



Executive Q&A

With Alex Doverspike, Director, Supply Chain Solutions, Chick-fil-A, Inc., 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: Today's customers care about what they eat and where their food comes from. Through our mobile platforms along with GS1 Standards, we are looking at enabling our customers to trace the food they are eating from the restaurant back to the field or factory in which it was produced.

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: In addition to using GS1-128 barcodes for traceability to keep our customers safe, we also anticipate leveraging this technology to better understand inventory levels throughout the supply chain. The GS1-128 barcode provides a common way for us to implement this across our multiple partners. Without the standardized data elements encoded in these barcodes, it would be impossible to implement such a comprehensive solution given the variety of partners' systems and methods.

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

A: Customers care deeply about food safety and it is incredibly important to our brand. GS1 Standards give us the ability to trace product from wherever they are in our supply chain back to their origin. When the GS1-128 barcode is scanned, specific batch and lot data is returned which allows us to quickly isolate impacted product and eliminate potentially contaminated product. Our ability to isolate impacted product also helps reduce disruptions at restaurants as good product is not wasted, ensuring that we can adequately care for the safety of our customers.

Q: How has your traceability program improved your recall readiness for you or your supply chain partners?

A: Our traceability program has significantly improved our ability to quickly target the specific restaurants impacted by a food safety or quality issue. Without this effort, we often have to discard good product in order to be sure we eliminated all contaminated product. As we finalize our traceability program, we plan to automate our recall process as we pursue our goal of becoming the safest place to eat in America.

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

A: Customers have embraced our app and use it to order product in advance either for takeout, dine-in or in the drive thru. They are able to earn rewards, learn about special promotions, and take advantage of other members-only benefits. As this on-demand economy evolves, we believe customers will expect to receive product when and where they are. GS1 Standards are a key foundational aspect in our work to support this future on-demand business as we create a dynamic, resilient supply chain of the future.

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

A: By implementing a uniform barcoded GS1 label across all products, we have laid the groundwork for future innovation projects surrounding inventory at our restaurants. By having the right products, at the right places, in the right amounts, we can increase restaurant capacity, improve team member experience and continue to grow sales.