

## GS1 US Apparel and General Merchandise Initiative 2021 Year In Review



As we reflect on 2021, the pace of change in business continued to demand resilience from all of you, our members. We salute your commitment to the use of GS1 Standards in driving supply chain excellence and the collaboration it takes to move industry forward. With your leadership and advocacy in our workgroups, you have demonstrated your support for the foundational value of unique identification of products and locations. You've helped raise the bar for supply chain resilience in the context of automated business processes and digital transformation. This summary is focused on our industry's accomplishments and the contributions of you, our members, in driving the adoption and use of GS1 Standards across the retail supply chain.

This past year we delivered a number of resources and engaged our industry to:

- Enhance data accuracy
- Extend the value of unique identification and improve omni-channel logistics
- Increase inventory visibility through EPC-Enabled Radio Frequency Identification (EPC/RFID)

Here are just some of the highlights:

### Industry Advocacy and Thought Leadership

To demonstrate the value of GS1 Standards in end-to-end supply chain operations, and to advocate the benefits of standards adoption and use, we leveraged industry events/communications opportunities.

- Published initiative member newsletters and regular retail industry updates featuring a selection of educational resources and tools to help our community increase the adoption and use of GS1 Standards
- Attended and/or co-presented sessions with industry partners at several industry events and meetings, including:
  - Presented "*Solve the Pain of Claims Compliance with RFID*" at RFID Journal Live
  - Presented "*GS1 US Guideline on Sustainability for Packaging Materials*" at the Retail Leaders Industry Association Sustainable Packaging Workshop
  - Presented "*Using RFID to Avoid & Automate Claims Compliance;*" "*Roundtable Working Group Session on Images & Attributes;*" and "*GS1 Digital Link & Scan4Transport: Sharing Transport Data Using the 2D Barcode*" at the 2021 Retail Value Chain Federation Annual Fall Conference

- Held nine apparel and general merchandise-specific sessions at GS1 Connect: Digital Edition, including:
  - *Digital Showrooms and the Impacts of Inconsistent Data*
  - *How Regular Tune-Ups Can Enhance Supply Chain Excellence*
- Enhanced awareness through media coverage with 26 articles, 4 media interviews, and 5 contributed features on topics ranging from EPC-enabled RFID tagging, blockchain, omni-channel, to data quality with expert commentary and thought leadership featured in many publications, including CSCMP Supply Chain Quarterly, Multichannel Merchant Magazine, Retail IT Insights, Retail Touch Points (RTP) online publishing network, SearchCIO (as part of TechTarget), Startup Nation Multimedia Company, and Total Retail Magazine.

### Enhance Data Accuracy

- Launched Color and Size Code Workgroup to streamline the current GS1 US Size and Color Code tables and assess utilization of the tools for future enhancements
- Published [GS1 US Color and Size Code Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Promoted updated [Best Practice Guideline for Exchanging Product Images and Attributes](#)
- Promoted updated [Best Practice Guideline for Exchanging Raw Material Attributes](#)
- Conducted cross-industry webinars, including:
  - *Product Data Wellness: Tools and Techniques to Help Your Business Stay Strong*

### Unique Identification and Omni-channel Logistics

- Launched RFID Claims Compliance Workgroup to address the specific needs related to RFID data capture, validation, sharing, and inputs to claims reconciliation relevant to claims compliance use cases.
- Promoted [Sustainability in Packaging Material Guideline](#)

### Improve Inventory Visibility

- Published Decathlon Case Study: [RFID Powers Global Retail Sporting Goods Leader](#)
- Promoted updated [Format & Symbol Placement for the Electronic Product Code \(EPC\) Implementation Guideline](#)
- Conducted cross-industry webinars, including:
  - *Solution Partner - Traceability from Start to Finish: How to Maximize Visibility and Minimize Risks*
  - *Digitize Your Supply Chain to Stay Ahead of Consumer Expectations*

### Cross-Industry Activities

- Supply Chain Optimization Cross-Industry Discussion Group  
Continuing the industry collaboration around supply chain visibility, this year we expanded the focus of the blockchain discussion group to include the linkages

between GS1 Standards and supply chain optimization to form this new group. The purpose of this expanded effort is to ensure current and future investments in unique identification via GS1 Standards and quality data to help companies of all sizes continue working toward full visibility and transparency.

- Developed cross-industry [EPC-enabled RFID Web Experience](#)

Businesses, particularly those disrupted by COVID-19 challenges in the last 18 months, recognize the foundational value of unique identification of products and locations in running their operations efficiently. Supply chain resilience and performance are functions of the business processes built on identification and automation. Consumer expectations for rich, accurate, and trusted data shape digitization priorities that ultimately lead to supply chain visibility. To this effect, we are also helping both supply and demand-side organizations as well as solution providers get started with a migration path toward the “next dimension” of barcodes in preparation for [Sunrise 2027](#). We have also launched the [Next-Level Supply Chain with GS1 US podcast](#) to broaden awareness of the power of standards. With you, and our other members, GS1 US remains committed to serve and support industry, leading the way for GS1 Standards to be for a key component of supply chain optimization.

You make a difference in the world by keeping supply chains running and providing essential products and services where and when they are needed. Thank you for everything you do, and we look forward to the great work we will do together in 2022!