

The Global Data Synchronization Network

What You Need to Know

The Global Data Synchronization Network (GDSN) is an association of:

- Interoperable GS1-certified data pools
- The global registry (GS1 Global Registry) that is combined with standards established by Global Commerce Initiative (GCI)
- GS1 (formerly known as EAN International and the Uniform Code Council)

A GS1-certified data pool is the repository of product information that will be exchanged between trading partners inside the GDSN. Suppliers will use 'source' data pools to store information that can be sent to or requested by their customers. Retailers use 'recipient' data pools to collect incoming item information and serve as a single repository and sender of all supplier item data.

The GDSN leverages the GS1 Global Registry as a single electronic library to identify where catalogue item data exists and to ensure that sources and recipients can find each other within the network.

Why is the GDSN needed?

The Global Standards Management Process (GSMP) defines the catalogue item attributes and standards that will populate the GS1 Global Registry. Registering an item requires core attributes, such as the Global Trade Identification Number (GTIN) and the Global Location Number (GLN) of the supplier, brand owner, distributor, retailer or other organization that handles the product. In addition, the GSMP is working to define the item standards which are used for commerce, pricing and other transaction-related activities.

With the maturity of Electronic Product Code (EPC), the GSMP is striving for continuity in both GDS and EPC standards. This continuity will touch core product information for track and trace, such as brand owner, brand name, description, color, height/weight, and price and promotion information for each location.

If the GDSN were not available, the challenges that would face both sides of the industry are significant:

Suppliers: To get item information to their retail customers, suppliers can be told to use processes ranging from paper-based processes to retailer portals and spreadsheets to proprietary catalogue services. This un-standardized approach can lead to errors, rework and increased manual effort, adding costs. The extra work and multiple paths also prevents the supplier from easily ensuring that the data describing their items is accurate and consistent across the supply chain.



“Manufacturers and retailers will be required to exchange product information due to Global Data Synchronization. A one-stop software shop that offers internal integration and external integration capabilities combined with a PIM will be preferred”

— AMR RESEARCH

GXS BEEFS UP TRADING GRID
WITH WEBMETHODS MUSCLE
NOVEMBER 17TH, 2004

Retailers: When each retailer takes a different approach, It takes longer to ramp their community of suppliers who resist the time and resource investment. Slower ramp time reduces the incremental benefits to the retailer of investment in master data management applications and processes.

With GDSN, the supplier has one place to put item data and the retailer has one place to get all item data. Suppliers and retailers can reliably and automatically distribute and request item data for all trading partners who participate in the network. And there is only one fee to pay to enter the network. Bottom line: one 'pipe,' lower costs and uniform standards to exchange information globally.

What is the status of the GDSN?

The GDSN went live in September 2004 with the first items being registered in the Global Registry. There are currently five data pools in production. In July 2005, a second round of certifications is scheduled to start with completion planned for October 2005. There are over twenty data pools registered for certification in the second round, including numerous Country Data Pools being powered by GXS and certified as duplicate data pools.

In addition to the data pools, there is a very active group of participants working on the Global Standards Management Process (GSMP) in the GDSN Task Group. The GSMP group is enhancing the data synch standards, defining new processes and standards, and settling disputes on how the standards should be implemented.

How can I best participate in the GDSN?

Choose a service provider that will be part of the GDSN. Several GS1-certified data pools are in operation today, such as 1SYNC (formerly Transora and UCCnet), GS1 UK Data Pool, ECCnet (GS1 Canada), Worldwide Retail Exchange (WWRE), SINFOS and GS1 HK Data Pool. Here are some key questions to ask your service provider:

- Does your current solution include GDSN-certified data pool services? If not, what data pool services are available and at what cost?
- Are you an active member of the GDSN Task Group?
- Are you participating in the GDSN 2.0 Certification Event for production in October 2005?
- If not, when do you plan to become certified to operate in the GDSN?

What are GXS's commitments to the GDSN?

