



Executive Q&A

With Kent McClelland, President and CEO, Shamrock Foods Company, and Member of the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative Executive Leadership Committee



Q: How has your participation in the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative helped you improve the consumer experience?

A: Operators are demanding more information about the products they purchase because consumers are asking more and more questions about the foods they consume. The first step in meeting these expectations is having quality product data. Our participation in the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative allows us to learn and implement best practices in collaboration with our customers and trading partners.

Q: What are some key efforts within your company related to product data management, data quality and completeness that directly impact the consumer experience?

A: We have several associates dedicated to the management of our product data to ensure its quality and accuracy. Our Data Compliance team provides weekly scorecards so we can understand the data gaps and outline plans to obtain the missing or higher quality data. It isn't just about checking the box with data – high quality data is the goal. We have formed cross-functional teams led by our marketing and category management teams to develop and ensure data compliance strategies with our suppliers.

Q: How does enhanced traceability help you protect your brand and mitigate risk?

A: What makes Shamrock unique is that we are both a supplier and distributor of foodservice products. Using GS1-128 barcodes for shipping/receiving products has strengthened our traceability capabilities. As a result, we can limit the scope of recalls or withdrawals and meeting our customers' expectations to react quickly should a product safety concern arise. The early adoption has been with our large quick service restaurant customers who are realizing savings when any product issues occur.

Q: Consumers are not only focused on transparency—they have also embraced apps, delivery, and other convenience options. How has Shamrock adapted to the faster pace of technology?

A: Leveraging GS1 Standards has helped us build a robust online selling tool with information our customers and downstream consumers need to make informed decisions. Ultimately, product data attributes based on GS1 Standards are the foundation for a robust e-commerce platform that is effective, accurate, scalable and always up-to-date.

Q: What specific benefits have you seen as a result of leveraging GS1 Standards in your operations? Can you quantify?

A: With accurate and complete product information easily accessible to our sales force through our online tool, they spend less time hunting down product information, and more time consulting with our customers to help build stronger collaborative relationships. We see improved customer loyalty and retention when this occurs. The sales numbers are also strong. For those suppliers who leverage GS1 Standards, we've seen a 20% increase in sales of products. For those who don't, it puts them at a disadvantage.

Q: What would be your recommendation to suppliers and manufacturers that are not yet leveraging GS1 Standards in their business operations?

A: GS1 Standards help provide "one version of the truth" about product data to flow through the value chain, mitigate food safety risk with traceability, and increase your bottom line results. As e-commerce expectations continue to grow in the foodservice industry, the power of quality data is essential. I would encourage you to dedicate resources to ensure that quality product data based on GS1 Standards is a priority within your organization.