

EAN.UCC  
Global  
Data  
Synchronisation

Volume 1 - The way to go NOW!  
Second Edition - October 2004



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# Volume 1 - The way to go NOW!

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## Foreword for EAN Member Organisations

This brochure intends to share the basic principles of the Global Data Synchronisation (GDS) Process with EAN Member Organisations and to point you in the right direction for further information on GDS.

It provides a general overview on the current status of the GDS Network and explains the benefits of implementing GDS NOW. The brochure is written in business language and addresses your users directly in an attempt to facilitate your communication with the vast majority of your customers that have little knowledge about GDS and have not yet started implementation.

We hope you find this brochure to be a valuable tool in understanding and communicating GDS. The time to act is NOW, both for you and your customers.



Miguel Angel Lopera  
Chief Executive Officer



## The Perfect World

Imagine, as a manufacturer or a retailer that you could continuously align product, location and programme information with your trading partners.

Imagine that this information could be communicated to your trading partners through simpler, faster and more accurate transactions all along the supply chain allowing for the right amount of goods to become available at the right place and at the right time.

Achieving this efficiency is not utopia but can be achieved NOW provided you decide to act NOW and to prepare your company for Global Data Synchronisation (GDS). Not interested? Think again, otherwise you stand to miss this unique opportunity to be best positioned in tomorrow's global and hyper competitive market place.

## What is Global Data Synchronisation (GDS)?


### What is Global Data?

In a trading relationship, the first thing you need to define is WHO and WHERE you are and WHAT you have to trade in WHICH target market. To answer these questions, EAN.UCC has developed identification keys that are the Global Location Number (GLN) and the Global Trade Item Number (GTIN). These keys have to be used properly by following EAN.UCC rules such as

- GTIN allocation rules (When to change a GTIN?)
- GLN allocation rules (How to assign a GLN?)
- Bar Code or Radio Frequency (RFID) Specifications (How is the key physically carried?)
- Other rules (Symbol placement, Physical package attribute, etc.)

As these keys alone do not provide sufficient information, they are completed by attributes describing them; such as item or location (party) description, price, size, pack, name, address, etc. These standardised attributes that support trading partner relationships are called Master Data (common across multiple items such as the GTIN) or Transactional Data (trading partner specific such as the quantity ordered in a purchase order). One of these attributes that play a key role in GDSN is the Global Product Classification (GPC) Code indicating which kind of product the trade item is and to which group of products it belongs. In GDSN, every GTIN has to be classified using GPC.

In addition, all the information (definition, format, etc.) for all attributes is stored in a central repository that is called the Global Data Dictionary (GDD). This ensures the consistent use of these attributes in all e-business standards developed by EAN.UCC.



## Why Synchronising?

Today, trading partners are facing high, unnecessary costs due to master data problems, such as supply chain information inefficiencies and inaccurate data in transactions. Invoices with errors are responsible for a large part of these costs. In addition, globalisation of trade has generated an accelerated need for the smooth inter-company flow of goods and better control of supply chain processes, which can be achieved through synchronised communication among trading partners.

By continuously synchronising/harmonising the master data, between your system and your trading partner's systems, you will ensure that master data is the same in all systems. This will allow you to trade globally, increase data accuracy between you and your trading partners and drive costs out of your supply chain (see figure 4 for the list of benefits you will enjoy).

It is important to note that GDS is a robust foundation upon which the full benefits of electronic collaboration can be achieved and scaled (Figure 1). Electronic collaboration without data synchronisation will merely accelerate the exchange of bad master data between trading partners. GDS is also a pre-requisite for the Electronic Product Code (EPC) based on radio frequency identification (RFID). Without clean, synchronised master data, EPC and RFID technology will just enable even faster transactions of the wrong information. More information on EPC is available at [www.epcglobalinc.org](http://www.epcglobalinc.org)

