



GS1 Traceability

GS1 recognises the need to enable cost-effective traceability for every product, across every supply chain



Companies, consumers, regulators and others are demanding greater visibility and transparency in order to make better informed decisions. Stakeholders across value chains are concerned about product safety, sustainability, fair trade and fair labour, and simply want to know more about the products they purchase and consume. GS1 standards provide the foundation for companies of all sizes and industries to deliver on these traceability and sustainability needs.

GS1 standards enable interoperable solutions

GS1 was established by industry for the purpose of creating an open and global organisation for identifying, capturing and sharing data. Industry leaders knew that the only way information could flow across systems within their own company and with their trading partners around the world was for systems to be able to talk to one another—they needed interoperability.

Interoperability refers to the basic ability of different computerised systems to readily connect and communicate with one another, even if they were developed as part of different ecosystems. Traceability solutions based upon proprietary identification methods cannot deliver interoperability between ecosystems.

GS1 Global is a neutral, not-for-profit organisation with no commercial interests. Its ongoing mission is to serve diverse industries and all of the companies that make up those industries by expanding the value they derive from using global standards. Crucially, this effort involves collaboration with solution providers to help them incorporate GS1 Global standards into their offerings; companies are able

to reduce integration costs and derive greater value from solutions that leverage this existing foundation.

Specific GS1 standards that support end-to-end visibility from source to consumer include the Global Location Number (GLN), Global Trade Item Number (GTIN), Electronic Product Code Information Services (EPCIS) and globally standard data attributes. Additionally, the GS1 DataMatrix and GS1 Digital Link standards connect myriad sources of data directly to the consumer.

Solutions that are siloed and not interoperable are most often built upon a proprietary layer of identity, data and data processes and are ultimately less valuable because they are unable to integrate with a broader ecosystem and scale effectively. These siloed solutions also lock companies and their partners into a relationship that limits choice across vendors and is costly to dismantle.



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GS1 is making global standards easier to access and more affordable for everyone

Over the years and in response to a number of industry-driven initiatives, access to GS1 standards has become dramatically simpler and more affordable for small and micro-businesses who are often upstream actors, such as raw material providers and farmers. In fact, nearly 90% of the companies GS1 serves are small and medium enterprises, many of them critical to upstream value chains.

GS1 has a long history of working with companies of all sizes at the local, regional and global levels to ensure that their investment in GS1 standards can be leveraged to ensure interoperability of solutions across today's complex supply networks.

Closing

We expect that easier access to the GS1 system of standards and authoritative registries of entity and location information—combined with a commitment to the foundational principles of interoperability—will continue to serve industry into the future. We also look forward to building new partnerships with solution providers and other standards organisations to ensure that we can best serve industry together.

GS1 has recognised that it can make the use of globally unique, interoperable identity even easier in the future. For example, GS1 has started a global programme to create a GLN Registry with minimal attribute requirements, which will simplify access to, and understanding of, data corresponding to entities and locations around the world.

GS1 partners with other standards organisations

In some cases, GS1 best serves industry by seeking conformance with higher-level standards. In the identification space, GS1 has embraced partnerships with other organisations, such as UN/CEFACT and ITC, to ensure that unambiguous, globally interoperable identifiers can be leveraged by industry.

Similarly, in the data exchange space, GS1 has embraced partnerships with organisations like UN/CEFACT to ensure that languages for data exchange are as interoperable as possible.

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