



Executive Q&A

With Kraig B. Adams, Vice President, National Foodservice Distribution, Coca-Cola North America, 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: We have found that by sharing our product information broadly using GS1 Standards we can provide the most important product information consumers want to make the best choices across our broad portfolio of beverages. We were one of the first companies to provide calorie information for our retail packages, and we quickly followed suit to support foodservice menu board guidelines. Our Freestyle dispenser platform electronically displays calorie information for all the 130+ brand options and data is electronically updated as needed from our Master Data HUB. We also support the sharing of additional attributes, including images for distributors and customers to utilize in their databases and online catalogs.

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 2014, Coca-Cola embarked on a journey to provide a centralized master data repository for our products produced and sold in North America. The implementation of this PIM (aka: Coca-Cola Master Data HUB) as “the single source of truth,” governed by the guiding principles of GS1 Standards, helps ensure we are generating quality master data the first time. In 2018, Coca-Cola registered 35% more U.P.C.s than in 2017. Managing this increase in volume without adding additional resources was due to system integration and process improvements.

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

A: Traceability is simply the right thing for us to do for the integrity of our brands. We started the project in 2017 implementing GS1-128 barcodes on all our foodservice dispensed bag-in-a-box (BIB) products. Two-sided labelling was completed in mid-2018 across seven manufacturing plants on 28 production lines, ensuring traceability data can be scanned, even as product passes through fast moving conveyor systems. Additionally, our Freestyle platform has our most sophisticated level of traceability using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) on each product cartridge. Since the Freestyle platform “phones home” daily, we are able to track and understand product shelf life and production information for each Freestyle machine at any given time for the over 50,000 dispensers at more than 30,000 customer locations in North America.

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

A: After completing a thorough audit by weighing and measuring our products, we updated weight data in our PIM and syndicated the updates to our bottling partners. With this data clean-up, we saw immediate improvements in how much product could be loaded to a truck. One bottler reported that for every 25 trucks they sent, they were able to pull one load off the road. Weight discrepancies also can cause order and shipping discrepancies. After aligning the weights between all systems, we were able to add one additional pallet of product per truckload. Our focus on the accuracy and completeness of our product data is a direct driver of increased operational efficiencies within our supply chain.