reviews for the grey MP3 player:



Implementation Methods

Product Families can be implemented through either of the following methods:

- **Product data feed** – Declare families in the XML Product data feed by adding an `<Attributes>` section with a family identifier to each product entry that you want to include in the family. Specific families are declared within a separate `<Attribute>` element whose children elements contain the appropriate external identifier as well as the value that identifies the family.

Implement Product Families through the XML Product feed when you need to declare families and define relationships for a large number of products.

- **Bazaarvoice Portal** – Use the Family Management tool to implement Product Families for a small number of products or to view and manage families that were created through the portal.

To avoid any unintended deletions, Product Families that are defined through one method cannot be edited through the other method. Regardless of the method that you use, the process of implementing Product Families consists of the following tasks:

1. Opening a Bazaarvoice support ticket that includes details about your implementation.

For more information, see “Opening a Support Ticket” on page 9.

2. Declaring the families that you will use to associate products with each other.

This task can be completed through the XML Product data feed or the Bazaarvoice portal. For more information, see “Declaring Product Families” on page 9.

3. Identifying the products on whose pages you want to display content from other products in the family.

This task can be completed through the XML Product data feed or the Bazaarvoice portal. For more information, see “Displaying Family-Related Content” on page 13.

Opening a Support Ticket

Before you start implementing Product Families, open a Bazaarvoice support ticket that includes the following information:

- A request to enable Product Families for your website
- If you intend to display information about the product for which a review or question was originally submitted, indicate whether to include the following information in the attribution statement:
 - Original product name
 - Original product image
 - Link to the original Product page

Ask your Bazaarvoice Client Representative to confirm the styles that are associated with attributed content.

- Include the following information if you plan to implement Product Families through the Bazaarvoice portal:
 - Ask that the Family Management tool be enabled
 - Provide a list of the user accounts that require access to the Family Management tool

Declaring Product Families

Product Families can be declared in the XML Product data feed or by using the Bazaarvoice portal. Regardless of the method that you use, each family must be given a unique identifier that does not contain any spaces.

The following types of characters are allowed:

- Alphanumeric
- Asterisk (*)
- Hyphen (-)
- Period (.)
- Underscore (_)

Product Families that are declared through one method cannot be edited through the other method.

Using the Product Feed to Declare Families

In the XML Product data feed, add the following section to each product entry that you want to include within a Product Family.

```
<Attributes>
  <Attribute id="BV_FE_FAMILY">
    <Value>{FamilyName}</Value>
  </Attribute>
</Attributes>
```

where {FamilyName} represents the name of the family to which you want the product to belong.

For example, the following code adds a product named `Green iPod Nano` to a family named `iPod_Nanos`.

```
<Product>
  <ExternalId>...</ExternalId>
  <Name>Green iPod Nano</Name>
  <Description>...</Description>
  <BrandExternalId>...</BrandExternalId>
  <CategoryExternalId>...</CategoryExternalId>
  <ProductPageUrl>...</ProductPageUrl>
  <ImageUrl>...</ImageUrl>
  <Attributes>
    <Attribute id="BV_FE_FAMILY">
      <Value>iPod_Nanos</Value>
    </Attribute>
  </Attributes>
</Product>
```

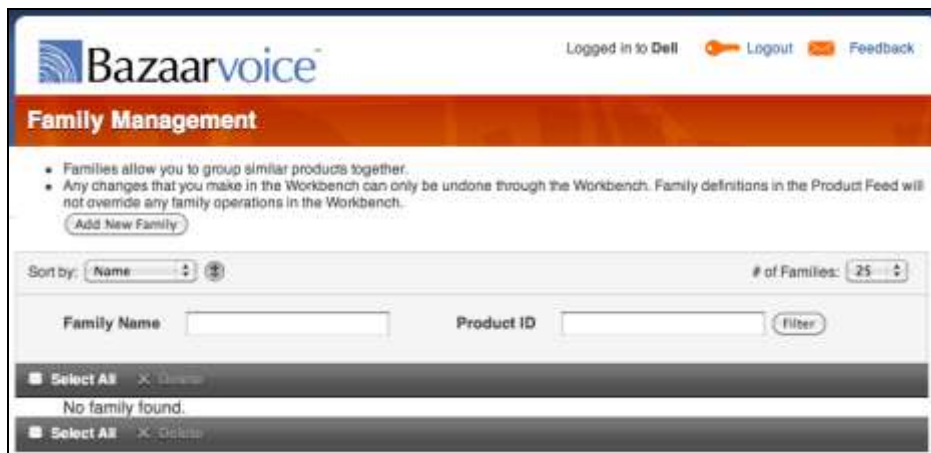
After you declare the appropriate Product Families in the XML Product feed, specify the products on whose Product pages you want family content to appear. For more information, see “Displaying Family-Related Content” on page 13.

