



# THE FOODSERVICE INFORMATION CHALLENGE

Report compiled by GS1 UK and commissioned  
by Foodservice Directors' Group

September 2012



# 1. Executive summary

The UK Food Service sector is the UK's fourth largest consumer market. Despite strong growth over the past 20 years, it currently faces numerous and complex challenges. What's driving this on the consumer side is increased demand for transparency and in particular for accurate and consistent information such as where and how a product is made, nutritional and allergen information and product specification. This rise is a result of the corporate social responsibility agenda, consumers wishing to eat more healthily, legislative changes and the rise of the savvy shopper who increasingly has the desire and capability to research everything before making a purchasing decision.

In particular, with the growing concerns towards healthy eating and allergies, the failure to provide more information on product ingredients could have serious consequences for both the brand owner and the food service organisations who could be exposed should inaccurate information cause consumers to be harmed. Information quality is becoming a key priority for the industry with the requirement to supply robust, accurate information across ingredients, packaging waste, energy, water and food allergens are set to increase in the short term. All resulting in an exponential increase in the quantity of information companies are required to supply customers and consumers.

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**All these requirements have one common thread, 'the increasing requirement to provide up-to-date and accurate information' for all parties. It is more important than ever for the sector to ensure they have the right product with the right information in the right place at the right time at the right cost.**

Improved quality of information will also provide potential for improvements in supply chain efficiency – our research highlights savings of £23 million each year on correcting errors, work arounds, out-of-stocks and lost business. On top of the actual savings potential, there is also opportunity for increased sales and cost reduction by ensuring that there are no products out of stock or food wasted. Currently the industry is running on an average of 2% out of stocks.

An average UK Food Service business can be required to provide information on over 200 product attributes. This number is predicted to double in the next five years as

the demand for more product information increases. The typical cost to an organisation within the Food Service sector to manage product information – request it, receive it, process it, in-put it, maintain it, distribute it internally (and externally) is in the region of £150 per line per year. If an organisation is able to remove some of the manual elements such as requesting, inputting and distributing then potentially 60% of effort could be removed, creating a benefit of nearly £90 per line. This is a potential industry saving of £20 million over the next five years.

The challenge for the industry is to identify, capture and share product information in a way that allows it to be understood and used throughout the entire supply chain – from manufacturer to consumer. However, the industry is being held back from meeting the information challenges, due to a legacy system of proprietary product codes, attribute descriptions and new line forms.

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**The time has arrived for the UK Food Service industry to address the issue of inaccurate information head on and work towards making business easier for all involved.**

The Food Service Directors' Group (FSDG) commissioned GS1 UK to research the current Food Service sector information flow within the supply chain to determine how accurate it is; understand where there are opportunities for improving information; recommend methodologies to meet growing demands; and to take advantage from the considerable benefits.

The report concludes that the industry should collaborate to make it easier to do business and embrace a global industry supply chain standard and (the technology) to meet the growing requirements placed on it.

## **Key drivers**

- **Corporate Social Responsibility**
- **The savvy shopper (increased consumer information requirements)**
- **Government initiatives**
- **Legislation in the UK and Europe**

## 2. Background

### The industry:

Estimated to be worth £42 billion, the UK Food Service sector is the UK's fourth largest consumer market after food grocery retail, motoring, and clothing and footwear.

**According to the Office of National Statistics, consumer spend on out of home catering amounts to approximately £75 billion annually.**

The past 20 years has seen strong growth in both the profit (retail) and cost (contract) sectors of the Food Service industry. With an increase in British consumers eating out, this trend looks set to continue. However, while a retail consumer is able to view product information

easily on packaging or via websites, the Food Service consumer is often reliant on staff knowledge or menus to obtain enough information to make lifestyle choices – be that healthy living, allergy or dietary. Accurate product information, provides significant opportunities for the Food Service industry to better serve the 21st century consumer and generate greater brand loyalty as a result.

Product information is also used by all parties in the Food Service supply chain and by almost every department – from sales and marketing to technical and accounts. These departments use different subsets of data, often re-entering, amending and validating it several times over. This creates pinch points within the flow of information for organisations, causing time delays and the potential for inaccuracies. A crucial challenge for the industry therefore is to ensure the right information is in the right place at the right time and updated to include amendments.

### Product information in the supply chain:



**The FSDG is a strategic industry network, within GS1 UK, which collaborates to achieve a common approach to overcoming key sector challenges. Members include some of the largest food service companies in the UK.**

**The Food Service industry has recently been impacted by:**

**Consumer:**

- Consumer demand for more accurate and consistent information, such as how a product is made, nutritional and allergen information and product specification has increased dramatically due to:
  - Food awareness campaigns
  - Legislative changes
  - The savvy shopper researching everything
  - Consumer touch points – store, online and mobile, influx of new products and tastes
- No signs of a slow-down, resulting in continual growth in type and volume of information – leading to a growing challenge for Food Service organisations

**Corporate Social Responsibility and Legislation:**

- European Food Information Regulation places a legal responsibility on businesses to provide more information on product ingredients – including eggs, milk, fish, soya, wheat and nut contents
- Operators and suppliers are faced with pressures from government, consumers and lobby groups for information regarding how products, packaging, storage and logistics impact the environment.
- The Government has indicated that the industry must work together to overcome these issues and provide accurate information or it may look to impose further legislation

