Zazzle RSS and Google Base Guide

Version 1.0

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Introduction

People come to Zazzle® to buy cool t-shirts and other products. But why wait for your customer to come to you? A lot of your potential customers use Google® and other search engines. Using Zazzle Feeds you can improve the chances that your products will come up when the buyer uses a search engine. Many of your customers would like to hear about your new products when you release them. Now they can subscribe to your new ideas using RSS. You can feed Zazzle product data to any RSS reader or application. You can also use Zazzle feeds to feature almost anyone's Zazzle product on your own web site. Any item purchased on your site and carrying your referral ID pays you royalties.

RSS, or Really Simple Syndication, is an easy way to feed your products to applications or present them on your own web page. When you are enjoying Zazzle galleries, the presence of an RSS icon

 in your browser tells you that the gallery you are viewing is available to you as an RSS feed. Most Zazzle galleries are available to you as an RSS feed.

Zazzle RSS feeds include two important features, the Zazzle URL Parameters (ZUP) and Google Base™ extensions. ZUP let you structure your feed, determine its presentation, and manage the product-specific information it contains. Google Base, a free listing service from Google, helps you boost your products and traffic. Listing your Zazzle products in Google Base can help you get them into the Google "Shopping results".   In addition to Google Base, you can use Amazon® OpenSearch and Yahoo® Media RSS extensions in your Zazzle feeds.

This guide assumes some familiarity with RSS and XML. The focus of this guide is the Zazzle-specific details you need to know to use RSS and Google Base to promote your Zazzle products.

RSS and Zazzle

You can make almost any gallery or product line available to standard RSS readers or your web site. You can use Zazzle RSS feeds to:

- Provide data to your applications
- Let your customers subscribe to your new products
- Create your own site featuring your Zazzle products
- Present your products on your blog
- Refer almost any Zazzle product from your site

Zazzle's RSS implementation includes support for useful extensions such as Media RSS, Google Base, and OpenSearch extensions.

This document does not explain the basics of RSS and is not an RSS reference. There are many online and print references to RSS available.

What is Google Base?

Google Base beta is a free service from Google that lets you publish a feed of your Zazzle products online in such a way that they appear in Google search results. This means Google users will see your products when they enter the appropriate search string. Google Base lets you promote all of your Zazzle products at once, or by category.

For more information about Google Base, see the Google Base home:

http://base.google.com/base

Zazzle Store Builder

If you are interested in a creating your own web site for your Zazzle products using the Zazzle RSS feed, you might consider using the Zazzle Store Builder product. Zazzle Store Builder makes it easy for you to create an RSS-fed product grid on your web site. You can personalize this suite of scripts quickly and be up and running with your own Zazzle product store. For more information regarding Zazzle Store Builder, download the Zazzle Store Builder Guide.

Requirements

To use Zazzle RSS, all you need to start is your Zazzle gallery. To use Google Base, you will need a free Google account in addition to your Zazzle gallery.

RSS Configuration

You can create a Zazzle RSS feed with just a few clicks. However, to make the most of your Zazzle RSS feed, consider tailoring your feed to emphasize the particular products and information you would like to be most prominent to users or the format most appropriate for the context in which you plan to present your products, be it a blog, website, or application.

To configure your RSS feed, generate your RSS feed using the Zazzle URL Parameters (ZUP). These special commands are interpreted by the Zazzle.com site and structure many aspects of the results displayed on your browser (and saved in files).

A Simple RSS Feed

In the simplest case, you can display your Zazzle gallery, or almost any Zazzle gallery, as an RSS feed by adding a few characters to the URL created by navigating on Zazzle.com. You earn referral royalties when the product is purchased on your site, regardless of the feed from which it originated. If the gallery you want to make accessible as an RSS feed is usually displayed using this URL:

```
http://www.zazzle.com/strk3
```

You can see a gallery's products as an RSS feed by adding "/rss" to the end of the URL and changing "www" to "feed":

```
http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss
```

In the example above, the RSS feed contains products from the gallery **strk3**. By default, the 15 most recent products from the specified gallery are presented.