### Data Synchronisation is the foundation for other forms of electronic collaboration

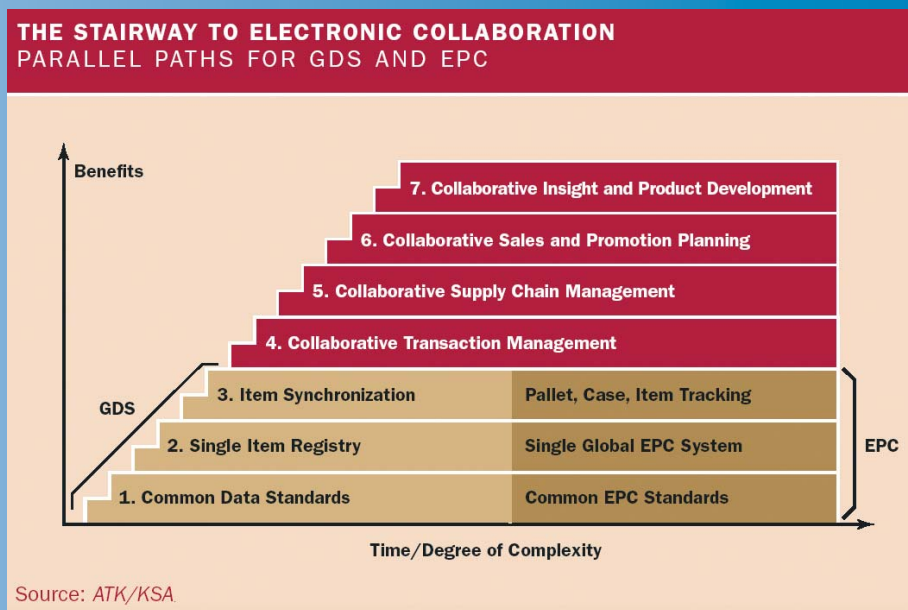
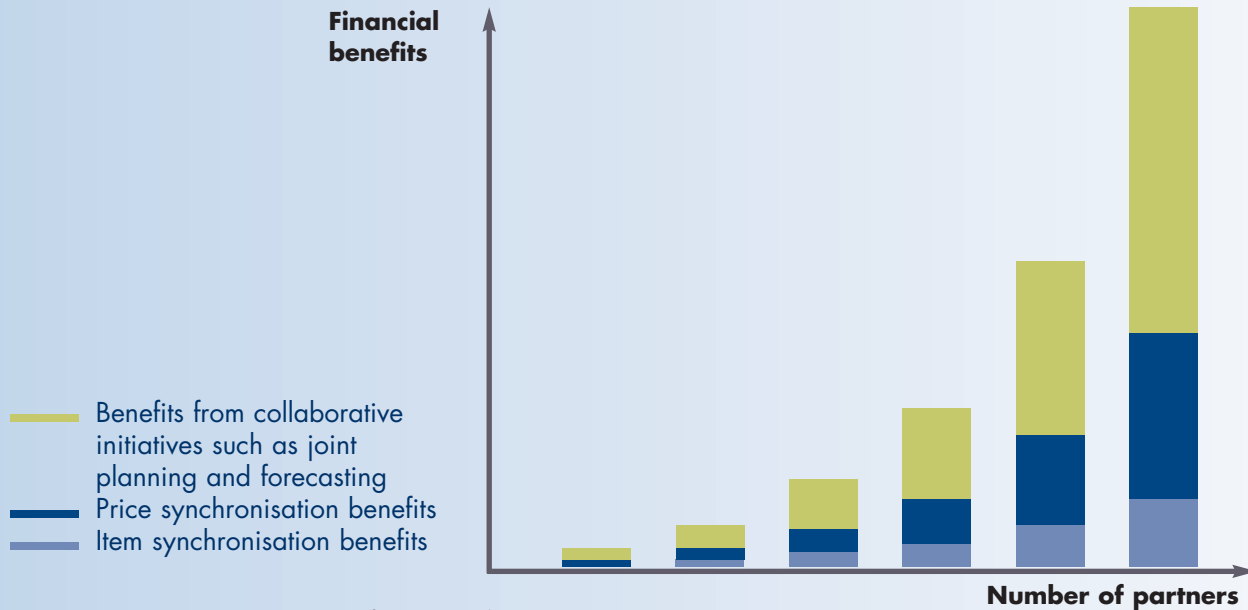


Figure 1: Source "Connecting the Dots - Harnessing Collaborative Technologies to Deliver Better Values to Consumers" by the Industry Affairs Council of the Grocery Manufacturers of America (GMA), the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), A.T. Kearney and Kurt Salmon Associates, 2004

It is also very important to note that greater financial return can be achieved as companies expand the scope of data synchronisation and collaboration (see Figure 2). For instance, by synchronising price information as well as item and location (party) information you can further reduce costs within the Supply Chain. Due to the fact that the majority of non-quality orders and invoice deductions are due to inaccurate pricing information, the benefits related to order quality and invoice matching are even more pronounced.

### Relative financial benefits of data synchronisation and other collaborative initiatives.



Source: IBM Institute for Business Value, 2003

Figure 2: Source: IBM - Driving value in the CPG/retail industry through data synchronisation: The basis for trading partner collaboration

Of course, to enable GDS, a Network is needed; this is what we call the Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN)

## What is GDSN and How Does it Work?

The Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN) is a concept that was developed by various industry groups, including the Global Commerce Initiative (GCI), EAN International, and the Uniform Code Council (UCC), to help industry streamline supply chain transactions and reduce supply chain costs. The GDSN is an Internet-based, interconnected network of interoperable data pools and a Global Registry, the GS1 Global Registry, that enables companies around the world to exchange standardised and synchronised supply chain data with their trading partners. The GDSN assures that data exchanged between trading partners is accurate and compliant with universally supported standards. The GDSN consists of trading partners (supplier and retailers), data pools (services that hold and process trading partner data), and the GS1 Global Registry (a worldwide directory to help the GDSN community locate data sources and manage ongoing synchronisation relationships between trading partners).

