

Adding & Editing Products on the ACI Website

A step-by-step guide for the people keeping the catalog up to date. No coding required — everything is done through the admin pages in your web browser.

Before you start

You'll need:

- bullet A **login** for the admin pages. Ask Shawn to set one up at *Admin* → *Manage Users*. He'll give you a username and a starter password; change the password the first time you log in (*Admin* → *Change My Password*).
 - bullet The **product photo** (a clear JPG or PNG, ideally on a white or neutral background).
 - bullet The **engineering drawing** as a single PDF.
 - bullet Any extra **handouts** you want customers to be able to download (catalog pages, spec sheets, brochures, etc.) — also as PDFs.
 - bullet The product's basic facts:
 - bullet **Item Number** (the real catalog number — once a product is live, **don't change it**)
 - bullet **Product Name** (what customers will see, e.g. *1000 Gallon Regular Septic Tank*)
 - bullet **Category** and **Subcategory** (pick from the lists in the form)
 - bullet **Dimensions** (Length, Width, Depth, Weight, Invert Height as applicable)
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Logging in

- 1 Open a web browser and go to **http://10.0.179.2/**
(If you're off-site, you'll need to be on the company VPN.)
 - 1 Click **Admin** → **Manage Products** in the top right. You'll be asked to log in.
 - 2 Enter the username and password Shawn gave you. After that, the admin menu items work directly.
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Adding a new product

- 1 From the top menu, **Admin** → **Manage Products**.
 - 2 Click the green **Add New Product** button at the bottom of the list.
 - 3 Fill the form **top to bottom**:
- bullet **Product Name** — what customers will read at the top of the detail page.

- bullet **Category** — pick from the dropdown (e.g. *Septic Tanks*). If your category isn't in the list, you can add it yourself — see *Managing categories* below.
- bullet **Subcategory** — type a few letters; the box will suggest existing subcategories (*standard, new_style, h20...*). You can pick one or type a brand new value. New values are fine — they'll appear on the customer page automatically.
- bullet **Invert Height** — **optional**. Many products (transformer pads, splice boxes, etc.) don't have one — just leave it blank. The site won't display the field when it's empty.
- bullet **Length / Width / Depth / Weight** — just the numbers, e.g. 60, 12000. Don't include units in these boxes; the site adds them ("60'", "12,000 lbs") when displaying.
- bullet **Item Number** — the real catalog number. Use the same one for the photo and drawing filenames if you're matching by hand.
- bullet **Slug** — leave **blank**. The site will auto-generate one from the Item Number.
- bullet **Sequence** — pre-filled to 100. This controls the order this product appears among others in its subcategory (lower numbers first). You can leave the default and adjust later with the drag-and-drop **Reorder** page (see below).
- bullet **Notes** — a *short* sentence shown as a subtitle at the top of the product page. Optional.
- bullet **Description** — a longer paragraph shown as a card lower on the page. Optional. Use this for things like *"Designed for shallow-bury residential installations..."*.
- bullet **Upload Image** — click *Choose File* and pick the product photo (JPG/PNG/WEBP up to 10 MB).
- bullet **Upload Drawing (PDF)** — pick the engineering drawing PDF (up to 25 MB).

1 Click **Create**.

The product now exists. You'll land back on the product list with the new one in it.

A nice safety net: uploads survive validation errors

If you upload an image and drawing but the form rejects your submission (e.g. you forgot the Product Name), you'll see the error AND a green confirmation under each file input: "✓ *Image already uploaded: ...*". Just fix the missing field and click **Create** again — you don't have to pick the files a second time. The site holds onto them until the save succeeds.

Managing categories

When the category you want doesn't exist yet (a brand new product line for the company), you add it here instead of asking a developer.

- 1 **Admin** → **Manage Categories**.
- 2 Click the green **Add new category** button.
- 3 Fill in:

- bullet **Category** — the internal name, e.g. Manholes. **Don't change this after products start using it** — that's what links a product to its category.

- bullet **Display name** — what customers see (usually the same as Category, but can be fancier, e.g. Round Manholes 48").

- bullet **Product line** — pick the top-level group it belongs to: *Septic Products*, *Manholes & Catch Basins*, *Utility*, *Transportation*, or *Culverts*. **If you leave this blank the category won't appear in the customer nav.** Ask Shawn if you need a brand-new product line — those still take a quick SQL update.

- bullet **Sort order** — order within its product line. Use gaps of 10 (10, 20, 30) so you can slot new categories in between later.

- bullet **Visible** — uncheck if you want to add the category but hide it from customers for now (seasonal items, work-in-progress, etc.).

4 Click **Create**. The category now shows up in the product Create form's dropdown.

Managing subcategories

Subcategories (e.g. *Standard Rated*, *H-20 Rated*, *New Style*) are edited from within each category's Edit page.

1 **Admin** → **Manage Categories**, click **Edit** on the category.

2 Save any changes to the category itself (top half of the page).

3 The bottom half lists every subcategory of this category in a table you can edit inline:

- bullet Change the **Display name** or **Sort** number directly in the row, click that row's **Save** button.

- bullet **Delete** a subcategory with its delete button (blocked if any products still reference it — reassign them first).

- bullet Add a new subcategory using the small form at the bottom: **Slug** (the lowercase internal value), **Display name** (what customers see), **Sort** order.

The slug column is read-only — you can't rename an existing slug from this page (it would orphan any products referencing it). If you really need to rename one, ask Shawn.

