



GS1 DataBar

More data...less space



What is GS1 DataBar?



GS1 DataBar is a new bar code that can deliver enhanced product identification at retail point-of-sale (POS). It can be used on small or hard-to-mark consumer products that could not previously be identified by bar codes or to carry more information than the current GS1 retail POS bar codes allow.

- By carrying more data
GS1 DataBar allows greater information to be carried on a retail POS bar code such as weights, expiry dates, batch numbers, serial numbers etc
- By taking up less space
GS1 DataBar enables the automatic identification of small or hard-to-mark consumer products such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, DIY hardware, jewellery and fresh produce. It also allows more space on packaging for branding and messaging

GS1 DataBar not only increases the number of products that can be automatically identified at POS, it also creates new opportunities to solve today's retail business problems such as enhanced and wider category management, product authentication, traceability, stock control, product replenishment, variable measure product identification and shrink control.

Evolution not revolution

GS1 DataBar joins the existing GS1 family of bar codes and is not a replacement for any current bar code; it is a new option that provides new opportunities.

"As a retailer, we always look at ways to improve the shopping experience for customers. Building on the last 25 years of the GS1 System this new bar code, the GS1 DataBar will enable us to extend customer service in a range of activities that is currently limited by existing bar codes types, especially with small products and capturing additional information at POS. In effect, the GS1 DataBar is like a 'high performance bar code.'"

Daniel Kochanowicz
Woolworths Australia



The business benefits



The business case for GS1 DataBar is simple: more data...less space

More data

Existing GS1 bar codes for retail POS, such as EAN-8 and EAN-13, are used to identify products through the use of Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs). No other data can be encoded in these bar codes.

The ability of GS1 DataBar to encode additional data beyond basic product identification, such as weights, expiry dates, batch numbers, serial numbers etc, provides new opportunities for retailers, manufacturers and solution providers to improve many retail supply chain processes, right through to the final POS.



Less space

Some GS1 DataBar symbols can occupy up to 50% less space than the equivalent EAN-13 bar codes that are currently widely used to identify retail items. This allows manufacturers to save valuable space on product packaging for greater branding, consumer and promotional messages and regulatory information.

This reduced space also means GS1 DataBar can be used to identify many small or hard-to-mark consumer products that could not previously be identified with bar codes, such as cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, DIY hardware, jewellery, fresh produce etc. This brings the benefits of accurate, automatic identification that have been enjoyed by retailers with many other FMCG products since the 1970s to this wider range of products.

GS1 DataBar has the potential to bring many benefits for retailers and manufacturers

- Enhanced category management for a wider range of products
- Improved product replenishment and out-of-stock anticipation
- Improved shrinkage control
- Globally unique product identification for fresh foods replacing today's generic information
- Increased product identification accuracy for loose produce by scanning versus manual key entering
- Improved scan rates compared to under-sized, low performing EAN bar code symbols
- More products that can be scanned by consumers at self-scanning checkouts
- Gain valuable space on product packaging
- Prevention of sales of out-dated products through sell-by and expiry date management
- Traceability of products at the POS through the use of batch and serial numbers
- Recall of products at POS through the use of batch and serial numbers
- Product weight management
- Ability to capture markdown pricing
- End of four-digit price limitations meaning prices greater than £99.99 can be coded on variable measure products
- Improved coupon and voucher control

GS1 DataBar family of bar codes

Point-of-sale symbols



GS1 DataBar Stacked Omnidirectional

Fresh produce, small consumer product goods (GTIN only)



GS1 DataBar Omnidirectional

Small consumer product goods (GTIN only)



GS1 DataBar Expanded

Variable measure products (GTIN + more data)



GS1 DataBar Expanded Stacked

Variable measure products (GTIN + more data)

“One key benefit for manufacturers will be the ability to increase consumer communication on pack by reducing the amount of space currently occupied by existing bar codes. This is a notable opportunity to better reach consumers at the moment of truth when they are making their purchase decisions”

Terry Mochar
Reckitt-Benckiser

GS1 DataBar applications



GS1 DataBar is currently being trialled and implemented by retailers and manufacturers throughout the world, with particular interest in three main applications.

