



Introduction

METRO Group and **Nestlé**, with a well established collaboration on data synchronisation, have worked together on the GS1 Data Quality Challenge to identify key areas within their relationship that can be improved through the implementation of data quality principles from the GS1 Data Quality Framework.

The Data Quality Challenge builds upon the GS1 Data Quality Framework's **Self-Assessment Procedure**, which enables organisations to assess their internal data management processes, in comparison to best practices. It also reveals important opportunities that can be further used by trading partners to enhance their data management and data quality.

See www.gs1.org/gdsn/dqf/challenge/about for more information.

Why they took the Data Quality Challenge

As part of its GLOBE Programme, the Nestlé Group has instructed the whole organisation (on a world-wide level) to manage data as a company asset. At the same time, data quality is a high priority at METRO Group. After the release of the "METRO Data Quality Principles", participation in the GS1 Data Quality Challenge was the next step in the



METRO Group-wide data quality activities. This shows the importance data quality represents to Nestlé and METRO Group.

When the Self-Assessment Questionnaire was simplified and the Data Quality Challenge launched, they made a common decision to take further steps on shared data quality opportunities.

They decided to work together as they knew it was vital to choose a trading partner with a mindset reflecting the following key values:

- open
- collaboration,
- equal partnership,
- shared responsibilities to deliver win/win benefits, a shared vision on a model that could be replicated across multiple markets and where the learning and experience could be re-used.



Openness, learning together, a 'no-blame' approach, and an absolute willingness to work together constructively and to share their findings are the key conditions for success they commonly identified for a strong and fruitful collaboration.



How they did it

At first, the two companies investigated their internal situation and identified a group of about 100 items that could be studied in detail where information on all levels of data management processes could be accessed; and the people who would be involved in the project. They also pre-defined whether they were going to answer questions based on their global business or on technical aspects. The biggest challenges in getting started were deciding the scope and internal responsibilities.

Training was provided on two levels: globally, (through general education about the Data Quality Challenge for all business units) and locally (through specific training in the Self-Assessment Questionnaire for the teams directly involved) so that people would have sufficient clarity about the process.

Both companies assigned global responsibility to one person in each company who could work on data management and data quality, had experience on best



practices on data management processes and who also had the necessary links to reach out to other areas of the organisation.

Experience and lessons learnt

The companies found that completing the full Self-Assessment Procedure, from planning to compilation of the final results, took less than one week thanks to the fact that they had already a robust internal platform for data quality in addition to the effort they spent on defining properly the scope ahead of time. However, they also found that the questionnaire could not just be passed around without explanation: as a result, they

would recommend companies conducting a self-assessment always to provide an explanation and create some guidelines around the questionnaire when distributing it internally.

Regarding the resources required, both companies feel that the number of people who need to be involved would vary greatly from company to company depending on the starting point, the scope and how each local organisation is set up. Therefore, in general terms both companies recommend keeping the group focused and as small as possible and agree on the essential need to appoint an “assessment leader”.

In summary, the pre-conditions for the self-assessment are: high-level management attention and sponsorship, good support within the company, open collaboration between the trading partners, and most importantly, having a data synchronisation process already deployed internally.

It is important, in the spirit of partnership, that the processes at the retailer are also reviewed. The main responsibility of the data recipient is to maintain data integrity by accurate application of the data received to his internal operational systems. By assessing data management processes at the recipient, a true end-to-end integration can be achieved.

Benefits and conclusions

Thanks to the Data Quality Challenge, METRO Group and Nestlé have reinforced their common understanding of each other's processes, and as a result, have strengthened a common collaboration platform. They identified and prioritised 14 possible potential improvements – which resulted in a concrete “to do list” for further collaboration in other areas. In general, METRO Group and Nestlé plan to work further on influencing and improving the quality of the value chain, by a more efficient sharing of information and experiences, and by continuing to pay attention to details to deliver value to consumers and shoppers.