Using the Bazaarvoice Portal to Declare Families

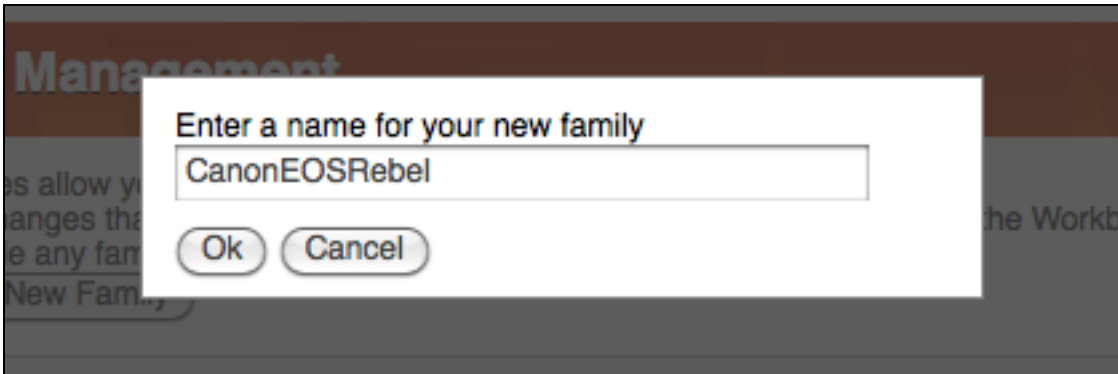
1. Under Manage Content, click Family Management Tool.



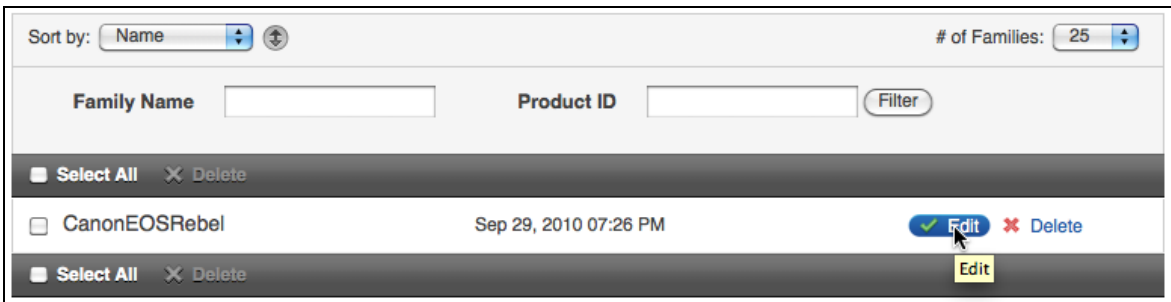
The **Family Management** page opens, as shown by the following image.



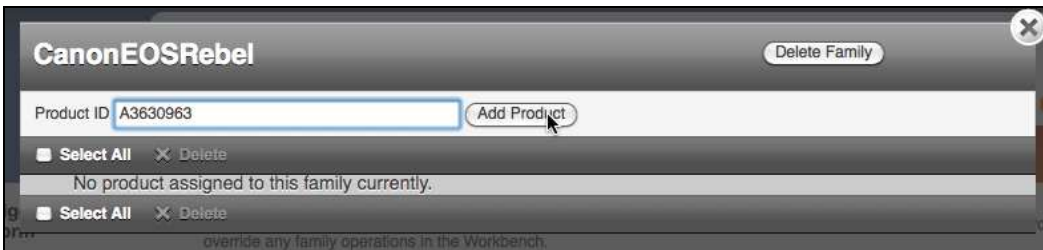
2. Click **Add New Family**, specify a name for the family, and click **OK**.



3. Hover over the family that you created and click **Edit**.



4. Specify the external ID of the product that you want to include in the family and click **Add Product**.

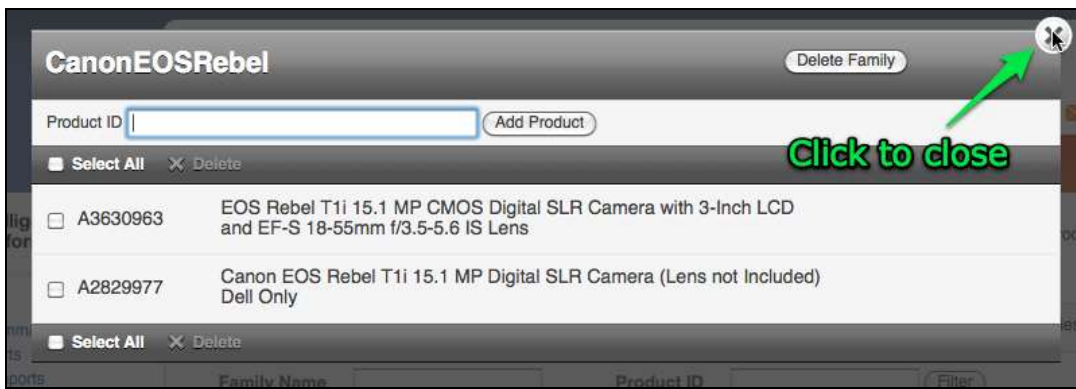


5. Repeat the previous step until you finish adding all appropriate external IDs to the family.

The external ID and product name of each added product is displayed, as shown by the following image.



