APPAREL AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE

WEBINAR Q&A

BEST PRACTICES, LEARNINGS, TRENDS, AND GUIDELINES FOR EFFICIENTLY EXCHANGING PRODUCT IMAGES AND DATA ATTRIBUTES FOR OMNI-CHANNEL SUCCESS

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THE GLOBAL LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS
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ABOUT GS1

GS1® is a neutral, not-for-profit, global organization that develops and maintains the most widely-used supply chain standards system in the world. GS1 Standards improve the efficiency, safety, and visibility of supply chains across multiple sectors. With local Member Organizations in over 110 countries, GS1 engages with communities of trading partners, industry organizations, governments, and technology providers to understand and respond to their business needs through the adoption and implementation of global standards. GS1 is driven by over a million user companies, which execute more than six billion transactions daily in 150 countries using GS1 Standards.

ABOUT GS1 US

GS1 US, a member of the global information standards organization GS1, brings industry communities together to solve supply-chain problems through the adoption and implementation of GS1 Standards. More than 300,000 businesses in 25 industries rely on GS1 US for trading-partner collaboration and for maximizing the cost effectiveness, speed, visibility, security and sustainability of their business processes. They achieve these benefits through solutions based on GS1 global unique numbering and identification systems, barcodes, Electronic Product Code (EPC®)-enabled Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), data synchronization, and electronic information exchange. GS1 US also manages the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code® (UNSPSC®).

www.GS1US.org.
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every day millions of Americans go online to shop. These consumers use product information and pictures to help them make informed purchasing decisions. Trusted, standardized product images and data attributes are indispensable to sales, but have historically been one of the most complex and frustrating information exchanges for suppliers and their retail trading partners. The explosion of e-commerce and the consumer’s desire for a seamless omni-channel experience have further complicated image and attribute delivery management to nearly uncontrollable levels.

This Q&A document was prepared to support both the September 2014 “Best Practices and Guidelines for Efficiently Exchanging Product Images and Data Attributes for Omni-Channel Success” webinar and the April 2015 “Learnings and Trends for Efficiently Exchanging Product Images and Data Attributes for Omni-Channel Success” webinar. In these webinars you will hear first-hand from GS1 US member companies on how they are successfully implementing GS1 US product images and data attributes guidelines to optimize image and attribute sharing for web-based retail.

These free on-demand tutorials are intended to help you learn how suppliers and retailers are using GS1 US guidelines to get their products online faster and how you can:

- Streamline image and product attribute sharing and eliminate many of your existing manual/labor intensive processes
- Get products online sooner
- Optimize product imagery and attribute processes to enhance speed-to-market product availability
1 WEBINAR Q&A

Q: Do I have to provide all of the attributes listed for my product type?

A: We understand that this is a new process. Provide what you can and work to get the other attributes that pertain to your product as they become available. Retailers will be accepting updates to their item setup so they can accept all requested attributes.

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Q: How many image facings do I have to provide?

A: That is up to you and your trading partner. The more images available online, the better the customer experience will be.

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Q: Do retailers expect all of the attributes and images to be ready when U.P.C.’s are loaded or will there be incremental updates allowed?

A: We believe that there will most likely be incremental updates as extended attributes are available within suppliers systems. However, your trading partners/retailers will need to be able to communicate how they can monitor changes and communicate their abilities to manage updates within their own systems.

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Q: What do you see as the timing of when the images and attributes will be available?

A: The attributes defined in the current guidelines have been public since September 2013. Several technology partners have already indicated they support the attributes within their services; however, we cannot answer on behalf of specific trading partners. Each company has to look at their own requirements and determine the work needed to support and timing for when they will ask their trading partners to provide the data. There have been several companies who have announced their image and attribute requirements to their trading partners already.

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Q: What is the current adoption rate of the Product Images and Extended Attributes Guideline?

A. The “Product Images and Extended Attributes Guideline” was produced within the last two years, as such the retail industry is in the beginning stages of adoption. Many large retailers have started announcing their plans to implement image standards and extended attributes into their own business processes. We suggest that you contact your trading partners to understand their requirements and implementation timing.

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Q: Is this webinar for all groups within the GDSN or just apparel?

A: The workgroup started with apparel, footwear, housewares, accessories and jewelry product categories, but will be extended to all product categories going forward. The attribute guidelines can be used by any company, regardless of data synchronization technology used.

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Q: What does attributing mean exactly?

A: Attributing is providing additional data for a product/item, for example care information, country of origin, dimensions, etc.

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Q: Are the new extended attribute mappings and guidelines now available? If so where can I get the documentation?

A: You can review/download version 2.0 of the Guideline for Exchanging Extended Attributes for E-Commerce and the new GS1 US Master Attributes Spreadsheet.

- Guideline for Exchanging Extended Attributes for E-Commerce – Voluntary Guidelines for Apparel and General Merchandise vendors, retailers, and solution providers. This document provides guidance on the extended product attributes that are recommended for exchange between trading partners in support of internet-based commerce (e-commerce, mobile commerce) initiatives.
- GS1 US Master Attributes Spreadsheet – this tool can be used by trading partners to share/send attributes in a standardized format, if electronic exchange of attribute data is not available.

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Q: Does this presentation include item weights and dims as well?

A: The Guideline will address weights and dims (based on GS1 Standards).

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Q: So the only retailers that are onboard with this image and attribute program right now are the ones shown earlier--the clothing retailers?

A: There are others working on the initiative, however they are not ready to publicly announce. We'll continue to update the Retailer Attribute Requirements Matrix as more retailers announce their plans, and post the document on the workgroup page.

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Q: Is this solution only applicable to those retailers that are willing to get the information from this catalog? Or will it produce and customize the file based on the format and method the retailer requires it be received?

A: The attribute guideline is not limited to catalog-only customers. It can be used across industry regardless of technology.
2 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To learn more, check out these additional resources:

- Guideline: Best Practice Guidelines for Product Image Exchange between Trading Partners – a standardized method for companies to create, name, associate data, and transport images to their trading partners
- Guideline: E-Commerce Extended Attributes Guidelines – voluntary guidelines for exchanging extended attributes for e-commerce
- Case Study: J.Reneé Leads the Effort to Apply GS1 Standards to Product Imagery
- Webinar: Best Practices and Guidelines for Efficiently Exchanging Product Images and Data Attributes for Omni-Channel Success
- Webinar: Learnings and Trends for Efficiently Exchanging Product Images and Data Attributes for Omni-Channel Success
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