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## Retailer and Manufacturer Tool Kit: Media Relations Materials

The following Media Relations Materials were developed to assist retailers and manufacturers with media outreach or inquiries concerning item level EPC/RFID tagging of products. As with all of the materials in the Retail and Manufacturing Tool Kit, the use of these materials is recommended, but not required.

This document contains the following materials:

- *Recommended Media Guidelines*
- *Talking Points*
- *FAQs*

### Overview

Electronic Product Code (EPC)/RFID technology presents significant opportunities to improve and enhance the performance of the supply chain. As implementation expands to item level use of the technology, the benefits extend beyond the manufacturer and retailer to the shopper.

The more information available to consumers on how the technology works, how it is being used and the benefits they can expect will help reduce any misconceptions about the technology and demonstrate that it is being used responsibly.

These media guidelines are designed to provide you with information on how to conduct media outreach that complements the spirit of the GS1 Guidelines on the Use of EPC/RFID for Consumer Products.

### Media Strategy

#### 1. News Release (Strongly Recommended)

- Issued prior to commencing EPC/RFID implementation
- Issued by either GS1 on behalf of pilot participants or by participating retailer
- Issued to local print and broadcast media in the implementation geography
- See news release template for suggested content/topics

*Rationale:*

- Ensures transparency

#### 2. Media Event (Optional)

- Local media invited to 'launch' implementation at retail site
- Demonstration of the technology in action
- Interview opportunity with key executives

*Rationale:*

- Ensures transparency
- Opportunity to demonstrate the technology
- Opportunity to demonstrate consumer notice and choice

#### 3. Interviews (Strongly Recommended)

- Select company spokesperson for all interviews
- Media train nominated spokesperson

*Rationale:*

- Facilitates consistent messaging

- Creates Centre of Expertise for media requests
- Ensures spokesperson has deep understanding of EPC/RFID and public policy issues

#### 4. On-Line (Strongly Recommended)

- Post details of implementation (locations, products, duration) on participant public websites
- Articulate shopper benefits
- Provide FAQs
- Provide consumer feedback channel

##### *Rationale:*

- Ensures transparency
- Proactively sets agenda
- Media and consumer resource

## Talking Points

**Description:** Key messages for use by retail participants

**Target Audience:** Media and other interested parties

- EPC/RFID is being used by leading retailers and manufacturers around the country. (*Insert store name*) is one of the retailers conducting an EPC/RFID implementation with select products in a limited number of stores.
- EPC/RFID is an electronic tag that contains a unique number. This number identifies one product from another.
- EPC/RFID uses radio frequency identification (RFID) to transmit information about products, i.e. a unique product identification key only, to store computer systems while the product is in the store.
- EPC/RFID tags only send product information data when prompted by a nearby EPC/RFID reader.
- EPC/RFID can help improve the consumer shopping experience and help retailers better manage how efficiently products are delivered to stores from suppliers.
- EPC/RFID tags do not contain, collect or store any personal information. The EPC/RFID tag has no power source and can only transmit its unique number when it is within range of a reader that activates the tag. The power – or strength – of readers is strictly regulated by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission. The actual distance from which an EPC/RFID tag can be read depends on barriers such as shopping bags and the presence of metals, liquids or other sources of interference that reduce the effective read range.
- For more information call 1-800-xxx-xxxx (INSERT CUSTOMER SERVICE NUMBER)
- Potential EPC/RFID benefits:
  - *Improved Product Availability*
    - stores keep better track of inventory so items can be restocked faster
    - Products are on the shelf when shoppers want them
  - *Faster Service*
    - help shoppers easily find products in the store
    - help speed check out
    - allow for simplified returns
  - *Quality Assurance*
    - EPC/RFID can help protect consumers against counterfeit products including medicines, clothing, toys and electronics
    - EPC/RFID can help make it easier to check how and when products move from manufacture to retail shelf.
    - EPC can be used to monitor the freshness of goods
    - EPC/RFID can provide a faster way to remove recalled products



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Description:** Frequently asked questions and answers

**Target Audience:** Media and other interested parties

### Q1: How does EPC/RFID work?

EPC/RFID tags serve the same purposes as a barcode. An EPC/RFID tag is encoded with the combination of a Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) and serial number to uniquely identify the product. To be read, an EPC/RFID-tagged product must pass by a special tag “reader”. Reader and tag communicate with each other by means of electromagnetic waves. Once the product has been identified, the inventory system can record that the product has been moved to the sales floor or taken out of the store.

It is important to remember that EPC/RFID is one of many different types of RFID applications. RFID technology has been in use since WWII and common applications include vehicle remote access and automatic toll fee payments.

### Q2: How were RFID and EPC developed?

RFID was developed more than 60 years ago and is used every day by consumers for systems like E-Z Pass, which speeds commuters through toll booths, and for SpeedPass electronic payments at Exxon and Mobil fuelling stations. A precursor to the current RFID technology was first developed by the allies in World War II to distinguish between friendly and enemy aircraft.

EPC/RFID was initially conceived by researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Auto-ID Centre, working to help businesses identify items in the supply chain, automatically and in real time. Before EPC could be implemented in the open supply chain, it required global standardisation efforts to reflect the needs of a broad range of businesses, anchored in existing identification standards.