**Supply chain challenges:**

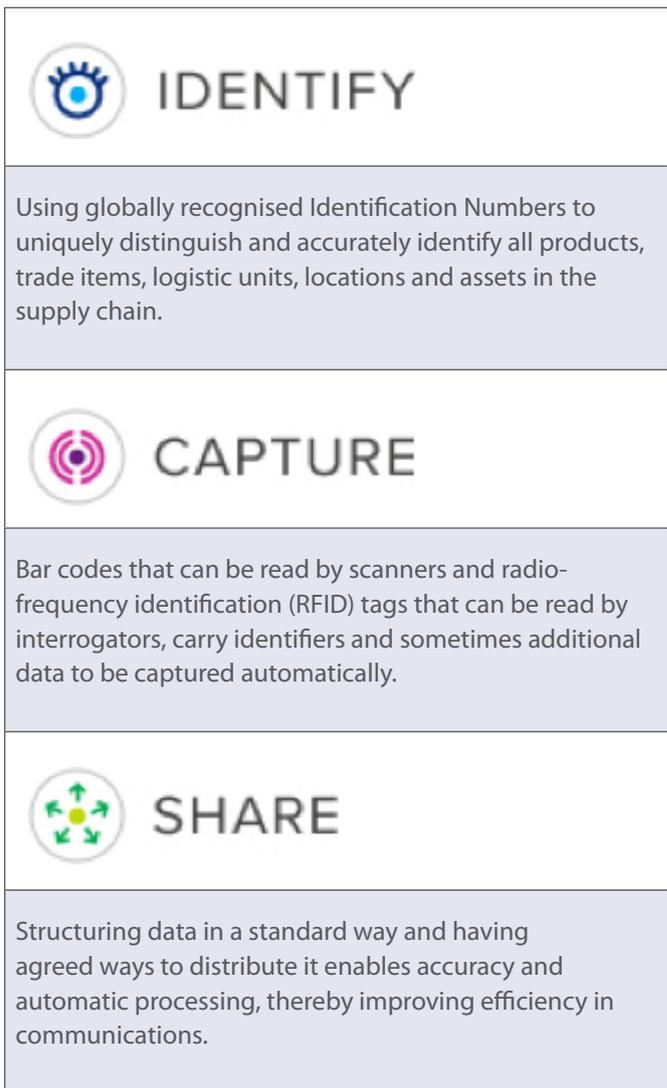
- Systems and processes to handle product information have not grown and are the same as when the market was smaller, slower and less dynamic
- Limited processes to check accuracy of information
- No mechanisms to update the different usage points such as buying, warehousing, logistics and IT when processes, content or attributes change
- Supply chain responsibility has not been allocated for ensuring the ongoing quality of information, or removing obsolete information from master information files

### 3. What did we do?

Recognising the growing need for up-to-date and accurate information, the FSDG initiated a research project to establish current processes for identifying, capturing and sharing information within the industry, and to consider how the current processes potentially impact the sector’s ability to manage information challenges.

For the research, Brakes, Unilever, Mitchells & Butler, and Whitbread allowed known existing industry processes to be captured and reviewed in order to establish a baseline position on the three key pillars of information management: Identification, Capturing and Sharing. Compass Group provided additional industry insight and a review of the findings.

In section 6, the findings have been used to highlight opportunities for improvement and guidance on how to begin tackling the issues.



### Research approach:

For each participating organisation, processes relating to business information management were reviewed:

- Pre-commencement survey looking at current business information usage and projected future requirements
- Review of AS-IS processes and future requirements with a participant from the following departments:
  - Supply Chain
  - Product Change Management
  - Manufacturing (where relevant)
  - Logistics
  - Commercial
- Assessment of workshop outputs and identification of current positions in relation to Identify, Capture and Share highlighting the impact that the current position has on the overall performance of the industry

## 4. Results of the study

The main findings of the research into the current supply chain processes and practices within the Food Services sector are split into:

- Identification of products
- Capturing information relating to products moving through the supply chain
- Sharing information related to products moving through the supply chain

### 4.1 Identify, Capture, Share

The study found that electronic identification, or how a product is identified within systems, is key to efficient supply chains and the management of product information.

#### Our research shows:

- 60% of products entering the Food Service supply chain do not have a globally recognised unique item identifier assigned by the manufacturer
- The majority of products that have a globally recognised item identifier assigned are supplied by manufacturers and suppliers who also serve the retail sector, such as Unilever. Selected distributors like Brakes, who supply own brand products use globally recognised item identifiers
- There is an inconsistent application of identifiers
- Where the globally recognised identifier is assigned to an own brand product for a distributor, it is not used as the unique identifier throughout the whole supply chain
- There is a heavy reliance on internal company-specific product identifiers, such as manufacturer's number, distributor's number and operator's number
- There is no globally recognised unique identifier being used throughout the Food Service supply chain to identify an item

#### What does this mean?

- There is no uniform identifier throughout the supply chain – there is reliance on mapping to create traceability, which adds a level of complexity when communicating information about products such as Purchase Orders
- Internal numbers do not guarantee uniqueness, potentially causing issues
- Multiple identifiers for each product are creating confusion
- No uniform identifier is leading to a heavy use of descriptions in communications between trading partners. Trading partners use differing description protocols adding to the confusion over product identity
- Orders placed with reliance on mapping results in errors leading to inventory imbalances and wastage
- Lack of common identifier on items, cases and pallets means the use of automated information capture solutions are not viable

**Managing assets better in the Food Service supply chain can lead to efficient supply chain practices and support of the sustainability agenda by freeing up capital and resources that can be used elsewhere. In addition, reducing wastage and increasing sustainability, by knowing where products are at any given time, will benefit the industry and its customers.**

## 4.2 Identify, Capture, Share

Technology allows key data such as identity numbers, use by dates and batch numbers, for products moving through the Food Service supply chain to be captured and used. Examples include bar codes and RFID that are applied to physical products and carry identification numbers, and sometimes additional data, so that they may be captured automatically, accurately and quickly and entered directly into supply chain systems. However to be usable in supply chains involving multiple companies (which most do) they have to conform to a recognised standard.