- When you are finished editing the family, click **Close** in the upper-right corner of the **Edit Family** window.



By default, products that are added to families through the Bazaarvoice portal automatically display family-related content on their Product pages. For information about preventing the display of family content on a Product page, see “Using the Bazaarvoice Portal to Display Content” on page 15.

Displaying Family-Related Content

If you used the XML Product data feed to declare a Product Family and assign products to it, the family-related content does not appear on the corresponding Product pages by default. Instead, you must add specific XML elements to the `<Attributes>` section of each product entry that you want to display family content.

However, if you declared a Product Family and its products through the Bazaarvoice portal, the corresponding Product pages automatically display family-related content. In such a scenario, you can use the Bazaarvoice portal to prevent specific Product pages from displaying family content.

Display settings that are specified through one method cannot be edited through the other method.

Using the Product Feed to Display Content

In the XML Product data feed, add the following elements to the `<Attributes>` section of each product entry that you want to display family-related content.

```
<Attribute id="BV_FE_EXPAND">
  <Value>BV_FE_FAMILY:{FamilyName}</Value>
</Attribute>
```

where `{FamilyName}` represents the name of the family to which you want the product to belong.

For example, the following code displays all of the content that is related to the family `iPod_Nanos` on the display page of the product named `Green iPod Nano`.

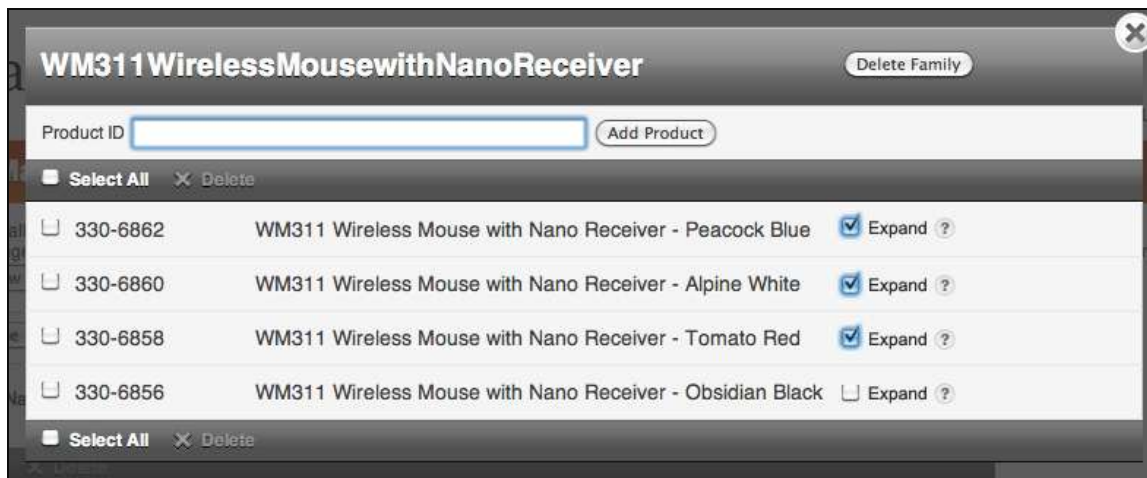
```
<Product>
  <ExternalId>...</ExternalId>
  <Name>Green iPod Nano</Name>
  <Description>...</Description>
  <BrandExternalId>...</BrandExternalId>
  <CategoryExternalId>...</CategoryExternalId>
  <ProductPageUrl>...</ProductPageUrl>
  <ImageUrl>...</ImageUrl>
  <Attributes>
    <Attribute id="BV_FE_FAMILY">
      <Value>iPod_Nanos</Value>
    </Attribute>
    <Attribute id="BV_FE_FAMILY">
      <Value>iPod</Value>
    </Attribute>
    <Attribute id="BV_FE_EXPAND">
      <!-- the following attribute indicates that only products in the
           iPod_Nanos family are shown on this page -->
      <Value>BV_FE_FAMILY:iPod_Nanos</Value>
    </Attribute>
  </Attributes>
</Product>
```

Using the Bazaarvoice Portal to Display Content

The Bazaarvoice portal uses the **Expand** check box to identify products on whose pages you want to display family-related content. If the Bazaarvoice portal was used to add a product to a family, the **Expand** check box that corresponds to the product is checked by default. In such a scenario, you do not need to perform further steps to display family content on the corresponding Product page.

Uncheck an **Expand** check box to prevent the corresponding Product page from displaying family-related content. If a product belongs to multiple families, checking or unchecking its **Expand** check box affects its display options only for that family.

The following image shows a series of **Expand** check boxes associated with products in a family.



If you are running the application locally, mirrored content appears on the Product pages of all family members approximately five minutes after you set up a Product Family. In a staging environment, an hour might be required for the mirrored content to appear on the appropriate Product pages. In a production environment, up to 15 hours might be required, due to Akamai caching.



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