You can subscribe to a feed of a single gallery by simply navigating to the gallery you want and clicking on the RSS icon in your browser. However, the RSS feed that results contains the entire gallery, presented in default order. If this is what you want, you are done. It's just as easy to subscribe to a single product line within a gallery: click on the product line and then click on the RSS icon. If you want a more specific feed or if you want to do more than subscribe to a gallery or product line, keep reading.

Note that the gallery does not have to be your own and you do not have log in to Zazzle.com to create an RSS feed.

Zazzle URL Parameters

Zazzle includes a set of commands you can use to structure your RSS feed. To use these commands, which we call parameters, you insert them in the URL for the Zazzle products you want in your feed.

Parameter	Description
qs	Query string, for searching text fields.
cg	Zazzle gallery product line. For more information, see *Specifying a Product Line (cg)*, below.
pt	Zazzle product type, the three digit numeric Zazzle product code, such as T-Shirt (235) or Mug (168). For more information, see *Zazzle Product Types (pt)*
st	Sort type; value can be "popularity" or "date_created".
sp	Sort period, used for "popularity" sorts, value can be: 0=over the history of the gallery, 1=today, 7=this week, 30=this month.
pg	Page number, specified the result page on which the feed starts.
ps	Page size, or the number of products per page.
ft	Feed type, value can be either "rss" or "gb" for RSS or Google Base. If not specified, defaults to RSS.
isz	Image size, the size of the product images in your feed. This parameter may be set to "tiny", "medium", "large", or "huge". For more information, see *Image Size in Feeds (isz)* below.
bg	Background color, a string in the form RRGGBB, used as the background color for product images.
opensearch=1	Puts the **opensearch** extension into Google Base feeds (makes opensearch "true"). RSS feeds are opensearch=1 by default. You can use opensearch for purposes of pagination, among other things, even if you don't plan to list your products on Google Base.

ZUP Syntax

You must follow a simple syntax when using the Zazzle RSS URL Parameters.

- Standard RSS feeds:

feed.zazzle.com/{gallerytitle}/rss?{query string parameters}

- Other Feeds, such as Google Base

feed.zazzle.com/{ gallerytitle }/feed?{query string parameters}

The first parameter must be preceded by a question mark (**?**) with additional parameters preceded by ampersands (**&**). For example, to create an RSS feed from the gallery *strk3* showing twenty products per page, starting on the second page of products:

> http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?ps=20&pg=2

To create a Google Base feed of the same products:

> http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/feed?ft=gb&ps=20&pg=2

Note that you must specify **ft=gb** to create a Google Base feed.

Specifying a Product Line (cg)

When you browse Zazzle.com galleries, you can view a single product line within a gallery by clicking on the name of the Product Line. When you click on a product line within a gallery, that product line is fetched using a URL like this:

> http://www.zazzle.com/strk3/cg-196550313342461053

The string on the right of the URL, **cg-196550313342461053**, consists of the product line ID parameter and the ID number associated with the product line you selected. Use the number returned for the product line to create a URL that fetches an RSS feed of that product line by using the ZUP parameter **cg**:

> http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?cg=196550313342461053

Notice the changes in syntax between the two URLs. The first URL above, the gallery URL, does not specify a feed and the **cg** parameter is separated from its value by a dash. The second URL above, the feed URL, specifies a feed (**rss**), followed by a question mark (**?**) preceding the **cg** product line query and the value of **cg** is indicated using an equals (**=**) sign.

You can just as easily display the gallery's products by product type (T-Shirt, Mousepad, Mug, and so on) rather than product line. To create a feed containing only shirts, use the Product Type code for shirts, 235:

> http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?pt=235

This URL uses the query string parameter **pt**, or Product Type, followed by an equals sign and the desired product, as a Zazzle Product Type number. For a complete list of Zazzle product codes, see *Zazzle Product Types (pt)*.