The current practices regarding the identification of products and delivery units create a number of issues and challenges including the lack of a common identifier on items, cases and pallets and the use of non-standard identifiers ensures various codes have to be mapped to each other.

### Our research shows:

- Where a manufacturer supplies retail customers, bar code scanning is used to capture data from the point of dispatch to the Food Service customer
- Only 30% of products entering the supply chain have a compliant bar code at product level
- 80% of products entering the supply chain do not have a compliant logistics label applied at the pallet or delivery unit level
- Manufacturers with no direct retail business do not use data capture technology
- There is no evidence of widely deployed data capture solutions where the product identification held in a bar code is scanned and used as the key to access information. We are aware of major initiatives to introduce this. Other automated solutions are being deployed, however, the information relating to the product is being entered manually and product identified by the description on packaging
- Heavy use of descriptions and/or proprietary numbering exists
- Significant paper-based processes around dispatch and receipt activities
- Manual entry through the supply chain - one company had 14 points of manual entry from receipt into the Food Service network from delivery to point of use in restaurants
- The remaining products either have no bar code or a bar code that is not GS1 compliant
- There is no evidence of additional information being applied in the bar code such as 'use by' dates (except 20%)

### What does this mean?

- The high level of manual information input results in errors when capturing information
- There is an increasing use of assumptions to collect key information
- There is a reliance on visual identification of the correct product, for instance, when receiving a pallet of multiple products in similar brown boxes, it is easy to make a mistake and record the quantities incorrectly. Such a reliance is often subjective
- Accurate, case level traceability is currently only achievable with a high level of manual intervention, for instance, manually recording batch numbers and 'use by' dates
- As the automatic data capture solutions cannot be used, manual processes around paper and/or manual information entry of product identity and attributes have to be deployed
- Errors occur when there is a reliance on manual processes to capture key information such as product identifiers and use by dates
- Manual information collection processes causes:
  - Inefficiencies
  - Errors
  - Heavy reliance on resources
  - Negative impacts on key areas such as quantity of food wastage and stock mismanagement

**Automating data capture in the Food Service industry ensures accurate information is used. This allows errors to be reduced so companies can make cost savings and provide a better service to suppliers and end-users. Automatic Data Capture technologies are already widely deployed in several industries: retail, pharmaceuticals and automotive where they have delivered major efficiencies and cost savings. Within retail, automating the goods receiving processes has led to cost savings of 82% through deploying automatic data capture. The quality of information has increased, leading to improvements in inventory management, fewer out of stocks and a reduction in waste.**

## 4.3 Identify, Capture, Share

Sharing and managing information associated with a product is vital, however, the sector currently uses various methods to transfer information between supply chain partners and departmental teams. Consumers can also impact the sharing of information through social media and websites commenting and informing others with simple recommendations or nutritional and allergen advice, which could potentially be very dangerous if inaccurate.

### Our research shows:

- There is a wide variation of companies that use a consistent solution for the product information process to make the information available. 14% of companies will not accept new products onto their product file unless the information is received through the information process. The remainder use traditional methods such as new line forms.
- The majority of the sector is heavily reliant on company specific new line forms
- Most of the sector does not have a single point where all product information is held
- There are multiple information feeds with information requested by different departments within a company
- Information is stored in multiple areas – internet, intranet, PDFs and menus
- Setting up a new line with nine points of manual information entry can take up to 15 minutes per point - potentially absorbing two hours of resource. The Food Service sector has a heavy reliance on information being passed to next step for progression through email with spreadsheet attachments. The supply chain team will set the product up on their systems and notify other departments that the product is live, triggering those departments to request the information they require from the supplier
- The sector does not operate on one point of truth with automatic feeds into other systems
- There is a high level of paper-based information management moving down the supply chain
- There is little visibility of who in the supply chain is using what information and what version
- There is limited knowledge up the supply chain as to whether changes to master information are received and implemented