One of the key advantages of the GDSN is that trading partners have a single point of entry to the GDSN through the certified data pool of their choice therefore avoiding having to pay subscriptions to multiple data pools either within the same geographic location or across multiple geographic locations. Therefore, trading partners access to the GS1 Global Registry is only available through a certified data pool. It has to be noted that trading partners can act as their own certified data pools.

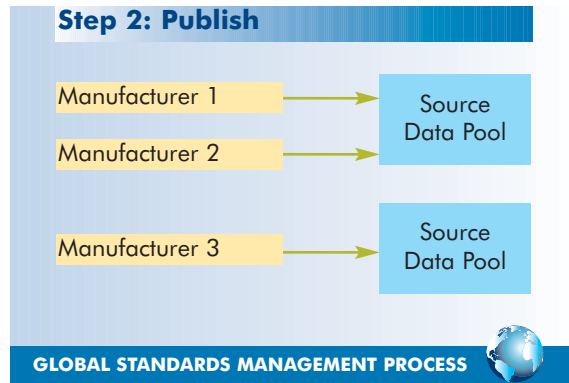
Within the GDSN, Catalogue Items are identified using the GTINs and GLNs of the data source (supplier), and target market while Parties are identified using a GLN. Suppliers and retailers willing to synchronise item, location (party) and price data with each other should perform the 5 following basic steps detailed below and leading to Figure 3:

‘ **Step 1:**

Suppliers prepare internal data and systems to match EAN.UCC standards (GTIN, GLN, GPC, etc.)

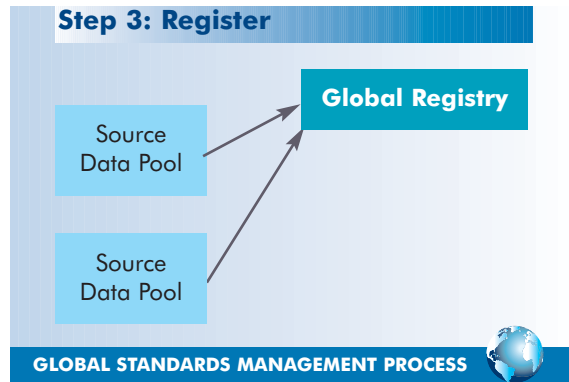
‘ **Step 2:**

Suppliers publish their accurate and standardised data to an EAN.UCC certified source data pool of their choice (in-house or third party).



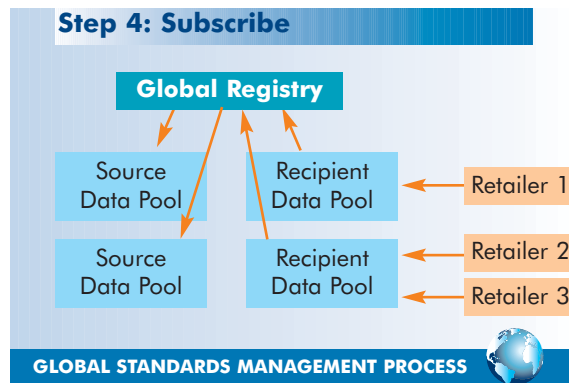
‘ **Step 3:**

The data pool registers a small subset of the supplier's information about each item (or party) to the GS1 Global Registry. The GS1 Global Registry holds this information and the location of each item's (or party's) data pool



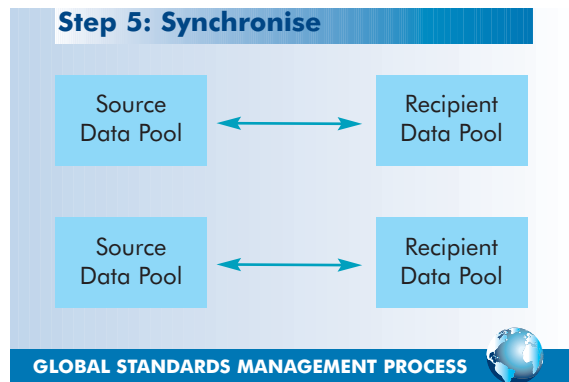
‘ **Step 4:**

Retailers search the GS1 Global Registry via their chosen EAN.UCC certified data pool for the item(s) or party for which they want to subscribe. Subscription can be done by any combination of GTIN, GLN, GPC and/or Target Market at the exception of GTIN and GPC that are mutually exclusive. The GS1 Global Registry identifies the source data pool(s) of the requested item(s) or party.



