magmodules

Google Merchant API vs Feed Upload

Google Shopping for Magento 2

Comparison of Google Merchant API and SFTP feed upload methods for the Google Shopping Feed extension. This guide helps you choose the right approach for your store.

Overview

There are two ways to sync products to Google Merchant Center:

Method	Description
SFTP Feed Upload	Generate XML file and upload via SFTP
Merchant API	Send product data directly via API

Both methods work. The right choice depends on your needs.

SFTP Feed Upload

The traditional method. Generate an XML feed file and upload it to Google via SFTP.

How It Works

1. Extension generates XML feed file
2. Cron job uploads file to Google SFTP server
3. Google processes the file (usually within hours)
4. Products appear in Merchant Center

Advantages

Simple Setup

- Just SFTP credentials from Merchant Center
- No OAuth configuration
- No API quotas to worry about

Reliable

- Mature, well-tested approach
- Works with any catalog size
- Easy to debug (you can inspect the XML file)

Automated

- Cron handles everything
- Set it and forget it
- Multiple feed types supported

No API Deprecation Concerns

- Feed format rarely changes
- Not affected by API version updates

Configuration

Location: Magmodules → Google Shopping - Feed → SFTP Upload

Setting	Description
Enable SFTP Upload	Turn on automatic uploads
SFTP Server	Google's SFTP server address
SFTP Username	From Merchant Center
SFTP Password	From Merchant Center
Remote Path	Where to upload the file

Getting SFTP Credentials

1. Log into Google Merchant Center
2. Go to **Settings** → **SFTP**
3. Generate SFTP credentials
4. Copy username and password to extension config

Google Merchant API

The newer method. Send product data directly to Google via API calls.

How It Works

1. Extension authenticates with Google API
2. Products sent individually or in batches
3. Google processes immediately
4. Near real-time updates possible

Advantages

Faster Updates

- Changes reflect within minutes
- No waiting for file processing
- Better for high-frequency changes

Granular Control

- Update individual products
- Delete specific items
- Immediate feedback on errors

Advanced Features

- Inventory updates
- Price updates
- Supplemental feeds

Current Status

Google launched the **Merchant API** as the successor to the **Content API for Shopping**.

API	Status
Content API for Shopping	Deprecated August 2026
Merchant API	Current/recommended for API use

When to Consider API

- You need updates faster than hourly
- You have complex inventory management
- You're building custom integrations
- You need programmatic control over products

Comparison

Factor	SFTP Feed	Merchant API
Setup complexity	Simple	Complex

Factor	SFTP Feed	Merchant API
Update speed	Hours	Minutes
Reliability	Very high	Depends on implementation
Debugging	Easy (inspect file)	Harder (API responses)
Rate limits	None	API quotas apply
Authentication	SFTP credentials	OAuth 2.0
Maintenance	Low	Higher

Recommendation

For most Magento stores: Use SFTP Feed Upload

Why:

- Works reliably out of the box
- No API configuration needed
- Handles any catalog size
- Cron automation is sufficient
- Less to go wrong

Consider API if:

- You update prices/stock multiple times per day
- You need real-time inventory sync
- You're building a custom integration
- You have development resources to maintain it

Setting Up SFTP (Recommended)

Step 1: Generate Credentials

1. Open Google Merchant Center
2. Navigate to **Settings** (gear icon)
3. Select **SFTP** from the menu
4. Click **Generate** to create credentials

5. Save the username and password

Step 2: Configure Extension

1. Go to Magmodules → Google Shopping - Feed → SFTP Upload
2. Enable SFTP Upload: **Yes**
3. Enter SFTP credentials
4. Set upload schedule via cron

Step 3: Test Upload

1. Generate feed via CLI: `bin/magento googleshopping:feed:create`
2. Check Merchant Center for new products
3. Verify no upload errors in logs

FAQ

Do I need to migrate to the Merchant API?

No. The SFTP feed method continues to work and is not deprecated. Only the Content API for Shopping is being deprecated (August 2026).

What if I'm already using SFTP?

Keep using it. There's no reason to switch unless you need faster updates.

Is the Merchant API faster?

Yes, for individual product updates. But for full catalog syncs, the difference is minimal because feed processing is quite fast.

Can I use both methods?

Technically yes, but it's not recommended. Pick one method to avoid confusion and potential conflicts.

What about supplemental feeds?

Both methods support supplemental feeds. SFTP is often easier for supplemental data.

Further Reading

- Google Merchant Center SFTP setup - Official SFTP documentation
- Google Merchant API overview - API documentation

Need More Help?

Documentation:

- All Help Articles - Complete documentation overview

Support:

- Contact Support - Get help from our team

For a complete overview of features and configuration options, see the Google Shopping extension on magmodules.eu

All articles for Google Shopping

Installation

1	Installation using Composer (recommended)
2	Installation using the Adobe Marketplace
3	Install through FTP and SSH
4	Update a Magento 2 Module using an Artifact Repository

Configuration

1	Quick Start Guide
2	Configuration Guide
3	Product Types
4	Attribute Mapping
5	Filters
6	SFTP Setup
7	Promotions Feed
8	Local Inventory Feed
9	Loyalty Program Feed

Troubleshooting

1	**Google Merchant API vs Feed Upload (current)**
2	Google Merchant Center Errors
3	CLI Commands

Background

1	Identifier Exists Attribute
2	Google Product Categories
3	Best Practices
4	Feed Preview
5	Troubleshooting
6	Google Merchant Center Setup