### What does this mean?

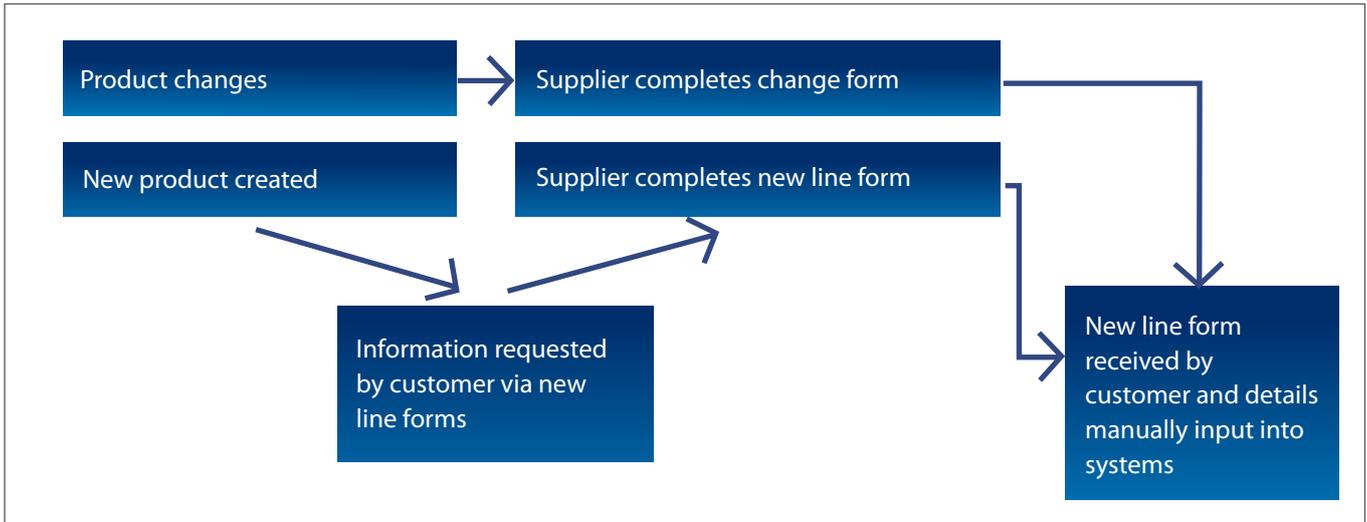
- Supply chain accuracy is impacted as information is manually entered into systems and inaccurate information is then passed onto suppliers and end-users
- Although suppliers go to great lengths to create documentation for nutritional information and make it available through the supply chain with printed sheets and websites, there is no feedback loop that confirms if a user has received changes or actioned them
- Every point of manual information re-entry creates an opportunity to impact the accuracy of information shared. The Food Service sector process currently has a significant number of points where manual information entry occurs
- Information updates, amends and changes are hard to manage, action and share when using paper
- There is potential for consumer facing statements to be incorrect over time
- Trust issues arise where consumers query whether the information is correct or not

**“Product information requirements are set to double in the next five years, the industry must take action by working together to prepare for this challenge. It is more important than ever to have the right product, with the right information, in the right place at the right time with the right cost.”**

*Gary Lynch, Chief Executive Officer, GS1 UK*

**The challenge for the sector is how to ensure accurate, consistent, timely and easily understood information is available to all in the supply chain and can be identified as being trusted.**

## Manual management of product information example:



### Example:

Information accuracy between one supplier and one customer was examined with the flow for new products and product changes showing in the above diagram (except where the supplier used information mapping to populate the form).

By comparing the customer master information files with the same information held by the manufacturer, an error rate of 8.3% (896 individual attributes being incorrect across 240 products with 45 attributes) was found.

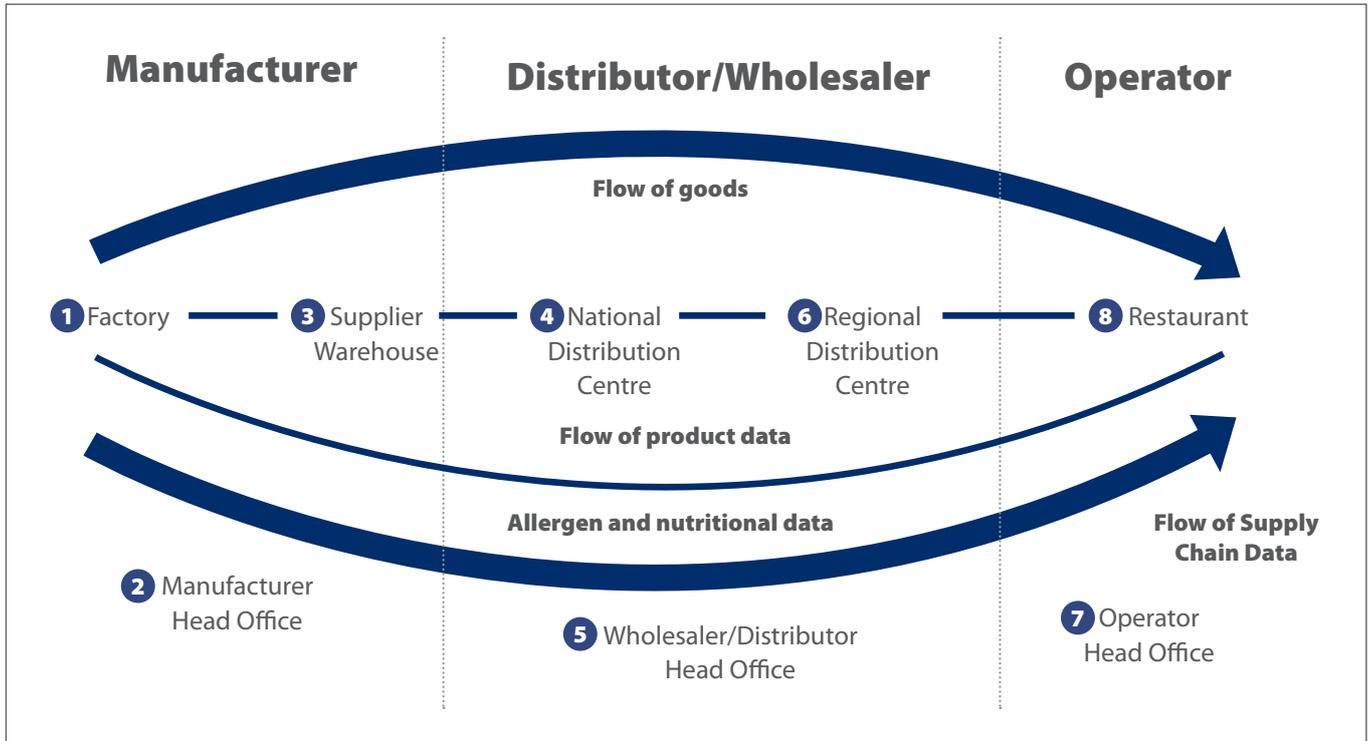
The errors found in the customer product file information were due to mistakes when inputting information and not actioning changes to product attributes sent by the supplier. This information held by the operator/distributor is used to forward information down the chain, compounding the overall information quality issue.

