



PRESS RELEASE

## **GS1 welcomes the ratification of a new standard: GS1 Digital Link**

Similar to a URL, it will enable web connections to all types of B2B and B2C information

**Brussels, 13 August 2018:** GS1, the global supply chain standards organisation, today announced the ratification of a new global standard: [GS1 Digital Link](#). This is a foundational step towards enhancing the shopping experience for consumers around the globe and bringing mobile-phone scanning into the 21st century.

Nowadays, consumers want to learn more about the products they buy through their smartphones—and they want to receive all information available. Scanning products sometimes leads to broken links or websites with incomplete or non-relevant information. Manufacturers are responding to this need for data, transparency and traceability by adding secondary barcodes—such as QR codes—in order to provide more product information. However, multiple barcodes can lead to confusion, both on shopper's phones and at the checkout counter.

Resembling a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) or web address, GS1 Digital Link can enable connections to all types of business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) information. As businesses begin to develop solutions using the new standard, consumers will be able to access a variety of information about a product by simply scanning a QR code with their smartphone: from dimensions and images to expiration dates, nutritional data, warranty registration, troubleshooting instructions—even social media links. They'll even be able to buy or order products, collect loyalty points and "share" products with their friends.

Retailers and brands who deploy solutions that leverage GS1 Digital Link can benefit from the simplification of product packaging and the ability to connect with their customers like never before. By linking the physical world of commerce with its digital counterpart, customers can, for example, be alerted to information on discounts and price matching while they are still inside the physical store. In addition, the standard enhances traceability solutions by enabling the coding and identification of specific product batches in case of a product recall.

Developed by a group of retailers, brand owners, solution providers and technology experts, together with GS1, the GS1 Digital Link standard will complement the traditional, ubiquitous GS1 barcode, which is expected to remain the universal standard for product identification for many years to come. It opens the door however, for a potential opportunity to migrate to a single web-enabled barcode in the future.

Pilot projects are now underway in several countries and some solution providers and brands are already cooperating to upgrade their platforms in order to support this new standard. Other GS1 standards will also continue to improve the efficiency, safety and visibility of supply chains across physical and digital channels.

**Robert Beideman, Senior Vice President Solutions & Innovation, GS1 said:** *"The GS1 Digital Link standard is the foundational bridge between physical products and their digital twins. Ensuring that product data, information about inventory and digital assets for a particular product are linked to each other through a common identity that also links to the actual physical product is essential to serving the needs of consumers today."*

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**About GS1**

GS1® is a neutral, not-for-profit organisation that provides global standards for efficient business communication. We are best known for the barcode, named in 2016 by the BBC as one of “the 50 things that made the world economy.” GS1 standards improve the efficiency, safety and visibility of supply chains across physical and digital channels in 25 sectors. We enable organisations of all types and sizes to identify, capture and share information seamlessly. Our scale and reach – local Member Organisations in 112 countries, 1.5 million user companies and 5 billion transactions every day – help ensure that GS1 standards create a common language that supports systems and processes across the globe. Find out more at [www.gs1.org](http://www.gs1.org).

