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Documentation Modules

Usage

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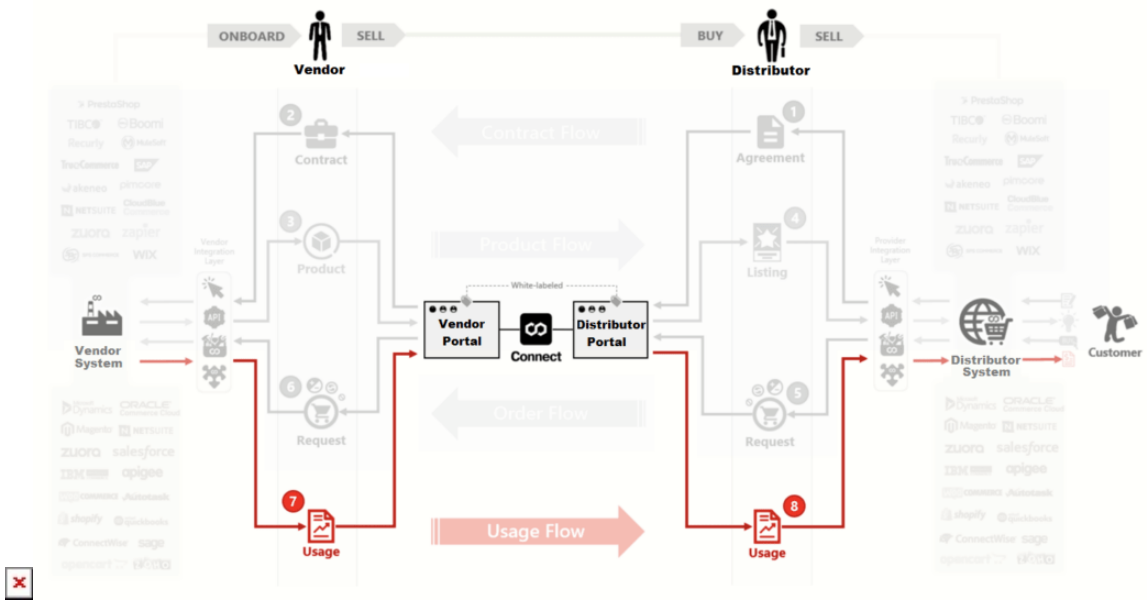
Overview

The Usage Management Module implements the direct flow of the consumption (metering/pay-as-you-go) data communication from Vendors to Distributors and Resellers. This business process is referred to as the *Usage Flow* on the Connect platform and it is is common for various businesses like Telecommunications, Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS), Internet of Things (IoT), Managed Services and many others.

In general, this flow requires Vendors to submit submit structured product consumption reports to their business partners on Connect. Thereafter, such reports can be used for the subsequent billing operations and reconciliation.

The Usage Flow is presented and highlighted in the following diagram:



This diagram showcases that Vendors can generate and submit usage report files to their partners by using the Connect platform. Thereafter, these usage report files are used by Distributors or Resellers to bill their customers.

Note that the system enables Vendors to generate usage reports for *reservation* and *pay-as-you-go* items. Therefore, the Usage Flow may include the following processes:

- Vendors can submit information on how items are being *consumed*. This scenario is applicable to the the **Reservation** items.
- Vendors can submit data specifically for *billing* purposes. This scenario is only applicable for the **Pay-as-you-go** items and could be used for billing operations between:
  - Vendors and Distributors.
  - Distributors and their direct Resellers.
  - Distributors and their Resellers.
  - Resellers and their Customers.

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The following introduces and describes different aspects of the Usage Management module on the CloudBlue Connect® platform.

Video Tutorial

The following video tutorial introduces the Usage module and provides its overview:

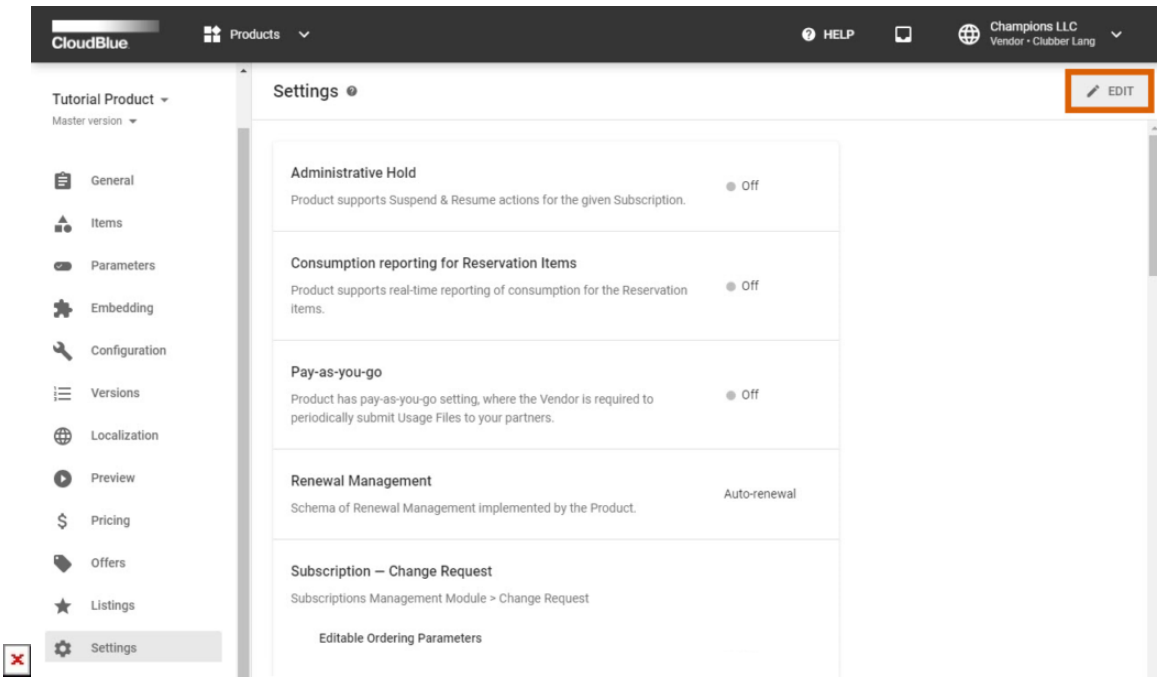
Prerequisites

Usage data can only be reported by Vendors in case the following requirements are met:

- Program Contract is activated.
- Corresponding Distribution Contract is activated.
- Required Product Capabilities are enabled.
- Items that should be included in the usage report are defined.
- Activated Listing for a product that features required capabilities.

Product Settings

By default, product capabilities that enable Vendors to generate usage reports are turned off. Navigate to the **Settings** tab from your product profile page and click **Edit** to access the following usage report options:



- **Consumption reporting for Reservation Items**: With this capability your product will support the real-time reporting of the *reservation items* consumption.
- **Pay-as-you-go**: This capability enables Vendors to implement the pay-as-you-go system and consequently define corresponding items on the product profile page. Once this capability is switched on, the system displays the following

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options:

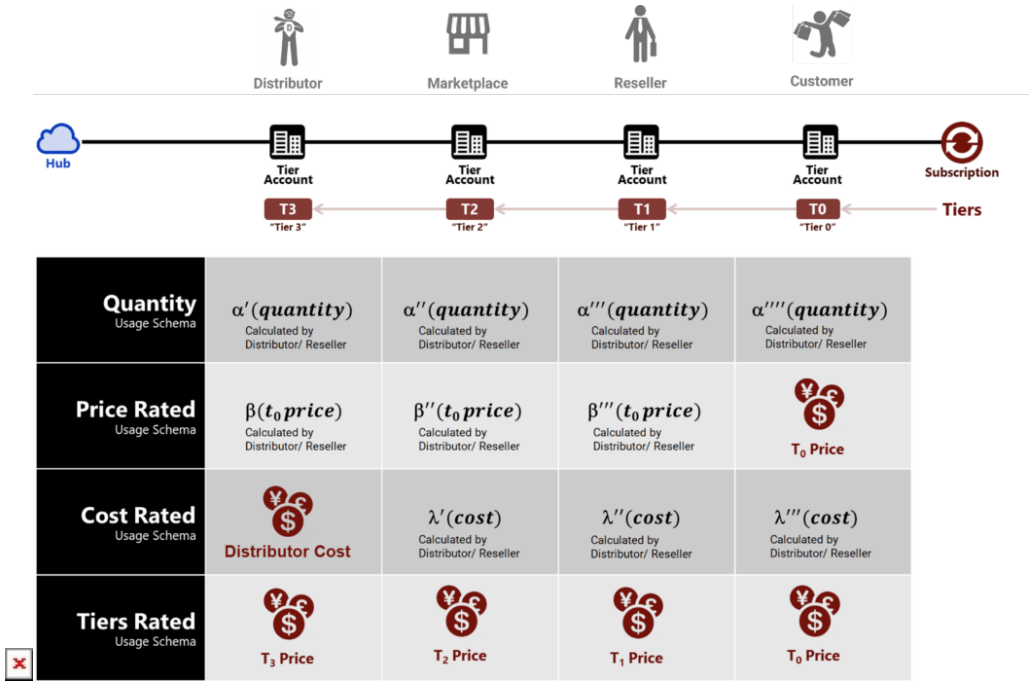
- **Dynamic Items**: This defines that Product reports dynamic items in the Usage File, i.e. the ones that were not pre-declared in the Product Definition.
- **Future Charges**: Product can generate usage reports with charges assigned to future dates.
- **Predictive Estimates**: Product supports predictive reporting of Consumption data within the Billing period before the actual Usage File.
- **Reporting Schema**: An implemented usage schema that is explicitly declared in the product definition. The system includes *Quantity*, *Multi-Tier Rated*, *Price Rated* and *Cost Rated* schemas. Note that one product implements only one schema.