Errors such as these could cause unnecessary problems in the supply chain if they involved incorrect dimensions or products containing an allergen.

**“The information needs of all our customers so that they can efficiently make our products available to chefs is vital to the way we do business in the UK. As an industry we’ve got the opportunity to work together and make a commitment to take action and reduce food waste and adhere to legislation. All of us have a role to play and need to take responsibility in working out the best way to follow this through.”**

*Tracey Rogers, Managing Director, Unilever Food Solutions*

The reasons for much of the inconsistency and inaccuracy of product data held by companies throughout the supply chain can be found within supply chain processes. Different functions have different information needs and in the absence of an accurate and standardised source of data, each department has created its own local repository of information. The following chart identifies key areas where these separate islands of information exist, and highlight the vital effects they can have on the operational efficiency of the business.



**Impacts: Administration 1,2,4, 5, 7**

Cause:	Effect:
Unmanaged process to make changes to product data after new line forms have been sent	Customer does not benefit from latest product information and operator/ restaurant cannot meet 2014 regulatory requirements
A multiplicity of data requirements across retailers	Increased effort and slower new line introductions
Purchase Order and invoice mis-match	Increased workload for finance departments and delayed payments

**Impacts: Depot 3,4,6**

Cause:	Effect:
Incorrect product life data	Manual checks on life dates at goods in and costs of rejected goods
Incorrect case quantities	Impacts all areas of business e.g. invoice matching for finance, ordering and depot operations
TiHi data wrong or missing	Requirement for manual checks and storage issues if height exceeds allowable limits; ultimately this can result in quarantine or rejection
Incorrect case weights and dimensions	Cage and trailer load problems impacting vehicle fill

**Impacts: Restaurant 8**

Cause:	Effect:
Not using Globally Unique Identifiers	Manual checks are required and rely on descriptions for stock checking
	Manual checks at goods receipt

## 5. Impact of current processes

Current processes impact the Food Service sector by contributing negatively to the key drivers outlined in section 2. Legacy systems and manual processing contribute to enormous inaccuracies and information inconsistencies, which lead to obvious problems including:

- **Diminished brand loyalty** amongst consumers
- The **inability to meet consumer need for information** around dietary intolerances and allergies
- The **associated consequences of not adhering to legislation**
- Building and operating local silos of product information impose a **large and unnecessary operational cost on the supply chain**

### Consumer:

The variety of products sourced by Food Service businesses is growing to meet consumer demands. This diversity adds to the complexity of product information, which in turn increases the risk of error if the quality of information is not properly managed.

To identify the ingredients across the many tens of thousands of products handled by major Food Service businesses, and to track products through the complex supply chains, it is essential that comprehensive product information can be readily available at a central point. Often this information is buried within a maze of spreadsheets in local stores and warehouses, or simply missing from the entire organisation.

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**Our research shows nearly two thirds of products contained at least one nutritional related error one step down from the supplier. Mistakes like these are a growing concern for the industry potentially causing diminished brand loyalty and the inability to meet consumers' need for accurate information.**

Product sourcing is complex; fruit, vegetables and non-food products are arriving from more and more countries, with different cross-border taxes and quotas, weight and volume systems and different labelling, packaging and language standards.

With concerns regarding healthy eating and allergies, failure to provide information on product ingredients could have serious consequences for the consumer, supplier, manufacturer and retailer. In addition to the potential human cost, such a crisis could have a severe impact on brand reputation. It is therefore important to record the origins of product batches as well as constituent ingredients. Should any ingredient become the subject of

a health alert, action can be taken to identify all affected products and withdraw relevant product batches.

### CSR and legislation:

Using standard product identifiers combined with data capture solutions, it is possible to build accurate and resilient solutions that allow products to be tracked through the supply chain efficiently and effectively. This enables improvements to be made to CSR practices, while at the same time increasing legislative and regulatory compliance.

The retail and hospitality industries are responsible for large quantities of food waste. The sector throws away 600,000 tonnes of food per annum of which **400,000 tonnes** is avoidable had it been better portioned, managed, stored and/or prepared.

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**WRAP estimates avoidable food waste costs the hospitality industry around £722m a year through wasted ingredients and labour, out-of-date foods, consumer leftovers or rising disposal costs. This is equivalent to 21 tonnes per eatery.**

Over 12,000 tonnes of the avoidable waste was in its' original packaging due to issues associated with stock management including first-in-first out controls and inventory management. This represents almost £17.5 million per annum of waste. Not only is food waste expensive, it has a damaging effect on the environment. The food supply chain accounts for one fifth of UK carbon emissions and if the UK is to meet obligations under the European Landfill Directive to reduce biodegradable waste going to landfill, it has to act fast.

The European Food Information Regulation due to come into force in 2014 ensures consumers can make informed decisions about their food purchases online or offline. While the main thrust of the new rules are around food labelling on the physical package, it also sets out new requirements for information that must be provided to the consumer for food sold online, via mobile apps and other distance selling methods. This will place even greater demands on the management of information within the supply chain.

### Supply chain processes:

The low level use of globally recognised unique identifiers and data capture technologies leads to difficulties in the supply chain such as over or under stocking. In order to manage inventory levels, the Food Service sector supply chain carries out frequent, manual stock checks with warehouses being cycle checked fortnightly and individual restaurants often daily.

