Database Cleanup

During the course of creating new Styles & Items it is inevitable that mistakes will be made and the database will need to be cleaned up. The most common mistake is creating blank Styles and Items. A blank Style is a Style that was created (the Add New Record button was pressed) but no Style name was specified.

Blank Styles
Blank Styles are easy to spot: open the Styles Catalog and click on the "See All Records" button. Clicking on the Style column header groups the contents of the catalog alphabetically. The blank records will appear at the top.

You can delete a Style as long as there are no Items that belong to that particular Style. This is often the case with blank Styles. Double-clicking a each row in the List View opens the catalog to that particular record. Click on the Delete key to erase the Style. The List View will not

refresh but you can keep working your way down the list of Styles, deleting the ones that are blank.

When you try to delete a Style you may see an error message that says "Cannot Delete: There is at least one item that belongs to this Style." Before you can delete this Style (if in fact you still want to delete it) you first have to reassign the items that belong to it to a different Style.

In order to preserve the integrity of the database, you cannot every delete an Item (and by this we mean Item # or SKU). This is not a problem since you will never really run out of room in your Items Catalog and you will never really browse through all the records in the catalog either. (Think of the Items Catalog as a phone book, you only lookup the phone/item you are looking for--using a Query).

While you cannot delete an Item, you can always reassign it to a different Style. To do this, find the item or items you are looking for by doing a Query in the Items Catalog. Then change the Style that appears in the Style field and press Save. If you refresh the view (by click on the First Record button) or do a new Query you will see that the Item now belongs to a different Style.

Duplicate Styles
Another problem that sometimes occurs is the accidental creation of Duplicate Styles, i.e. two Styles with the same name.
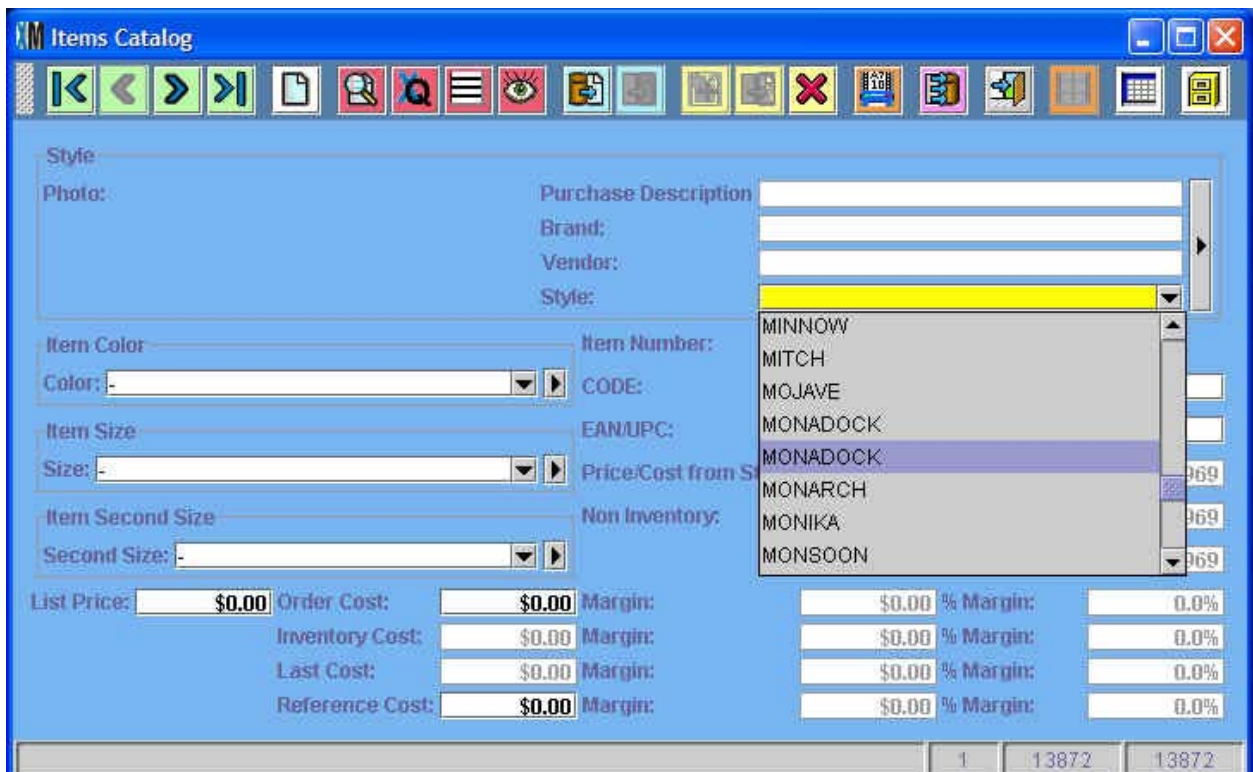
When you have more than one Style with the same name, every time you do a Query (such as in the Items Catalog as shown above), only the first record will be shown. So even though there are two Styles called MONADOCK and the user clicks on the second one, the database will only show the first record (price, vendor, brand, etc).

