

Floral GTIN Initiative

The landscape of the floral industry is changing with continued consolidation of floral retailers, wholesalers, and growers, as well as the growth of on-line floral formats. These changes have motivated leading floral buyers to initiate cost-cutting measures and efficiency programs in order to remain competitive, such as barcodes, electronic commerce, RFID and data synchronization, each of which were built around the use of standards. With the recognition that the floral industry is plagued with many manual activities, inefficient practices, numerous redundancies and poor supply chain visibility, the floral industry is now becoming aware that today's practices are antiquated. These same practices are being done in a more automated and efficient manner in other industries. The transformation from today's practices to tomorrow's practices begins with the incorporation of standards, which are necessary to implement these new business practices.

The GTIN numbering protocol was developed by GS1 to describe all of the GS1 worldwide data structures. This umbrella term was designed to encapsulate all products at all levels in the supply and demand cycle (e.g., selling units, boxes, boxes, pallets, etc.). Each level requires a unique GTIN to correctly identify products throughout the supply chain. The 14-digit GTIN will be used to identify boxes of flowers. For the items inside the box, if in the United States, the U.P.C. (also called the GTIN-12) will be used in UPC barcodes to identify bunches and bouquets. If outside of the U.S., the EAN (also called the GTIN-13) will be used in EAN barcodes to identify bunches and bouquets.

Through the direction of the Floral Logistics Coalition, six key trade associations — WFFSA (Wholesale Florists and Floral Suppliers Association), PMA (Produce Marketing Association), AFIF (Association of Floral Importers of Florida), CAFGS (California Association of Flower Growers and Shippers), CCFC (California Cut Flower Commission), SAF (Society of American Florists), along with support from GS1 US — sponsored a pilot of more than 20 floral companies to begin use of the GTIN as the standard product identification number for four floral categories (basic flowers, bouquets, specialties, novelties) and the use of UPCs on bunches and bouquets. The pilot kicked off on October 2, 2007. The purpose of the pilot was to test a strategy created at a June 2007 meeting of more than 150 floral companies and trade associations for assigning GTINs at the box level, and subsequently for EAN or U.P.C.s at the item level for bunches and bouquets only. This strategy was necessary to prevent a proliferation of GTINs at the box level and U.P.C. or EAN numbers at the bunch and bouquet level, as well as providing some consistency as to what level of granularity is needed when assigning these numbers.