In addition, there is a complex network of National and Regional Distribution Centres and satellites serving the customer base. Products may undergo several pick-up operations, in different locations before being shipped to the final customer. This complexity provides challenges for the tracking and tracing of products, and information capture solutions would enable greater visibility of where products are in the chain.

The lack of a globally recognised, unique identifier on two-thirds of the products entering the supply chain means significant effort is required to track products from the constituent supplier to their end point. This complexity further increases when products are given internal identifier codes for different customers as part of the order process.

Employees in buying and commercial, logistics, warehousing, finance, technical specification and marketing each have their own information requirements. With no central point for obtaining or inputting product information, local spreadsheets are created at numerous points. The existence of multiple manually entered data points creates inconsistency and causes inaccuracies as well as creating a significant hidden cost of staff maintaining the local information.

Inaccurate product information is a major cause of:

- Invoicing errors leading to compliance issues and supplier conflicts
- Incorrect shipments resulting in unhappy customers and additional expense
- Variations in pack configurations and quantities leading to unnecessary delivery rejections, manual investigations and repeat logistics activity

The hidden cost of workaround processes required to keep the supply chain running is expected to be £100 million over the next four years.

70% of products entering the supply chain do not have a globally recognised identifier carried in a bar code. This results in significant manual time and energy to ensure key information such as use by dates is accurately captured. Pilots into globally recognised identifiers indicate that implementing standard ID and data capture solutions at the point of receipt has the following benefits:

- The time to receive could be slashed by 36% if all data capture solutions were deployed, saving £1.9 million per year of cost
- Research indicates that 10% of invoices are disputed due to differences in items on delivery tickets or whether goods were received

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**Well-designed standards allow organisations to focus on how to use information rather than how to get information.**

## 6. Industry next steps



### How the Food Service industry can work to meet the growing information demands:

The problem needs to be recognised at board level, with senior executives made responsible for information. Collaboration is key and the industry must move to a standard approach for greater information accuracy.

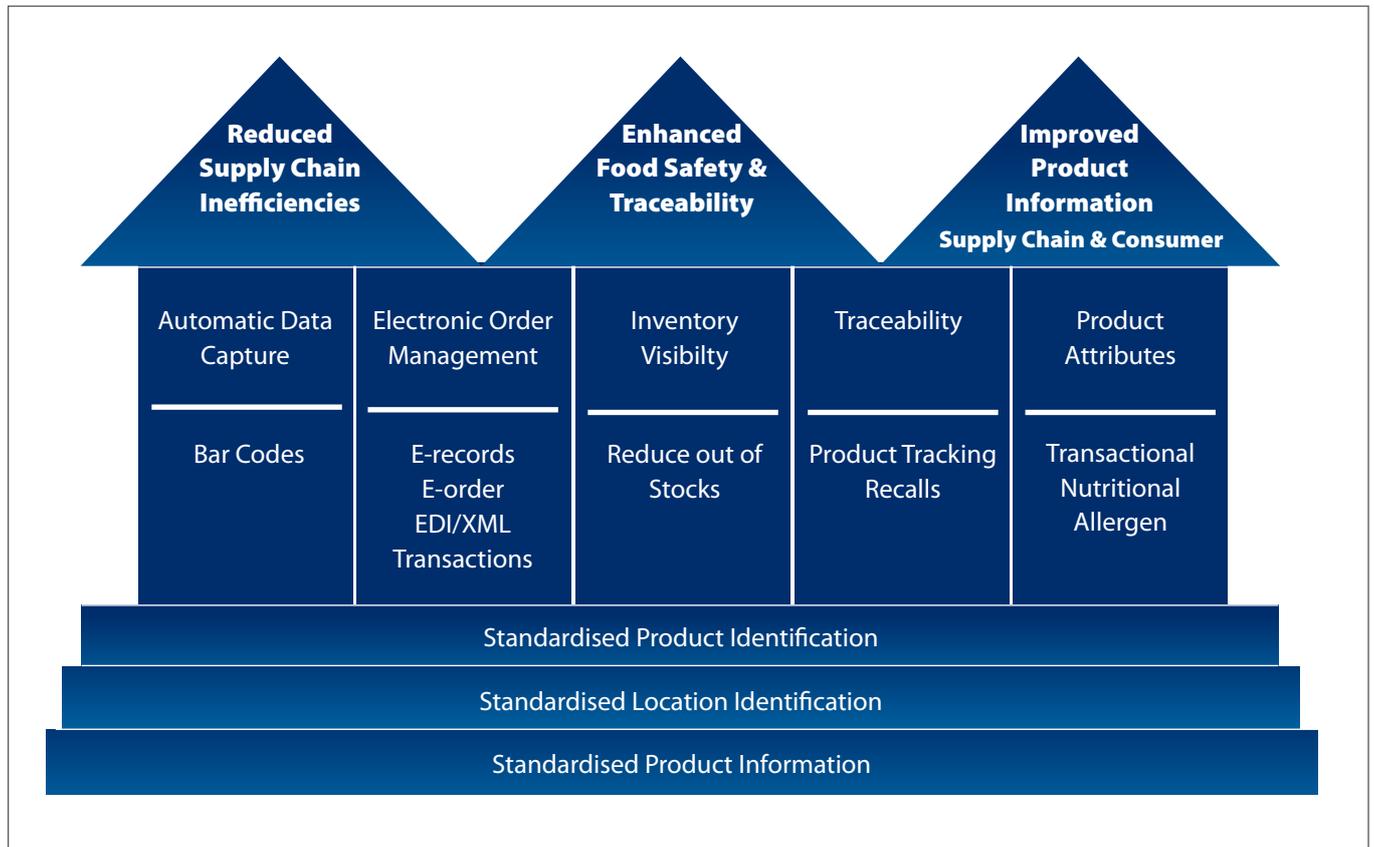
To achieve change within the industry, the FSDG will implement industry best practice guidelines and work with industry members and partner organisations to support

the adoption of GS1 global standards. Best practice will be based on the adoption of an industry standard approach for identification, data capturing and information sharing. These foundations will enable the building blocks for the industry to adopt and implement further standards-based solutions to meet the requirements placed on them by legislative and consumer requirements, corporate and social responsibility initiatives and business function requirements.