Image Size in Feeds (isz)

The isz parameter lets you choose the size of the product images in your feed. All images are square. By default, images are 152 pixels on each side. If you want a different size, you can choose from these options:

Parameter Value	Size of Each Side, in Pixels
Tiny	50
Small	92
Medium (Default)	152
Large	210
Huge	328

For example, to set your images to small, you would add, `&isz=small`. Adding to a URL from a previous example:

```
http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?ps=20&pg=2&isz=small
```

Zazzle Product Types (pt)

The pt parameter takes a number specifying a particular Zazzle product type, such as a t-shirt or mouse pad.   You can see these codes in Zazzle gallery URLs. To use this parameter you need a list of products offered by Zazzle and their corresponding three digit codes.

128	Bumper Sticker
137	Card
144	Mouse pad
145	Button
146	Keychain
147	Magnet
148	Hat
149	Bag
151	Tie
153	Photo Sculpture
154	Apron
156	Photo Print
158	Calendar
167	Keds Shoes
168	Mug
172	Postage Stamps
186	Skateboard
217	Sticker
228	Print (posters)

235	T-Shirt
239	Postcards
240	Profile Card

The Zazzle Product Type codes may change. New products will be added. You can check for new Product Types when this document is revised or in the Zazzle.com help system.

Zazzle RSS Feeds

A typical Zazzle RSS feed contains tags with this content:

Tag	Content
<title>	A product title you define.
<description>	HTML markup including a product image linked to the product page on Zazzle.com.
<link>	Product link URL.
<guid>	Product link URL.
<pubDate>	The date the product was published.
<author>	The contributor handle for the creator of the product

In addition to these tags, your feed may contain other tags, discussed below.

OpenSearch

OpenSearch lets you include in your feed your preferences regarding the presentation of your products within your feed. For example, you can set the total number of products to be returned, the starting point, number of results per page, and even define a search query. The Zazzle RSS feed supports OpenSearch response elements by default. Note that Zazzle Google Base feeds do not implement OpenSearch by default, but you can include OpenSearch by adding "&opensearch=1" to your Google Base feed URL.

By default, Zazzle feeds contain the 15 most recent products. Using OpenSearch elements you can determine how many products are in your entire feed and how many are displayed in a page. You can choose to start displaying on a particular page and set the number of items per page displayed. You can set these preferences using the **pg** and **ps** ZUP, discussed in Zazzle URL Parameters.

For example:

```
http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/feed?pg=2&ps=20&opensearch=1&ft=gb
```

This URL would start with the second page of products and return 20 products per page. If you have a very long list of products, you might find this feature useful.

By default, your feed includes several opensearch extensions inside the **`<channel>`** element. These are used to code pagination through the entire feed of products.

Tag	Content
<opensearch:totalResults>	The total number of products in the requested feed.
<opensearch:startIndex>	The start index of the first product returned by this feed request.
<opensearch:itemsPerPage>	The number of items returned by this feed request.
<opensearch:Query>	The search query parameter, if specified.

For more information on standard OpenSearch response elements, including standard element definitions and examples, see:

http://www.opensearch.org/Specifications/OpenSearch/1.1#OpenSearch_response_elements

Media RSS Extensions

The Zazzle RSS feed supports Yahoo's media extensions to RSS 2.0 enclosure capabilities, called Media RSS. By default, media extensions are used to specify information about your products within your feed. You can add to this content yourself.

By default, the RSS feed output type includes a few Media RSS extensions. These have a variety of uses for programs consuming the feeds.

Tag	Content
<media:title>	Product title.
<media:description>	Your product description.
<media:thumbnail>	A small thumbnail product image URL.
<media:content>	A standard 500 pixel square product image URL.
<media:keywords>	Your keywords for this product.
<media:rating>	The maturity level of the product, G, PG-13, or R.

Here is an example feed fragment, containing media extension content, as generated from a gallery:

```
<media:title><![CDATA[California State Flag]]></media:title>

<media:description><![CDATA[California State Flag]]></media:description>

<media:thumbnail
url="http://rlv.zazzle.com/img/california_state_flag_shirt.jpg?action=view&amp;
pid=235666056437877051&amp;max_dim=OneTwentyFive&amp;rvtype=product&amp;pdt=shi
rt&amp;side_front=horz&amp;style=basic_tshirt&amp;color=white&amp;size=a_l&amp;
context=kari&amp;view=front&amp;view_auto=1.3" />

<media:content
url="http://rlv.zazzle.com/img/california_state_flag_shirt.jpg?action=view&amp;
pid=235666056437877051&amp;max_dim=FiveHundred&amp;rvtype=product&amp;pdt=shirt
```

```
&amp;side_front=horz&amp;style=basic_tshirt&amp;color=white&amp;size=a_l&amp;co
ntext=kari&amp;view=front&amp;view_auto=1.3" />

<media:keywords>california, cal, cali, bear, state, flag</media:keywords>

<media:rating scheme="urn:mpaa">g</media:rating>
```

