

Context

Products have a number of characteristics, the allowed combinations of which are considerably constrained (i.e. it's easier to list allowed combinations than disallowed combinations).

Recommended Practice

Maximize use of variant tables not only for validation and inferences, but also for restrictions by using restrictable characteristics (instead of preconditions).

Benefits of the Practice

Provides for easiest maintenance. Allows to move a large part of modeling effort to the knowledge workers in engineering / marketing. Allows for easy imports of data from external sources.

Exceptions

Do not apply this practice when maximizing VC performance is an absolute must. Variant tables typically all get stored in the same transparent table on R3 and performance suffers if large tables are used. If IPC is used for high-level configuration in R3, this exception does not apply as in IPC variant table data is stored in independent tables.