

WR #	GSCN Name	Effective Date
18-120	GTIN non-reuse effectuation	1-Oct-2018

Associated Work Request (WR) Number:

18-000120
17-000073

Background:

- This is a follow-up on WR17-073 GTIN reuse cessation that was ratified and published in GS1 General Specifications version 17.1.
- In the WR17-073 led to the inclusion of the following statement: The standard for GTIN Reuse will be changed in **December 2018**: a GTIN allocated to a trade item SHALL NOT be reallocated to another trade item. The only exceptions are:
 - If a GTIN has been assigned to an item, which was then never actually produced, the GTIN may be deleted from any catalogue immediately without first being marked as discontinued. In this exceptional case, the GTIN may be reused 12 months after deletion from the seller's catalogue.
 - Trade items that have been withdrawn from the market and are reintroduced may use the original GTIN if they are reintroduced without any modifications or changes that require a new GTIN as specified by the GTIN Management Standard.
- With this change coming into effect, it now needs to be fully incorporated in the GS1 General Specifications v19 (to be published in January 2019).

GS1 General Specification Change:

The recommended changes are highlighted below, relative to GS1 General Specifications version 18.

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1.6 Allocation

GS1 Member Organisations licence GS1 Company Prefixes and in some cases also licence individual GS1 identification keys (e.g., GTINs and GLNs) to companies.

A company, when licensing a GS1 Company Prefix, has access to all applications using the GS1 system of identification (e.g., logistic unit, service or asset identification). An individually licenced GS1 identification key, generally speaking, provides limited access to the GS1 system.

Regardless of the way the GS1 number has been issued by the GS1 Member Organisation, the ~~normal~~ requirements on the reuse of GS1 identification keys apply to all organisations at all times.

Additional guidelines in the following sections apply when a company changes legal status as a result of an acquisition, merger, partial purchase, split, or "spin-off."

GS1 Member Organisations may adapt the following guidelines if the law of the country makes it absolutely necessary.

Companies SHOULD notify their GS1 Member Organisation of any legal status change within one year of that change to facilitate a smooth transition.

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1.6.1 Acquisitions and mergers

If a company is being acquired by or merged with another company and has stock on hand, the stock's existing Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) ~~should~~ SHOULD be kept. Products that are produced after the acquisition or merger may keep the GTIN allocated before the acquisition if the acquiring company maintains the licence with the GS1 Member Organisation to use the applicable GS1 Company Prefix or [GS1 identification](#) keys.

1.6.1.1 GS1 identification keys transferred to an acquiring company

An acquisition or merger often implies that a company has taken over another company and has assumed responsibility for the acquired company's GS1 Company Prefixes and any individually assigned GS1 identification keys. For example, products that the acquired company identified using its GS1 Company Prefix or individually assigned ~~GTINs~~ [GS1 GS1 identification keys](#) can still be produced using the same keys after the merger, since the acquiring company now has the licence to use the acquired company's GS1 Company Prefix(es) and GS1 identification keys. ~~If it so desires,~~ ~~The~~ acquiring company can also choose to identify the products using their own GS1 Company Prefix.

- ✔ **Note:** A company should be careful when centralising the allocation of all numbers under one GS1 Company Prefix, for example resulting in a change of the GTIN of existing products, which are otherwise unchanged. Centralising the allocation of all numbers under a single GS1 Company Prefix should be an exception, as it may result in additional work and data file maintenance for customers.

The importance of ensuring trading partners are informed of any changes in a timely manner cannot be overemphasised.

- ! **Important:** [See section 4 for the reuse rules that apply to the party that acquires the GS1 identification keys, in particular the GTIN non-reuse rules in section 4.3.5.](#)

1.6.1.2 GS1 identification keys not transferred to acquiring company

If a company acquires a division of a [nother](#) company, but its GS1 Company Prefixes continue to be used in other divisions not acquired, then the acquiring company must change the Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) and Global Location Numbers (GLNs) for the acquired division within one year.

- ✔ **Note:** The rules concerning the use of the seller's GTINs and other GS1 identification keys should be taken into consideration when drawing up the purchase contract.



! **Important:** See section 4 for ~~any special GTIN~~the reuse rules that may apply to the party that retains the GS1 identification keys, in particular the GTIN non-reuse rules in section 4.3.5.