For more information on RSS media extensions, start here:

http://search.yahoo.com/mrss/mrss

Google Base Configuration

Creating a Zazzle Google Base XML file is just a special case of Zazzle RSS feed configuration. If you skipped the section on RSS Configuration, you should go back and read it before reading this section.

You can upload, or submit your products to Google Base in two ways:

- • Manually enter the information you want to submit, such as product title, description, price, and so on.
- • Upload a file containing the information you want to submit.

Entering your information manually is not practical if you are interested in uploading more than around ten products and it is harder to check for errors. This guide tells you how to create an XML format file containing your Zazzle feed and upload that file to Google Base.

Briefly, you can create an XML file with your product information by structuring an appropriate RSS feed on the Zazzle site and saving the feed as an XML file. Then you upload the XML file to Google Base. You can use special features built in to the Zazzle site to optimize your information for Google Base.

For more information on using Google Base, see:

http://base.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=59537

Creating Your Zazzle Google Base Feed File

The process of creating a feed file for Google Base is almost the same as the process you follow to create an RSS feed. Structure your feed using the same steps described in the section, RSS Configuration. Then set the feed type to Google Base and save the result as described in this section.

Convert your feed to the format Google Base expects.

1. Once your feed contains the products you want in the order you want them (following the steps in the RSS Configuration section), convert your feed to the Google Base feed type by adding "&ft=gb" to the end of your feed's URL.

   For example, if your feed were,

   http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?qs=1984&ps=30

   You would change **rss** to **feed** and add **&ft=gb** at the end:

   http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/feed?qs=1984&ps=30&ft=gb

   Your feed will look different in your browser window. The images are gone, as is the product HTML markup. Other changes required by Google Base but not visible in your browser or RSS reader are now present in your feed source.

Save your feed to a file. The commands you use to save your feed to a file differ from browser to browser; in the example Firefox® is used. If you have configured your browser to launch a RSS reader automatically, you may not be able to save your feed source in the same way. Your feed file must have the ".xml" extension.

2. In the Firefox **View** menu, select **Source**.

   The Source window is displayed.

3. In the Source window File menu, select **Save Page As…**

4. Use any file name, but make sure it ends with the extension ".xml".

   For example: MyGoogleBaseData.xml.

Setting OpenSearch

Zazzle RSS feeds implement the OpenSearch extension by default. Zazzle Google Base feeds implement Google Base extensions (g:) but not OpenSearch. If you would like to include OpenSearch in your Google Base feed, add &opensearch=1 to your Google Base URL before you save your Google Base feed to a file. For example,

   http://feed.zazzle.com/strk3/rss?qs=1984&ps=30&opensearch=1&ft=gb

For more information on OpenSearch, see the section, *OpenSearch*.

Uploading Your Google Base File

Once you have prepared your XML file, you can follow the instructions provided by Google:

   http://base.google.com/support/bin/topic.py?topic=11271

Uploading your Google Base entry requires a free Google account and some configuration on the Google Base site. The Google account can be your gmail account, if you have one already. Most of the configuration required for your Zazzle Google Base entry follows the standard Google Base procedure. As you follow the standard instructions found on the Google Base home, here are some important Zazzle-specific points to keep in mind:

Under **Data Feed**, on the **Settings Tab**:

- **Display Name** can be your Zazzle Contributor ID.

  For example, `strk3`

- **Website URL** must be zazzle.com/*yourcontributorID*

  For example, `zazzle.com/strk3`

- The **File Name** is not required to match the actual file name you upload, but the file extension must be the same.

  Your Zazzle Google Base feed file must have a `.xml` extension.