The way to fix this problem is to go back to the Styles Catalog and do a Query for the name of the Style that appears as a duplicate. In this case, the a query for "MONADOCK" yields two records. The next step is to rename one of the Styles (usually the one with the fewest items belonging to it) so that it can be distinguished from the other.
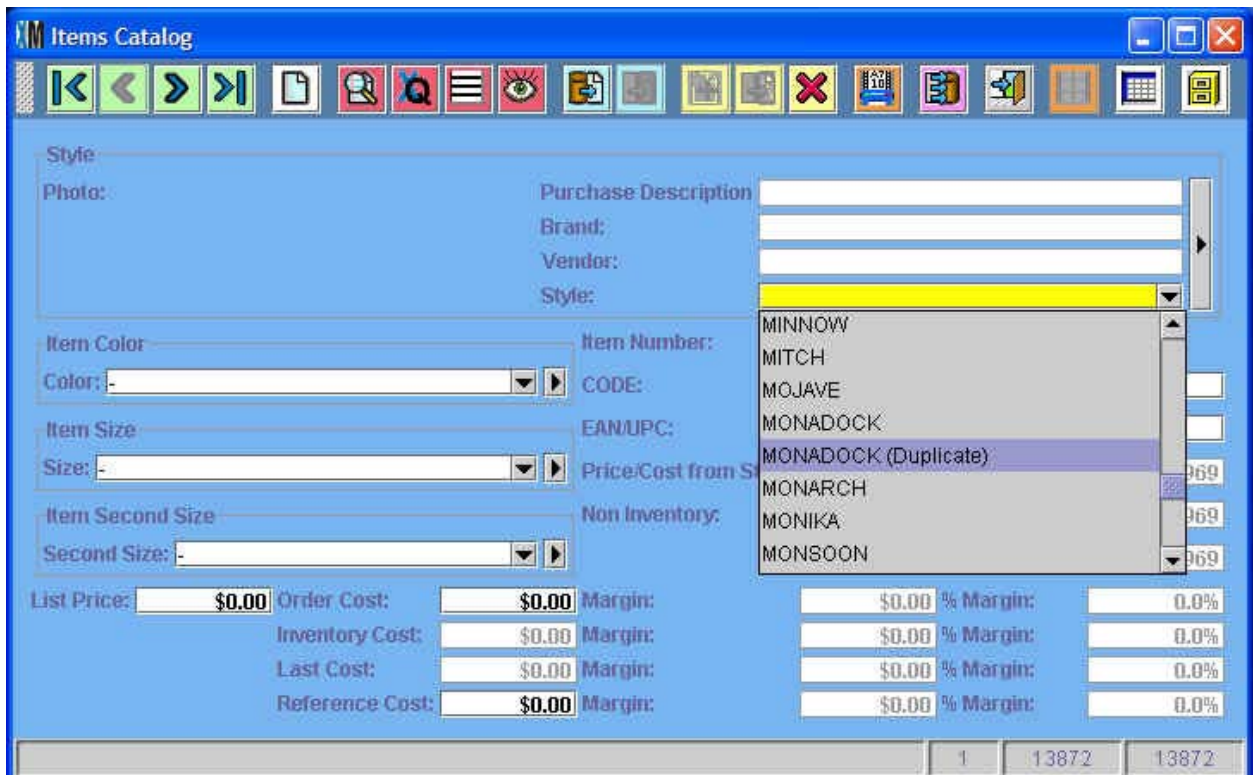

Now that the two MONADOCK Styles have distinct names it is possible to do further cleanup. Typically you'll want to reassign items so that they all fall under one Style. For example, you may have had items with the color Red belonging to the first MONADOCK style and items with the color Blue belonging to the second. As you reassign items belonging to MONADOCK (Duplicate) to MONADOCK, the matrix will take shape and show both Red and Blue items. Once there are no more items belonging to the duplicate style you can go back to the Styles Catalog and delete it.