**Foundation Steps:**

Based on the findings of the research the FSDG has identified three foundation areas the industry should firstly adopt:

1. Standardised Product Identification
2. Standardised Location Identification
3. Standardised Product Information



**Adoption of these foundations will allow other standards-based solutions to be implemented by businesses throughout the supply chain. For instance:**

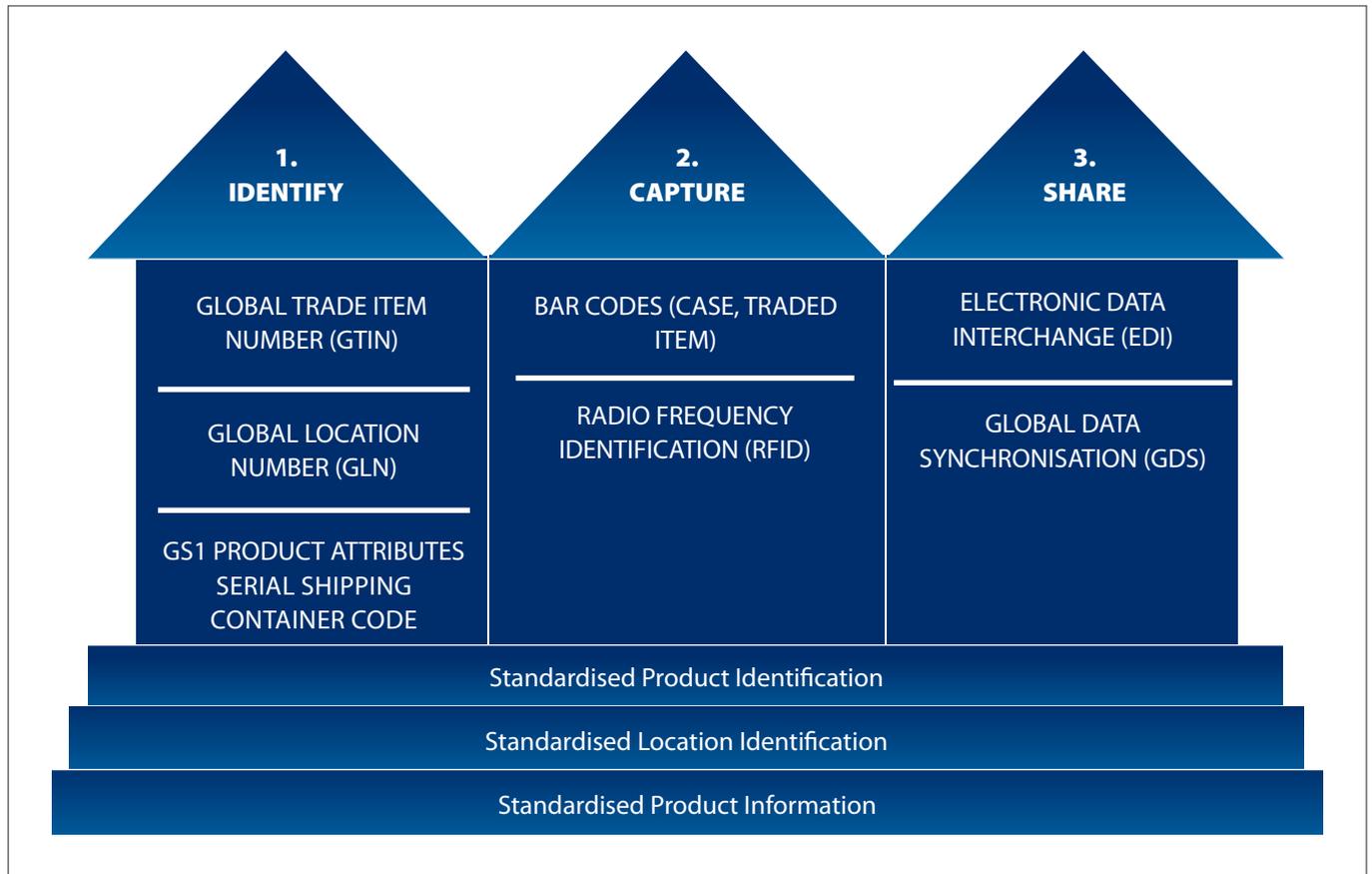
- Automatic Data Capture
- Electronic Order Management
- Inventory Visibility
- Traceability
- Product Attributes

**“With customer satisfaction key to our business, the growing nutritional and allergen information demands for our products are top of mind alongside reducing food and packaging waste. Consumer and legislative information requirements are growing; having the correct product information is vital to ensuring our continued success and this report highlights how the industry has a unique opportunity to tackle these growing challenges through working together to adopt a common information approach.”**

*Brodie McMillan, Logistics Director, Whitbread Group Plc*

**The roadmap:**

The roadmap is based on a proven methodology and follows a global Food Service initiative approach ensuring consistency for all businesses whether they are purely UK focused or have global business links. It is based on a structured approach of implementation for all industry members of any size or at any point of adoption. This long-term road map is designed to achieve industry commonality and is phased into three areas. GS1 and the FSDG in particular will support businesses in the adoption and transition from areas one to three.