At the earliest opportunity, the acquiring company SHOULD phase-in new numbers from its own range of numbers for items whose brand name it has acquired. The acquiring company will be able to do this, for example, when packaging is redesigned or reprinted.

If a company sells an asset to another company, then the asset identifier SHOULD ideally be replaced by another Global Individual Asset Identifier (GIAI) or Global Returnable Asset Identifier (GRAI) within one year or be removed from the ~~physical item~~asset.

~~During a sale of division or asset and for four years following the selling company must not reallocate the original numbers to other items.~~

! **Important:** See section 4 for ~~any special GTIN reuse rules that may apply.~~

1.6.2 Split or spin-off

When a company splits into two or more separate companies it is necessary for each GS1 Company Prefix of the original company to be transferred to only one of the new companies. Individually assigned keys also need to be transferred to only one of the new companies. If a company is left without a GS1 Company Prefix or individually assigned keys and has a requirement to identify products, locations, or assets etc., it will need to apply to a GS1 Member Organisation to obtain a new GS1 Company Prefix or individual [GS1 identification keys](#) as appropriate.

The decision about which of the new companies should take the original GS1 Company Prefixes should be made in such a way as to minimise the impact on existing GS1 identification keys, in particular existing Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs). The decision should be part of the legal arrangements of the new companies.

It is not necessary for existing stocks of [trade items](#) to be renumbered. However, when any of the split or spin-off companies has trade items that are numbered with a GS1 Company Prefix that it no longer holds, the company SHOULD renumber those items using its own GS1 Company Prefix when new labelling or packaging is produced. Customers should be notified well in advance of the changes.

Split or spin-off companies that retain a GS1 Company Prefix [or individually assigned GTINs](#) must keep a record of the GTINs ~~created~~ that have been allocated to items they no longer own [and must adhere to the standards surrounding the use of the GS1 identification keys](#). ~~They must not reuse these GTINs for a period of at least four years after the company that split away last supplied goods identified by those GTINs. Therefore, the company that did not retain the GS1 Company Prefix has to keep the company that now maintains it informed of the dates on which goods were last supplied using that GS1 Company Prefix or to guarantee a date by which the number change will be made.~~

! **Important:** See section 4 for ~~any the~~special GTIN reuse rules that ~~may apply~~ apply to the party that retains the GS1 identification keys, in particular the GTIN non-reuse rules in section 4.3.5.



previous AIDC marking specifications)

Symbol X-dimensions, minimum symbol height, and minimum symbol quality

For multi-sector use except for retail or regulated healthcare trade items see section 5.9.3.2, GS1 symbol specification table 2.

For regulated healthcare non-retail consumer trade items see section 5.9.3.8, GS1 symbol specification table 8.

For manufacturing and MRO processes see 5.9.3.4, GS1 symbol specification table 4.

Symbol placement

All the symbol placement guidelines defined in section 6.

Unique application processing requirements

For a description of processing requirements, see section Z.

2.1.8.2 Trade item groupings of identical trade items

Application description

A trade item grouping that is a predefined grouping of identical trade items. The manufacturer or supplier has the option of either assigning a unique GTIN-13 or GTIN-12 to each trade item grouping or assigning a unique GTIN-14. These 14-digit GTINs incorporate the GTIN (less its check digit) of the trade item contained in each grouping. The check digit for each GTIN-14 is then recalculated.

The indicators have no meaning. The digits do not have to be used in sequential order, and some may not be used at all. The GTIN-14 structure for trade item groupings creates extra numbering capacity. ~~Indicators can be reused.~~

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Figure 2.1.8.2-1. GTIN-14 data structures

		Global Trade Item Number (GTIN)												
		Indicator	GTIN of contained trade items (without check digit)											Check digit
GTIN-8 based	N ₁	0	0	0	0	0	N ₇	N ₈	N ₉	N ₁₀	N ₁₁	N ₁₂	N ₁₃	N ₁₄
GTIN-12 based	N ₁	0	N ₃	N ₄	N ₅	N ₆	N ₇	N ₈	N ₉	N ₁₀	N ₁₁	N ₁₂	N ₁₃	N ₁₄
GTIN-13 based	N ₁	N ₂	N ₃	N ₄	N ₅	N ₆	N ₇	N ₈	N ₉	N ₁₀	N ₁₁	N ₁₂	N ₁₃	N ₁₄

The indicator is a digit with a value of 1 to 8. It is assigned as required by the company that constructs the identification number. It can provide up to eight separate GTIN-14s to identify trade item groupings.