Discarded Items
A third problem that sometimes arises is the accidental creation of unwanted items. For example, you might accidentally add a color or size to the matrix that doesn't belong. Recall that once you create an Item you cannot delete it. However, as we've already seen, you can reassign existing Items to new Styles. Therefore, it is often useful to create a Style called "Discarded Items" to serve as a collection bin for these unwanted item numbers.

Once you've created this dummy Style, you can do a Query in the Items Catalog and find the unwanted items. Click on the Style field and select Discarded Items as the new Style. Click Save and the unwanted item will no longer be a part of the old Style you are cleaning up.
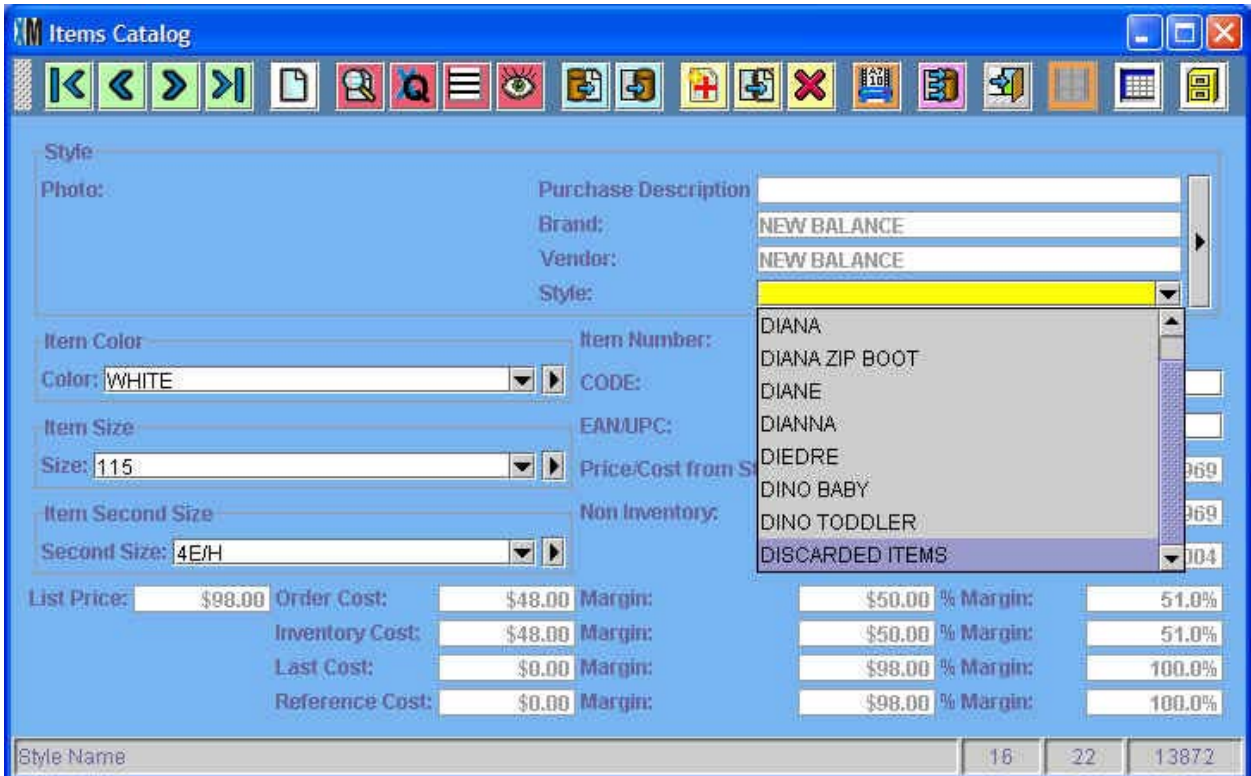
If you are publishing the contents of your database to a Web Store you will want to use the XpertQuery™ to filter out the "Discarded Items" Style.