‘ **Step 5:**

Data pools process the exchange of information between the trading partners via their respective data pools. As product attributes change, suppliers immediately resend their updated information to their chosen data pool, which ensures that all retailers within the GDSN community who are subscribing to this information are notified of the updated information via their recipient data pools.



## Some key aspects of the GDSN are:

- This model supports a rich network of interoperable data pools
- Suppliers and Retailers have a single point of entry to the GDS Network
- Suppliers and Retailers do not have direct access to the GS1 Global Registry, unless they act as their own data pool
- Trade Items are identified in the GDSN using the unique combination of GTIN, GLN of the data source, and Target Market (TM).
- Parties are identified in the GDSN using GLN.

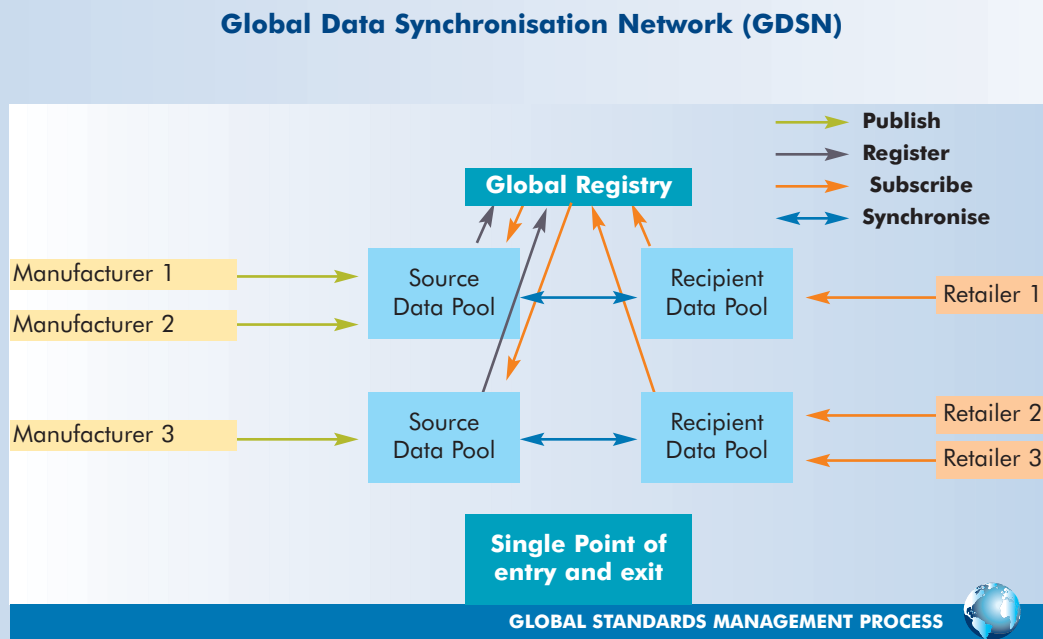


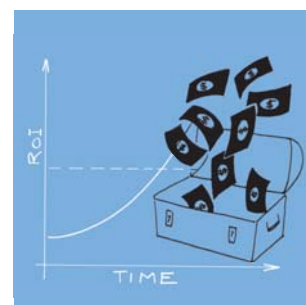
Figure 3: Source EAN.UCC Global Standard Management Process (GSMP)

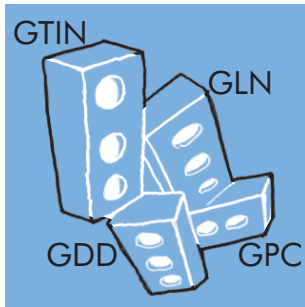
## Path Forward For Implementing GDS



Get commitment from Senior Management for your GDS strategy, communicate this commitment internally and to your trading partners, and get “buy-in” across the company structure.

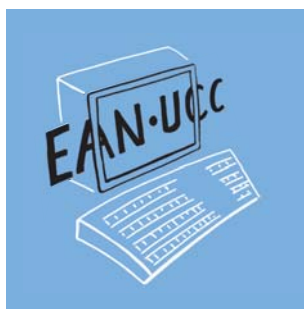
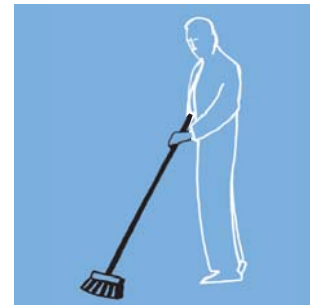
Build your company-specific business case on the basis of the rationale and link it to key performance indicators. This can be achieved by assessing your current business processes to define the benefits and your current IT landscape to define the implementation costs. The specified ambition level will allow you to spread the investments over time. Build your roadmap or project plan for the coming years and use the business case to identify the key performance indicators to track the benefits and maintain visibility of the overall progress.