1 Fresh, loose produce



The smaller size of GS1 DataBar means it can be used on standard labels on many fresh, loose produce items such as apples, pears, tomatoes and other fruit and vegetables. A number of leading global retailers are taking advantage of this and the benefits they are already realising include:

- Enhanced product identification accuracy at the POS compared to manual key entry using PLU (price look-up) codes
- Faster checkout times
- Greater use of self-scanning checkouts by customers
- Greater shrink control by, for example, differentiating conventional versus organic produce
- Faster product replenishment leading to greater product availability

2 Variable measure fresh produce



Many trials are also taking place with variable measure fresh produce such as meat, seafood, cheese etc, using GS1 DataBar to encode additional information such as best before date, country of origin, batch number and weight. By ensuring accurate and complete sales information for these products, retailers benefit from:

- Greater flexibility over discounted pricing
- More accurate stock replenishment
- Less waste
- Higher margins



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An example of a GS1 DataBar Expanded stacked symbol encoding GTIN, net weight of 2.56 kg, expiry date of 31 May 2009 and a price of £12.56.

3 Small and hard-to-mark consumer products



Many retailers and manufacturers are using GS1 DataBar on small and hard-to-mark consumer products, such as cosmetics, jewellery, DIY hardware and pharmaceuticals. In the past these products were not bar coded or used under-sized, low performing EAN bar code symbols.

An enhanced consumer experience



GS1 DataBar will contribute towards an improved consumer shopping experience.

1. Better category management and stock control resulting in improved product availability and fewer wasted customer journeys
2. Greater and clearer product information available on product packaging
3. Increased customer usage and satisfaction with self-scanning checkouts as more products can be scanned
4. Enhanced consumer and product safety through improved best-before and expiry date management
5. Faster checkouts and less queuing as more products are scanned



“Some of our health and beauty care products have very small packaging, and strict regulatory requirements mean we have to put a certain amount of text on the boxes, no matter how small they are – and that means less panel space for communication with our customers. We’re looking forward to GS1 DataBar symbols to help us solve this dilemma.”

Bud Babcock
Procter & Gamble

When will GS1 DataBar be available for use?



GS1 DataBar introduces many new benefits and applications for retailers and manufacturers. It is already being used in wide-scale implementations by North American grocery retailers, in trials throughout Europe and Asia and also on loose, fresh produce shipping all over the world

Based on a market readiness report conducted in 2008, a new global plan for GS1 DataBar adoption has been introduced:

- By 2010 GS1 DataBar standards will be available for bilateral agreement between trading partners for all trade items. The specific focus will be on fresh produce scanned at retail POS.
 - Faster checkout times
- By the target date of 2014, GS1 DataBar standards, including the use of additional data (using Application Identifiers), can be used by all trading partners in an open environment. At a minimum, retailers should be able to scan GS1 DataBar symbols and process the encoded GTINs

“GS1 DataBar is the next step in the evolution of bar codes.”

Kevin Koehlar
Loblaws

In practical terms this means:

- Retailers can use GS1 DataBar at any time with their trading partners, if there is agreement in advance to do so
- Retailers who are already utilising GS1 DataBar, especially with fresh produce, can progress their activities with no interruption and continue to enjoy the benefits
- 2014 is the date when GS1 DataBar can be used globally in open trade, on any product

Are your scanners ready?

When purchasing new scanning equipment, retailers should ensure it is GS1 DataBar compatible.

For your existing scanning equipment, contact your equipment provider or go to www.gs1uk.org/barcode/databar.asp for a list of GS1 DataBar ready scanners by brand and model.

Note: this list may not include all brands of scanning equipment but will be continually updated as equipment companies provide us with information.

What should you do next?

GS1 UK recommends that all its members, whether retailers, suppliers or solution providers, understand the full implications of GS1 DataBar and prepare an implementation strategy.

Full advice and test cards to check scanner compatibility are available at www.gs1uk.org/barcode/databar.asp or you can contact GS1 UK on Freephone 0808 178 8799 or by email at support@gs1uk.org.





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