For packaging configuration hierarchies which include a retail consumer trade item identified with a GTIN-13, GTIN-12, or GTIN-8, this GTIN must always be one of the relevant levels of packaging contained, usually the lowest level (see note below related to GTIN-14 assignment on the primary packaging). Restricted Circulation Numbers must not be used in this element string.

Note: regulated healthcare trade items on the primary packaging, the phrase "usually the lowest level" SHALL be interpreted as allowing for the use of GTIN-14 on packaging configurations below the retail consumer trade item level, if one exists. This interpretation may not be applied to other trade item categories such as Do It Yourself (DIY) or Foodservice.

Any product package which will encounter scanning or product listing for sale at point-of-sale SHALL be identified according to retail point-of-sale specifications.

4.3.5 ~~Lead time in reusing a GTIN non-reuse~~

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~~A GTIN allocated to a trade item that has become obsolete must not be reused for another trade item until at least 48 months have elapsed after:~~

- ~~■ the expiration date of the last original trade items produced with that number~~
- ~~—or—~~
- ~~■ the last original trade items produced with that number have been supplied to the customer.~~

~~The following sector-specific rules apply:~~

- ~~■ Apparel: In the case of clothing the minimum retention period is reduced to 30 months.~~
- ~~■ Healthcare: Companies must ensure that GTINs allocated to regulated healthcare trade items SHALL never be reused.~~

~~Exception: regulated healthcare trade items that have been withdrawn from the market and are reintroduced may use the original GTIN if they are reintroduced without any modifications or changes which require a new GTIN as specified by the GTIN Management Standard.~~
- ~~■ Technical industries: GTINs that are marked directly on components and parts, such as used in rail rolling stock and infrastructure, SHALL never be reused (also see 2.1.11).~~

~~For other trade items, brand owners should consider a longer period depending upon the type of goods and/or any regulatory framework. For example, steel beams may be stored for many years before entering the supply chain, and processes should be put in place to ensure that the GTIN is not reallocated for a significant period of time.~~

~~In addition, when contemplating the reuse of a GTIN, consideration should be given to the use of data associated with the original GTIN by trading partners for statistical analysis or service records, which may continue long after the original trade item was last supplied.~~

~~If a GTIN has been assigned to an item, which was then never actually produced, the GTIN may be deleted from any catalogue immediately without first being marked as discontinued. In this exceptional case the GTIN may be reused 12 months after deletion from the seller's catalogue.~~

- !** **Important:** ~~The standard for GTIN Reuse will be changed in December 2018: a GTIN allocated to a trade item SHALL NOT be reallocated to another trade item. The only exceptions are:~~
 - ~~□ If a GTIN has been assigned to an item, which was then never actually produced, the GTIN may be deleted from any catalogue immediately without first being marked as discontinued. In this exceptional case, the GTIN may be reused 12 months after deletion from the seller's catalogue.~~
 - ~~□ Trade items that have been withdrawn from the market and are reintroduced may use the original GTIN if they are reintroduced without any modifications or changes that require a new GTIN as specified by the GTIN Management Standard.~~

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- ~~■ If a GTIN has been assigned to an item, which was then never actually produced, the GTIN may be deleted from any catalogue immediately without first being marked as discontinued. In this exceptional case, the GTIN may be reused 12 months after deletion from the seller's catalogue.~~
- ~~■ Trade items that have been withdrawn from the market and are reintroduced may use the original GTIN if they are reintroduced without any modifications or changes that require a new GTIN as specified by the GTIN Management Standard.~~

- ✓** **Note:** ~~The GTIN non-reuse rule went into effect on 1 January 2019 in response to digital business demand. GTINs discontinued and withdrawn from the market prior to 1 January 2019 may be considered for reuse one final time (*). However, companies are strongly~~

[advised to follow the non-reuse rule for all GTINs to avoid risks of conflicting data.](#)

[\(*\) If a GTIN was withdrawn prior to 1 January 2019, the previously applicable rules must be adhered to \(see section 4.17.1 Deprecated GTIN reuse rules\).](#)

4.3.6 Data alignment

When a new Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) is assigned to a trade item, it is essential that the brand owner provide the detailed information to trading partners about the item's characteristics. This information should be provided at as soon as possible before the trade item is actually traded. Expediting GTIN information to buyers reduces order exception handling and reduces the lead time in getting goods to the selling floor.