Ensure that your company and your trading partners have adopted the EAN.UCC GTIN, GLN, Global Data Dictionary (GDD) and Global Product Classification (GPC) standards. This is indeed a key prerequisite to start GDS.

Clean up internal data catalogues and ensure that you are able to send/receive all data attributes (Master Data) to/from your trading partners in a Global Data Dictionary (GDD) compliant structure. This step is critical and should not be underestimated as several studies have shown that this process could take from several months to several years.



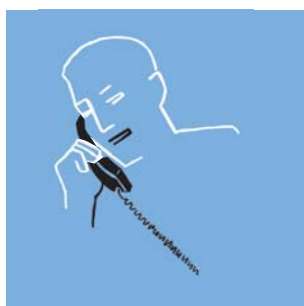
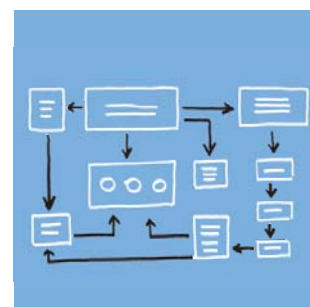
Ensure that your internal or third party data pool is EAN.UCC certified and interoperable in the GDSN

Subscribe to the GS1 Global Registry by signing a 'GS1 Global Registry™ Subscription Agreement'. Additional information is available at <http://www.ean-int.org/gds> under the 'Joining the GDSN' section.



Start working with a few key items and with a small, selected number of trading partners that are strategically important and committed to developing the capabilities required to exchange clean and EAN.UCC System standards compliant data.

Engage in pilots with these selected partners, monitor results and make necessary workflow, process and technical adjustments before moving to full production.



Support the drive towards industry-wide participation by encouraging other trading partners and companies to join GDSN by sharing your results and publishing case studies.

## Considerations for Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME's)

If you have a limited number of item and party data to share with your trading partners, you will, most likely, access your third party data pool using a Graphical User Interface (GUI). This interface (i.e. web-based) will allow to you to enter data directly into the EAN.UCC certified data pool of your choice and to synchronise automatically with your trading partners should you add, change or delete your item or party data.

## Benefits for Implementers

In a recent case study (The Case for Global Standards) performed by Cap Gemini Ernst & Young under the leadership of the Global Commerce Initiative (GCI) Steering Group, it was demonstrated that adopting and implementing GDS would lead to a one to three percent savings in supply chain costs. As indicated earlier, long-term benefits are even greater, as GDS is a corner stone for large-scale implementation of collaborative business processes and also for the Electronic Product Code (EPC) based on radio frequency identification (RFID). Identification of the benefits (see Figure 4) makes it apparent that retailers and manufacturers stand to gain in equal measure. What is more, it is not only global players that will benefit from global standards such as GTIN, GLN, GPC and GDSN. Trading partners of all sizes will reap benefits from increased reach and synchronisation.



### Overview of Benefits for Manufacturers and Retailers

	Manufacturer	Retailer
Corporate management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simplified corporate reporting (D)</li> <li>○ Expand geographic retailer base (I)</li> <li>○ Eliminate IT system redundancy (I)</li> <li>○ Opportunity for shared service creation (I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simplified corporate reporting (D)</li> <li>○ Enable global sourcing</li> <li>○ Corporate transparency/sales synergy (I)</li> <li>○ Eliminate IT system redundancy (I)</li> <li>○ Opportunity for shared service creation (I)</li> </ul>
Category/Promotion management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve visibility/stock level planning (I)</li> <li>○ Product posting/maximise retail exposure (I)</li> <li>○ Reduce time spent on complaints/disputes (D)</li> <li>○ Simplified and enhanced category reporting (D)</li> <li>○ Reduce product introduction lead time (D)</li> <li>○ Reduce product promotion lead time (D)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce need for local agents/intermediation (I)</li> <li>○ Expand supplier base (I)</li> <li>○ Corporate sourcing price transparency (I)</li> <li>○ Improve visibility/stock level planning (I)</li> <li>○ Reduce time spent on complaints/disputes (D)</li> <li>○ Simplified and enhanced category reporting (D)</li> <li>○ Reduce product introduction lead time (D)</li> <li>○ Reduce product promotion lead time (D)</li> </ul>
Administrative data handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eliminate need for cross-reference tables (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer Invoice disputes (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer write-offs (D)</li> <li>○ Reduce accounts receivable (I)</li> <li>○ Fewer sales order defects (D)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Less category maintenance (D)</li> <li>○ Eliminate need for cross-reference tables (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer invoice disputes (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer order defects (D)</li> <li>○ Improved fill rate (I)</li> </ul>
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Simplified order tracking and tracing (I)</li> <li>○ Fewer return shipments (D)</li> <li>○ Improved rate of perfect orders (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer emergency orders (D)</li> <li>○ More accurate picking (D)</li> <li>○ Optimised short-term planning (I)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Error-free shipment receiving (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer return shipment (D)</li> <li>○ Fewer backorders (D)</li> <li>○ Less excess/safety stock (I)</li> <li>○ Optimised location despatch (I)</li> </ul>