Feed Submission by FTP

Google Base requires files larger than 20 megabytes to be uploaded using ftp. You are not likely to create a file larger than 20 Mb. If you must use ftp, you can follow the steps provided by Google:

http://base.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=59462

Feed Submission from a Macintosh

Macintosh users and some Windows PC users have reported problems submitting data to the Google Base Store Connector. If you encounter problems, you may be able to use the information in this section to work around these issues and upload successfully. Make sure you check the Web for current information on Google Base submission from the Macintosh.

- Use Firefox, not Safari. It appears there are compatibility issues between Safari and Google Base at present.
- It has been reported that during the upload step, Google Base cannot select a file on the Macintosh. Try uploading using an ftp client, such as Fetch, from Fetch Softworks, LLC. Follow the ftp upload directions here:

  http://base.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=59462

Zazzle Google Base Feeds

Zazzle Google Base feeds contain tags set to particular values, by default. You can change the value of some of these tags yourself, while others are set by Zazzle.

The opensearch extension to the **<channel>** are turned OFF by default, for full compatibility with Google's feed uploader tool. They can be enabled by adding the ZUP parameter **opensearch=1** to your feed request URL.

Tag	Content
<g:id>	The Zazzle product ID number.
<g:image_link>	Product image. By default 210 pixels. You can set this tag using the ZUP **isz**.
<g:brand>	Always set to **zazzle**.
<g:color>	A color describing the product, such as **black** or **red**.
<g:price>	The base or estimated price chosen by the product contributor. Price may change due to buyer style selections.
<g:product_type>	Internal Zazzle short name for a product, such as **shirt**, **stamp**, or **mug**.
<g:style>	Your product style, e.g., **Basic T-shirt**.
<g:made_in>	Currently set to **US**.
<g:condition>	Always set to **new**.
<g:expiration_date>	Set to 30 days from the date on which the file was generated, by Zazzle. This is the maximum duration for Google Base listings.
<g:age_range>	Currently set by default to **0-90**.
<g:size>	Product size, if relevant.
<c:keywords>	Zazzle has added a Google Base c: namespace tag to allow you to add your keywords to your Google Base listings.

Example Output

Here is an example item (a single Zazzle product), in Google Base format, showing the googlebase:g extension elements.

```
<item>

<guid isPermaLink="false">http://www.zazzle.com/california_state_flag_shirt-235666056437877051?gl=hikingviking&amp;ZCMP=gbase</guid>

<pubDate>Sat, 14 Jun 2008 12:30:31 GMT</pubDate>

<title><![CDATA[California State Flag]]></title>

<link>http://www.zazzle.com/my_cute_dog_shirt-235666056437877051?gl=bigzazzlefanatic&amp;ZCMP=gbase</link>

<artist>bigzazzlefanatic</artist>

<description><![CDATA[My Cute Dog]]></description>

<g:id>235666126437877666</g:id>

<g:image_link>http://rlv.zazzle.com/img/
my_cute_dog_shirt.jpg?action=view&amp;pid=235666056437877051&amp;max_dim=210&amp;rvtype=product&amp;pdt=shirt&amp;side_front=horz&amp;style=basic_tshirt&amp;c
```

```
olor=white&amp;size=a_l&amp;context=kari&amp;view=front&amp;view_auto=1.3</g:im
age_link>

<g:brand>zazzle</g:brand>

<g:color>white</g:color>

<g:price>14.95</g:price>

<g:product_type>shirt</g:product_type>

<g:style>basic_tshirt</g:style>

<g:made_in>US</g:made_in>

<g:condition>new</g:condition>

<g:expiration_date>Fri, 08 Aug 2008 15:02:11 GMT</g:expiration_date>

<g:age_range>0-90</g:age_range>

<g:size>"s,m,l,xl"</g:size>

</item>
```

Google Base Troubleshooting

Here are some Google Base limitations to keep in mind.

- Descriptions containing HTML are rejected. If a feed includes 1000 items and one item contains embedded HTML, the entire feed will be rejected.
- Google Base allows up to 10 files per upload.
- Listings expire in 30 days. You must upload again after 30 days.

Google Base feeds may take up to five days to become active.