4.3.6.1 Data alignment best practice

A number of actions are vital to ensure that Global Trade Item Numbers (GTINs) are accurately communicated within the supply chain. These ensure that the data associated with any scanned barcode can be associated with accurate, up-to-date data. This is particularly essential for items scanned at the point-of-sale where the absence of accurate data may have legal implications.

The GTIN provides a supply chain solution for the identification of any item that is traded (priced, invoiced, or ordered). Overall supply chain costs are minimised by all partners in the supply chain adhering to identical GTIN Management Standards (see section [4.3](#)).

The following best practices are proposed for all items. It has been developed by manufacturers, distributors, and retailers to help eliminate any confusion between product identification and product listing in the retailer's database in the supply chain.

1. GTIN Management and the barcoding of the GTIN are technical processes with rules detailed in these GS1 General Specifications. Product listing is the act of adopting a new product in an assortment by a commercial organisation. Product listing is the result of commercial negotiations between purchaser and seller. For example, GTIN Management should be independent from product listing.
2. For management reasons, or to ensure that correct information is communicated to the final consumer, changes to an item may require a new GTIN. A new GTIN does not automatically imply a new listing. For example, if a change requiring a new GTIN is made to a listed product, this should not automatically imply a new product listing is needed.

GTIN Management and database listing are to be considered as two entirely autonomous decisions: GTIN Management is not an object of negotiation.

The brand owner makes available to its client all information regarding the listed items, ideally with an EDI message or in an e-product catalogue, no later than at the time of item listing. In case of time limited promotions or a product evolution, this information will be communicated largely beforehand, thus allowing the retailer to validate this information and to circulate it internally.

4.3.7 GTIN-8 guidelines and pack size constraints

~~the following guidelines should be observed. Before deciding to use a GTIN-8 as opposed to a GTIN-13 or GTIN-12, companies, working jointly with their printer, should consider options such as:~~

- ~~Whether the barcode can be reduced in size; e.g., printed at a lower X-dimension, taking into account the minimum barcode print quality requirements (see section [5.9](#)).~~
- ~~Whether the label or artwork can reasonably be changed to enable the inclusion of an EAN-13 or a UPC-A barcode or a symbol from the GS1 DataBar Retail POS family.~~
- ~~For example, redesigning the label and increasing the label size may be an option, especially when the existing label is small in comparison with the pack area.~~
- ~~Whether a truncated barcode can be used.~~

 **Note:** A truncated barcode (normal length, but reduced in height) may only be used if there is absolutely no possibility of printing a full size barcode. Truncation removes the

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4.17 Deprecated rules

This section contains rules that have been deprecated. The rules are included as reference for pre-existing situations where the rules may still apply.

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4.17.1 Deprecated GTIN reuse rules

These rules are deprecated as of 1 January 2019.

A GTIN allocated to a trade item that has become obsolete must not be reused for another trade item until at least 48 months have elapsed after:

- the expiration date of the last original trade items produced with that number
-or-
- the last original trade items produced with that number have been supplied to the customer.

The following sector-specific rules apply:

- Apparel: In the case of clothing the minimum retention period is reduced to 30 months.
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Exception: regulated healthcare trade items that have been withdrawn from the market and are reintroduced may use the original GTIN if they are reintroduced without any modifications or changes which require a new GTIN as specified by the GTIN Management Standard.

- Technical industries: GTINs that are marked directly on components and parts, such as used in rail rolling stock and infrastructure, SHALL never be reused (also see 2.1.11).

For other trade items, brand owners should consider a longer period depending upon the type of goods and/or any regulatory framework. For example, steel beams may be stored for many years before entering the supply chain, and processes should be put in place to ensure that the GTIN is not reallocated for a significant period of time.

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