Source: Cap Gemini Ernst & Young

The benefits for manufacturers and retailers from GTIN/GLN/GDS are summarised in this chart. "D" and "I" indicate whether the specific benefit should be judged as direct or indirect. Direct benefits are more explicit and relatively easy to quantify. Indirect benefits generally have a larger potential value, but the size is harder to quantify and must be assessed or "guestimated".

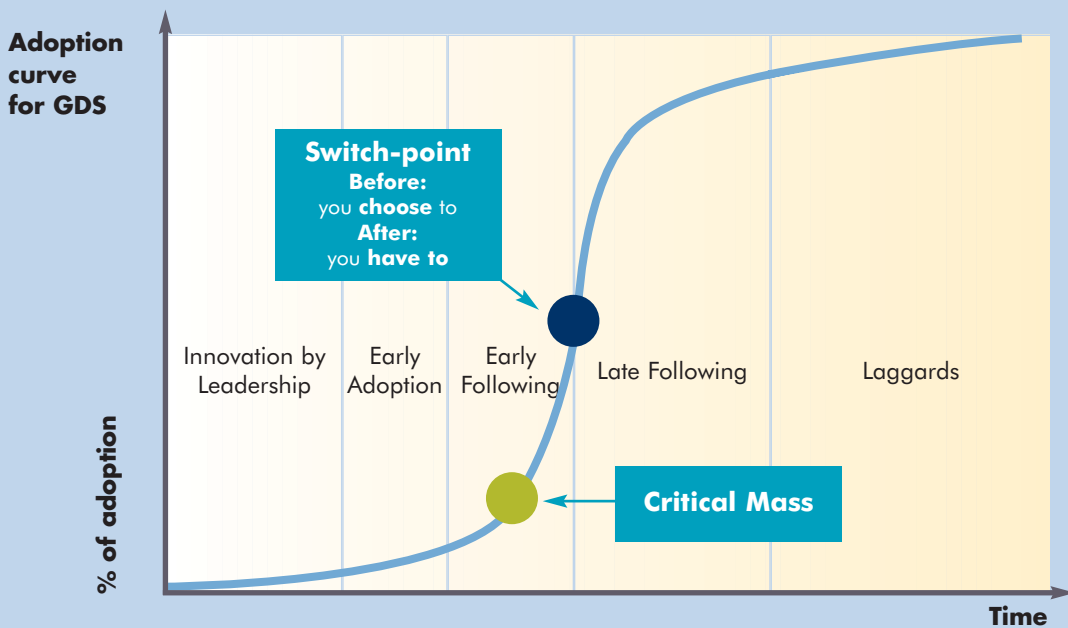
Figure 4: Source The Case for Global Standards (GCI and CGE&Y)

Looking to the implementation costs side, A.T. Kearney conducted several case studies between November 2002 and January 2003, on behalf of GMA-FMI, showing that payback on the initial investment takes less than one year. Even with fully loaded implementation costs and allowing for five years for full realisation of the benefits, the return on investments (ROI) for each of the trading partners was in excess of 500 percent.

## Benefits for Early Implementers

Have you seen all the benefits listed in the previous paragraph? They are within your reach NOW, so why would you wait and let your company continue to incur unnecessary costs? Several case studies show that cleansing your data and ensuring compliance with GTIN and GLN allocation rules results in immediate and important cost savings. Don't forget that integrated, collaborative trading relationships are key to succeeding in tomorrow's global, hyper competitive marketplace. So start improving your relationship with your trading partners NOW. By successfully embracing data synchronisation today, you will be in the best position to create sustained business value in the future for yourself and your trading partners. GDS is happening NOW; decide to join before you are forced to (see Figure 5).

### There will be a typical adoption life-cycle for GDS



Remember the adoption of telephones, fax-machines, the internet...

Figure 5

# EAN.UCC System Standards

## Available Standards

The Global Standard Management Process (GSMP) of EAN.UCC has already released most of the standards needed to support the Global Data Synchronisation (GDS). For each standard, GSMP provides 2 different components: Business Message Standards (BMS) and XML Schemas. While the BMS contains all necessary information to implement the electronic messages, the XML schemas are the messages themselves in electronic (XML) format.