Dedicated Resources

In addition to being one of the founding members of the GDSN Task Group, GXS Engineering and Product Management employees actively participate in the standards process for global data pool interoperability. Christopher VanTine, GXS Global Product Manager for Data Pool Interoperability, is a voting member of the GDSN Task Group. VanTine holds one of only six positions on the GDSN Task Group Leadership Team, which also includes members from Wal-Mart, Ahold, Coca-Cola, Crossmark and Supervalu.

GXS is committed to minimizing expense and effort on behalf of its customers by ensuring that GXS data pools are GDSN compliant and available for information exchange with all other compliant data pools worldwide. GXS successfully completed the latest Global Interoperability Certification for three separate data pools, which included receiving official notification from the Drummond Group (the interoperability and conformance testing standards body responsible for certifying Data Pool solutions providers).

Continued Leadership

GXS is the EAN leader in developing or operating GS1 certified data pools for 17 GS1 Member Organizations including the GS1 Canada, GS1 UK and GS1 Australia. Currently over 7,000 suppliers and retailers are using GXS data synchronization services worldwide.

Data Synchronization Solutions

Beyond our data pools, GXS provides support to implement US-based customers onto the 1SYNC data pool and offers a variety of solutions to help businesses of all sizes move towards global data synchronization. All of our products are being designed to operate within the GDSN.

- **Global Product Catalogue**—designed to meet the needs of the apparel industry; a hosted and managed data alignment service that enables quick and convenient compliance to data synchronization mandates and standards.
- **PIM Express**—a hosted or behind-the-firewall offering that enables end-to-end automation of data synchronization including aggregation, workflow, item transformation and syndication.
- **Product Information Manager (PIM)**—for retailers and suppliers; available hosted or behind-the-firewall. PIM offers end-to-end automation of all product content management, not only for standards-based data synchronization, but for all target channels including web sites, direct to customers, and to other internal systems.
- **Community LinkSM**—best-in-class community management through global trading partner ramping, technical support and change management.

How will GXS customers get the most up-to-date status on the GDSN?

We actively communicate the status of the GDSN, as well as any other certifications or activities, through messages on www.gxs.com and via our monthly Retail e-Newsletter. You can subscribe to the e-Newsletter on the GXS website.

If I use a GXS solution such as Global Product Catalogue, how will the new GDSN impact me?

GXS is planning to enhance its world class catalogue to allow seamless movement of data into and out of the GDSN. This will allow our existing users to leverage the solutions they have

GS1 COUNTRY DATA POOLS POWERED BY GXS

- GS1 Canada (ECCnet)
- GS1 UK (e.centre)
- GS1 Russia (EAN Russia)
- GS1 Korea (KorEANet)
- GS1 Hong Kong (HKANA)
- GS1 Taiwan (EAN Taiwan)
- GS1 Australia and New Zealand (EANnet)

used and trusted for years with minimal impact. In addition, those GXS users already connected to the 1SYNC Data Pool are enabled to join the GDSN directly.

About GXS

GXS is a leading provider of B2B e-commerce solutions that simplify and enhance business process integration and collaboration. Organizations worldwide, including 75 percent of the Fortune 500, leverage GXS' GS1 certified global interoperability and supply chain execution solutions. Active in the global standards arena, GXS offers solutions, powered by the Trading GridSM, that enable customers both large and small, to connect with global partners, synchronize product information and optimize the execution of supply chains.

Headquartered in Gaithersburg, MD., GXS provides sales and support to businesses and their partners worldwide. For more information about GXS visit www.gxs.com.



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NORTH AMERICA AND GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS

100 Edison Park Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
U.S.A.

+1-800-560-4347 t

+1-301-340-4000 t

+1-301-340-5299 f

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

1 Station Road
Sunbury-on-Thames
Middlesex TW16 6SU
United Kingdom

+44 (0)1932 776047 t

+44 (0)1932 776216 f

ASIA PACIFIC

25th Floor, Shell Tower
Times Square
Causeway Bay
Hong Kong

+852 2884-6088 t

+852 2513-0650 f

www.gxs.com