**“The desire of both catering customers and consumers for information about the food on their plate has grown considerably in the last 10 years and will continue to do so. The industry needs to fulfil this demand in the same way it has pushed the boundaries on service and reliability and embed data accuracy into its operating DNA.”**

*Sean Negus, Business Process & Change Director, Demand & Supply Planning, Brakes*

## 7. Summary

Although the supply chain continues to function and satisfy consumers, the financial cost of the manual workarounds, lost sales, wastage and loss of brand loyalty is significant. This is unsustainable and growth in the industry will be stunted if use of the current model continues. The industry must concentrate on raising efficiency levels and streamlining activities. Improving product information and reducing the time and effort it takes to identify, capture and share accurate information, will play an important part.

The quantity of information companies are required to supply customers and consumers around issues including sustainability and nutrition is set to increase exponentially. Information quality will become a key priority for the Food Service industry and the requirement to supply robust, accurate information across ingredients, packaging waste, energy, water and food allergens in the short term will rapidly increase. Added to this are the pressures imposed by consumers, governments, regulators and pressure groups for greater information alongside the complex industry dynamics.

The demand for information is not going to go away. To keep pace with industry expectations and to manage information efficiently and economically, food manufacturers, operators and suppliers need to work together to make it easier to do business through identifying, capturing and sharing consistent information. This is starting to come to fruition through electronic menus in restaurants, trained staff who can advise on products and even having an open kitchen where the chef is available to answer better questions.



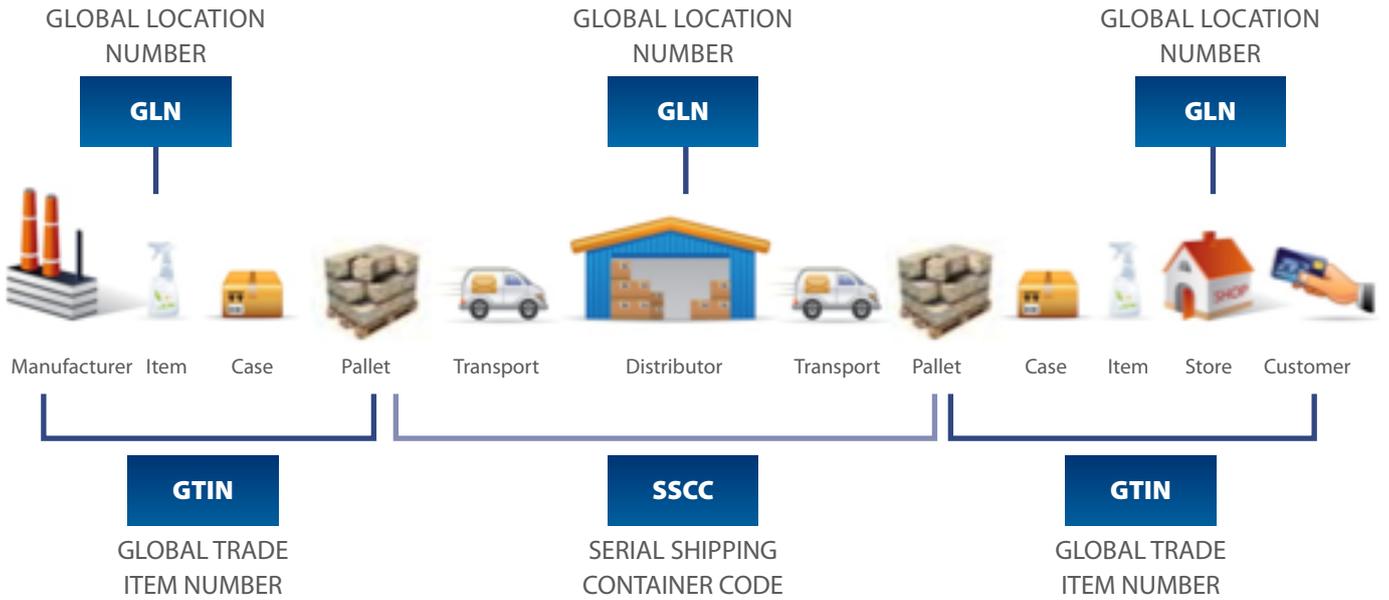
**Improving the quality and consistency of product information in the supply chain is essential to us and**

**our customers. A standard approach ensures we all have access to correct and complete information, improving customer experience and saving significant time and money through the avoidance of errors."**

*Dennis Deare, Director of Food Trading, Mitchells & Butlers*

**GS1 standards:**

# Identify



# Capture



**Benefits of adopting global standards:**

Some companies develop their own proprietary identification, classification and data capture systems. Others use standards that are only functional within the confines of one single industry sector or one single country.

**Global:** no matter where in the world your company, suppliers or customers are based, GS1 standards will function perfectly as the system is truly global.

**Robust:** our standards have been purpose-built to be extremely robust and react and respond predictably, even in unpredictable situations.

**Multi-sector:** standards work within your organisation... and outside of it too. The Global System of Standards has been endorsed by a wide variety of industries.

**Scalable:** the System of Standards suits both small and large companies, a single product or hundreds. Scalability allows companies to smoothly expand product lines, extend into new geographies, merge or acquire companies.

**GS1 standards are used today by more than a million companies in dozens of sectors including healthcare, transportation and logistics, chemicals, high tech – and still, of course, the retail supply chain.**



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