Standards released up to now that are available at [www.ean-int.org](http://www.ean-int.org) and at <https://solutionscenter.uc-council.org/index.cfm> (password protected) include:

### a) Standards implemented in the GDSN since August 1, 2004

- Data Synchronisation Data Model for Trade Item v1.3.2 (attributes describing the trade item such as the description, the brand name, the colour, packaging and measurement information, etc.)
- Catalogue Item Synchronisation v1.3.2 (all the messages required to synchronise the Trade Item between the different data pools and between the data pools and the GS1 Global Registry)
- Party v1.3.2 (attributes describing the party/location such as address, contacts, payments terms, banking and tax information, etc.)
- Global Validation Rules ensuring that data (Item and Party) passed within the Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN) conforms to a common structure and complies with global standards. Different checks such a syntax checks, consistency checks, legal checks or quality checks will therefore be applied to the data before publication or registration. Validated data will also have to comply with the EAN.UCC GDSN standards such as Global Product Classification (GPC), GTIN allocation rules or GDSN standards for the Trade Item (all mandatory attributes must be present).

It is understood that some data pools will implement additional validation rules to satisfy their local market requirements. Suppliers are encouraged to implement the validation rules in their internal systems to optimise internal data accuracy.

### b) Standards not yet implemented:

- Price v1.3.1 (attributes describing the price such as gross or net price, period of validity for the price, etc.)
- Price Bracket v1.3.1 (attributes describing the price for a certain quantity of items such as price per Kg for 100 to 200 Kg of the item)
- Party Synchronisation v1.3.1 (all the messages required to synchronise the party/location information between the different data pools and the data pools and the GS1 Global Registry)
- Data Synchronisation Search (Request/Result) v1.3.1 (all messages enabling GDSN participants to discover Items or Parties that may be of interest)

**c) Standards for the Global Product Classification (GPC)** are also available for licensed users and can be found at <http://acnielsen.com/EANUCC-Schema/>

**d) The Global Data Dictionary (GDD)** is available at [http://www.ean-ucc.org/global\\_smp/global\\_data\\_dictionary.htm](http://www.ean-ucc.org/global_smp/global_data_dictionary.htm)

## Standards Under Development

The Global Standard Management Process (GSMP) of EAN.UCC will release before end of 2004 the remaining standards, listed below, that are needed to support Global Data Synchronisation (GDS):

### **Standards for Certification of the Data Pools and the GS1 Global Registry:**

Buyers and sellers will utilise the GDS Network to exchange standard and proprietary (trading partner specific) information. This can only be achieved if all Data Pools and the GS1 Global Registry being members of the GDSN conform rigorously to standards (the certification standards) for technological and operational performance so that the reliability and security of the entire network is commercially credible.

There are many criteria with which the data pools and the GS1 Global Registry have to comply to be GDSN certified and therefore allowed to join the network, such as conformity to the EAN.UCC standards, confidentiality and integrity of user information, interoperability, etc. Remember, to be certified, data pools and the GS1 Global Registry have to comply with the Global Validation Rules and the Global Search functionality.



## Implementation Support

EAN.UCC and other groups have developed several guidelines to assist users implementing GDS such as:

- GTIN Allocation Rules (available at [www.ean-int.org/gtinrules/](http://www.ean-int.org/gtinrules/))
- Draft GLN Allocation Rules (available in the PTRG e-room (CR03-078)). A finalised version is expected by October 2004
- Package Measurement Rules for Data Alignment (available as Section 6.8 of the General EAN.UCC Specifications at <http://online.ean-int.org/secure/html/GSV5.0/06/06-08.html> (Password protected)).
- Frequently Asked Questions regarding GDSN (available at [www.ean-int.org/GDS/](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS/) in the "FAQs" section)
- Contracts and other relevant information explaining users how to join the GDSN (available at [www.ean-int.org/GDS](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS) in the "Joining the GDSN" section).
- GCI Business Case for Global Standards and GDS developed by Cap Gemini Ernst & Young (available at [www.gci-net.org](http://www.gci-net.org) in the GDS Marketing Package for Business Managers (section "deliverables" of the working group GCI GDS Implementation Team))
- IBM White paper "Driving value in the CPG/retail industry through data synchronisation: The basis for trading partner collaboration" (available at [http://www1.ibm.com/industries/retail/doc/content/bin/ibv\\_data\\_sync.pdf](http://www1.ibm.com/industries/retail/doc/content/bin/ibv_data_sync.pdf))
- The action plan "Connect the dots" developed by the GMA/FMI, A.T. Kearney and Kurt Salmon Associates addressing the connections between GDS and EPC (available at [www.ean-int.org/GDS](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS) in the "Introduction & background" section)
- The Action Plan to Accelerate Trading Partner Electronic Collaboration developed by the GMA/FMI Trading Partner Alliance and A.T. Kearney (available at <http://www.gmabrands.com/industryaffairs/ecollaboration.cfm>)
- GCI report on Internal Data Alignment: Learning From Best Practices (available at [www.gci-net.org](http://www.gci-net.org) in the section "deliverables" of the working group GCI GDS Implementation Team)
- The document outlining "How To Use EAN.UCC XML Schemas V.1.3.1" (available at [www.ean-int.org/GDS/](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS/) in the "GDS Business and Technical Requirements" section)
- The "AS2 Transport Communications Guide for the EAN.UCC GDSN Community" (available at [www.ean-int.org/GDS/](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS/) in the "GDS Business and Technical Requirements" section)