### Q4: How does EPC/RFID benefit consumers?

EPC/RFID has the potential to help us all. It helps businesses improve supply chain efficiencies and visibility, which benefits consumers by providing improved product availability, speed of service, and quality assurance.

EPC/RFID helps prevent fake goods from reaching consumers by tracking products from its source and also helps manufacturers’ ability to quickly and effectively recall damaged or defective products. EPC/RFID allows retailers to track inventory more effectively, reorder products more efficiently and get the products consumers want on the shelves at the right time.

### Q5: How does EPC/RFID benefit businesses?

EPC/RFID can help businesses transform their processes in order to improve their own efficiency while providing additional consumer benefits. Poor supply chain visibility results in billions in annual losses to businesses due to lost, stolen, and out-of-stock inventory. The technology behind EPC/RFID can help businesses track inventory more effectively, reorder products more efficiently and reduce the number of times a product is “out of stock”.

In addition, EPC/RFID may also help companies track their shipments to prevent tampering and to prevent counterfeit or illicit goods from entering the marketplace. EPC/RFID’s ability to track specific items from manufacture to destination can effectively combat such problems. Items can be routed reliably, and those with fake or duplicate identification can be investigated and removed quickly and easily.

Of great importance to businesses is that the use of EPC/RFID is based on the same GS1 standards businesses have been using for product identification and electronic commerce for many years. Companies can therefore continue to leverage their current enterprise applications and infrastructure while incorporating the advantages of RFID’s innovative features into their business processes.

### Q6: Who is creating standards and managing implementation of EPC/RFID?



Under the GS1 umbrella, EPC/RFID development and standardisation has been spearheaded by a wide range of stakeholders from multiple sectors, including manufacturers, technology and logistics providers, and retailers. As EPC/RFID technical standards have matured, the work of maintaining and extending them has been taken up by GS1's Global Standards Management Process, or GSMP.

**Q7: What about consumer privacy concerns?**

EPC/RFID tags are created for businesses to manage products, not people. An EPC/RFID tag contains no personally-identifiable information. GS1 and its community recognize that, for EPC/RFID to gain broad public acceptance, consumers must have confidence in its value and benefits, as well as in the conscientious application of this technology.

GS1 member companies are committed to gaining and retaining this public confidence. Privacy has been a focus of EPC/RFID development efforts since the earliest stages of the effort to standardise RFID for open supply chain issues.

When EPC/RFID was introduced, GS1 created a multi-industry, global Public Policy Steering Committee to anticipate and engage in policy issues and address them through education and outreach to key stakeholders in the public and private sectors. GS1 members have developed self-regulating guidelines that can evolve as the technology develops.

The GS1 Guidelines on the Use of EPC/RFID for Consumer Products promote consumer notice, education, and choice about the technology and include consumer privacy protections. More information can be found at [http://www.gs1.org/epcglobal/public\\_policy/guidelines](http://www.gs1.org/epcglobal/public_policy/guidelines) and <http://www.gs1.org/guidelines-epc>.

**Q8: Can products that have EPC/RFID tags be identified once they are in the home?**

EPC/RFID tags only transmit product data when prompted by a signal emitted by an RFID reader. Consumers will be informed of the choices that are available to remove or disable EPC/RFID tags on the products they acquire. Consumers may sometimes wish to keep the tags for ease of product returns, recalls, and recovery of stolen goods.

Such applications are still at an early stage but, as new developments occur and EPC/RFID deployment continues to grow, the GS1 Guidelines on the Use of EPC/RFID for Consumer Products will evolve, while continuing to represent the fundamental commitments of industry to consumers.

It is hoped that further developments, including advances in technology, new applications, and enhanced post-purchase benefits, will provide even more choices to both consumers and companies on the use of EPC/RFID tags.

**Q9: Do EPC/RFID tags contain any consumer personal information?**

EPC/RFID tags do not contain, collect or store any personal information. When an item carrying an EPC/RFID tag is purchased, no information is captured on the EPC/RFID tag about the buyer. As with any non-cash transaction today, separate and apart from an EPC/RFID tag or barcode, the retailer must still capture, if only temporarily, the information required to complete the transaction.

**Q10: How do you remove or destroy an EPC/RFID tag?**

In most cases, EPC/RFID tags can be removed by removing and discarding product packaging. In the future, consumers may want to keep the EPC/RFID tags applied for easier product returns, faster recalls or identification of stolen goods.

**Q11: Are stores currently using item level tagging?**

Item level tagging continues to gain momentum and is already being rolled out in many product categories to support better inventory management and reduce out-of-stocks. Item level tagging applications will continue to grow based on demand and need for increased efficiency in the supply chain.

**Q12:** *Are the tags and readers safe for people?*

There are national and international regulations for operating RFID equipment at safe radio transmission levels. Medical research does not demonstrate that the technology poses a concern to human health when operating according to official national regulations. As the EPC/RFID technology evolves, there will be more and more opportunities to enable safety and sustainability, including more efficient and reliable sorting of recyclable items.

**Q13:** *Will EPC/RFID technology interfere with my other wireless technology?*

The radio frequencies used by EPC/RFID are assigned by governments around the world to help ensure that no interference occurs.