Hiding or deleting a category

- bullet **Hide**: Edit the category, uncheck **Visible**, save. It stays in the database with all its products intact, just disappears from the customer nav and product line tiles. Re-check anytime.

- bullet **Delete**: Edit list → **Delete**. Blocked if any products still reference the category — reassign products to a different category first.

Adding Specifications and Tags (the bullet lists)

A product can have two kinds of extra information:

Specifications — bullet points shown to customers on the detail page. Selling-point statements like *"4000 psi Concrete @ 28 days"* or *"Reinforced with structural fibers & grade-60 rebar"*.

Tags — key/value pairs that are **NOT shown** to customers. They're internal metadata for grouping and filtering products in the future (e.g. tag *Class = H-10, Use = Residential*).

To edit either:

- 1 On the product list, find your product and click the **Tags & Specifications** button on its row.
- 2 The page has two columns: **Tags** on the left, **Specifications** on the right.

To add a brand-new bullet or tag

Use the *Add a tag* or *Add a specification* form in the appropriate column. Type and click the button. Done.

To reuse one you've already written on another product

Below each form is a **Library** section. It lists every bullet or tag already used on any other product. Click the green + button next to any item to copy it onto the product you're editing. This is the fastest way to keep wording consistent across similar products.

To remove a bullet or tag

Click its **Delete** button. Gone immediately.

Editing an existing product

- 1 **Admin** → **Manage Products**, find the row.
- 2 Click **Edit**.
- 3 Change whatever you want and click **Save Changes**.

Some specifics:

Replacing the photo: pick a new file in *Replace Image*. Leave it empty to keep the existing one.

Adding more downloads: pick one or more PDFs in *Upload New Downloads*. They're added; nothing existing is removed.

Removing a download: scroll to *Existing Downloads* below the form, click **Delete** on the one to remove. Each download has its own delete button.

Things you generally should NOT change once a product is live

Item Number — used in URLs and to find the photo/drawing files on disk. Changing it can break links from elsewhere (e.g. emails, printed catalogs).

Slug — same reason.

If you do need to change them, change them together with everything else, and be ready to redirect anyone who saved the old URL.

Reordering products on the customer page

When customers visit a category, products appear in the order set by the **Sequence** number. Editing each product's sequence by hand is tedious — there's a drag-and-drop page:

- 1 **Admin** → **Manage Products** → click **Reorder products (drag & drop)** at the top.
- 2 You'll see all products laid out in cards, grouped by category and subcategory.
- 3 **Drag a card** to wherever you want it within its group.
- 4 The change saves automatically — you'll see a green "Saved ✓" notice in the bottom right.

You can only drag within a group (i.e. you can't move a Septic Tank into the Lift Stations section by dragging — that'd require editing the product's Subcategory).

Managing the home-page photo carousel

The big sliding photos on the home page are managed separately:

- 1 **Admin** → **Manage Banners**.
- 2 To **add** a photo: choose a file (JPG/PNG/WEBP), click Upload.
- 3 To **remove** one: click its Delete button.

Photos rotate every 6 seconds. Pick ones that look good with text overlaid on the left side — the headline sits on top of them.

Handling quote requests

When a customer submits the *Get a Quote* form, the request shows up at:

Admin → **Quote Requests**

You'll see the name, company, contact info, and message. Mark it as handled once you've replied so it drops out of the open list.

When something doesn't look right

What you see	Most likely fix
A product won't show up on the customer page	Check that its Category has a <i>Product Line</i> set — Admin → Manage Categories → Edit → Product line dropdown.

What you see	Most likely fix
Photo is sideways or too big	The site doesn't auto-rotate based on phone EXIF data. Rotate and resize the photo first (any image editor) and re-upload. Aim for around 1200 × 1200 pixels max.
Drawing PDF doesn't show inline on the detail page	Make sure it really is a PDF (not a scanned image saved as .pdf — those work too but render blurry). File must be under 25 MB.
The "Subcategory" suggestions list is empty	That's normal for the very first product in a brand-new category. Type the subcategory you want; future products in this category will then have it as a suggestion.
You uploaded the wrong photo	Edit the product, upload a new photo in <i>Replace Image</i> . The old one gets overwritten.
You accidentally deleted a product	There's no undo. Ask Shawn — there may be a backup.

Daily / weekly habits worth getting into

- bullet **Keep the photo style consistent** — same background, similar lighting, similar zoom level. Customers scan a grid of cards and inconsistent photos read as messy.
- bullet **Reuse Specifications from the Library** whenever possible. "4000 psi Concrete @ 28 days" should be worded the same on every product that has it.
- bullet **Check Quote Requests at least once a day** during business hours. Don't let leads sit.
- bullet **Refresh the home banner photos occasionally** (every few months) so returning visitors see something new.

Who to ask for help

- bullet **New Product Line** (a whole new top-level menu group like "Custom Precast") → Shawn — those still require a quick SQL update.
- bullet **Renaming an existing subcategory slug** (the lowercase internal value, not the display name) → Shawn — would orphan existing products if done casually.
- bullet **Login problems / password reset** → Shawn.
- bullet **Anything looks broken on the public site** → Shawn, with a screenshot if possible.

Last updated: 2026-05-26 — covers the version of the site current as of the Categories self-service admin page release. If buttons or labels look different from what's described here, the site has been updated and this guide needs a refresh.