## Infrastructure – EAN.UCC Information Network (EIN)

Responding to the user demand for the development of a Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN), EAN International and the Uniform Code Council propose the creation of an EAN.UCC Information Network. This network will be the foundation for the exchange of master data between partners of the global supply and demand chain. The components linked together through the EAN.UCC Information Network are the GEPIR databases, item data pools compliant with the EAN.UCC standards, and the GS1 Global Registry. It is planned that in the future the network will also include a link to the Object Naming Service of the EPC network.

The network is made up of certified data pools interconnected together in order to provide users with two basic functions:

- Global publication and subscription to make available item, party, and location data and to offer a subscription facility to insure continuous synchronisation of master data
- Global search to process and respond to search requests forwarded by a certified registry

### GEPIR



The Global EAN.UCC Party Information Registry (GEPIR) has been in existence since 1999 and is operating in 69 countries providing a valuable service for companies to retrieve Global Company Prefixes (GCP), Global Location Numbers (GLN) and Serial Shipping Container Code (SSCC) information. As part of the EAN.UCC Information Network solution to facilitate Global Data Synchronisation, UCC has joined the GEPIR network. An EAN.UCC architecture team is meeting regularly to ensure that the relationship and technical linkages between the GS1 Global Registry, GEPIR and the EPC network is such that it will become a seamlessly integrated network.

### Item Data Pools

Item data pools are electronic catalogues of standardised item data. They serve both as a source and/or recipient of master data and can be run by an EAN Member Organisation, supplier, customer, exchange or service provider. Today, several catalogues exist that have been operating for several years. Eight of these catalogues are already on the GDSN. These are CABASnet, Click Commerce (formerly bTrade Inc.), Global eXchange Services (GXS), Sinfos, Sterling Commerce, Transora, UCCnet and WordWide Retail Exchange (WWRE). In time it is expected that many more electronic catalogues will become compliant with the EAN.UCC standards.

A list of the electronic catalogues available in the EAN community can be found at [www.ean-int.org](http://www.ean-int.org) in the online publication "Electronic Business in the EAN Community 2002"

## GS1 Global Registry

The GS1 Global Registry is the central directory for providing information for subscription sharing for achieving data pool interoperability and Catalogue Item uniqueness by the registration of items and parties.

The GS1 Global Registry became operational on August 1, 2004 and has the following roles:

- Guarantees efficiently the uniqueness of the Catalogue Item (GTIN + GLN + target market) for a particular data source.
- Holds the information on the source data pool where the details of the GTIN reside. This data is only held once in the network.
- Ensures that all the data pools in the network are complying with a common basic set of validation rules that support data integrity in the system. This is achieved by allowing only data from EAN.UCC certified data pools to be registered in the GS1 Global Registry.
- Holds the information about who has subscribed to Trade Item or Party data. This data is only held for the purpose of acting as a central repository. Data pools receive subscriptions based on a match of the Trade Item or Party data Registered with the GS1 Global Registry.
- Allows data pools to direct global search requests to the GS1 Global Registry subscription service. The search can work on GTIN, GLN, target market and Global Product Classification (GPC) schema.

A new legal entity named GS1 Global Registry Inc. (GRI) has been created to provide the GS1 Global Registry service. The Oversight Committee, which currently includes seventeen senior executives from manufacturing, retailing, and EAN Member Organisations, governs this legal entity and ensures that the EAN.UCC Information Network and the GS1 Global Registry service meet the needs of the entire global community.

Additional information is available in the Roadmap on the Global Registry v5.8 and in the FAQs at [www.ean-int.org/GDS](http://www.ean-int.org/GDS) under "Roadmaps" and under "FAQs"



## **EPC Network**

As the EPC network evolves, the EAN.UCC Information Network will be enhanced to link the EPC number back to the Item information via the GTIN.

By ensuring that the EPC structure can include the GTIN, this will enable current EAN.UCC users to apply the EPC technology in a way that is totally compatible with their current implementations.



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[www.ean-int.org](http://www.ean-int.org)

Rue Royale, 145 - 1000 Brussels - Belgium  
Tel. + 32(0)2 227 10 20 - Fax +32(0)2 227 10 21 - e-mail [info@ean-int.org](mailto:info@ean-int.org)

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