Learn more about product settings by accessing the corresponding article within the Products module documentation.

Reporting Schemas

A product that includes pay-as-you-go items allows Vendors to generate a variety of usage report files via the Usage module on the CloudBlue Connect® platform. Such usage reports are used by Distributors or Resellers for subsequent billing operations. Therefore, the Connect platform helps your organization and your business partners regulate prices and charge your customers for the provided services.

The following schematically illustrates and describes all usage reporting schemas that are available on the Connect platform:



- **Quantity**: Bill rate based on the item-level *quantity* information that Distributors (or Resellers) receive from their Vendors.
- **Price Rated**: Billing based on the item-level *Tier-0* (End-customer) price information. Other prices are calculated by Distributors or Reseller systems.
- **Cost Rated**: Bill rate based on the item-level *Distributor Cost* information. Other prices are calculated by Distributors or

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Reseller systems.

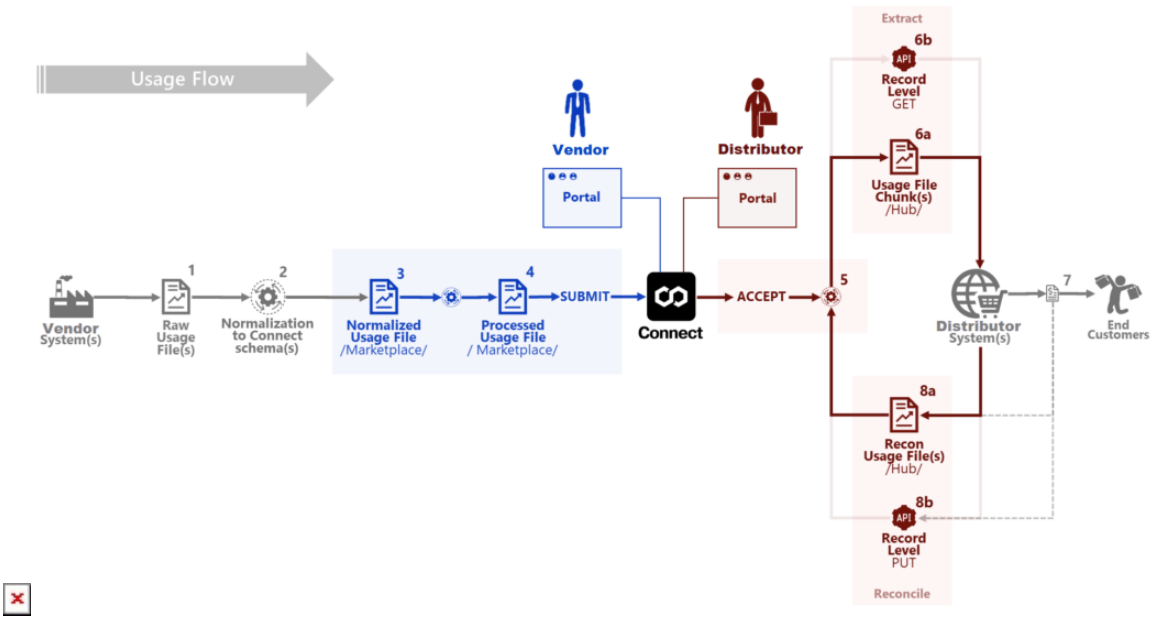
- **Tiers Rated**: Billing based on the item-level price information for multiple Tiers. Therefore, Distributor or Reseller systems can simply apply all prices that are provided by the Vendor system.

> ●
> One schema per a product
>
> Note that the system allows selecting only one schema per one product on the CloudBlue Connect® platform.

In case you require more information on completing a usage report file with your selected schema, please refer to the Usage – Vendor Portal subarticle.

Workflow

The Usage module workflow and interactions between Vendors and Distributors are described and schematically illustrated below:



1. Vendors collect *raw data*, i.e., information that should be formatted and uploaded to the Connect platform.
2. Vendors specify required data by using an *example template file*.
3. Vendors upload normalized usage report file to Connect. The system processes uploaded usage report file.
4. Once the file processing is complete, Vendors can submit a report. Thus, the system transfers this file to the *Pending* state.
5. Distributors review and accept the *pending* usage report file. In case of an error, Distributors can also reject this file.
6. Export of records for billing either using record-level API calls or using the bulk file export.

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7. Received usage data is utilized by Distributors to bill their Customers or Resellers.
8. Storing of reconciliation data either on a record-level or using the bulk file upload.

Note that the Usage module also features standalone workflows for *usage files* and *usage record* objects. Refer to the Usage – State Machine documentation to learn more about the workflows and all available statuses of these objects.

Next Steps

Access the following articles to learn more about the Usage module graphical user interface, API, and available operations with usage report files from the Vendor Portal and Distributor/Reseller Portal on the Connect platform:

1. Usage – Vendor Portal
2. Usage – Distributor & Reseller Portals
3. Usage File & Record Statuses
4. Usage API

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