



Media Release
23 March 2022

Trade digitalisation pushed to the next level as ICC and WTO toolkit references GS1 global data standards

The International Chamber of Commerce and World Trade Organisation recently released a toolkit to assist companies and government agencies to adopt available standards to accelerate the digitalisation of trade processes.

Simplifying trade systems and enhancing supply chain traceability are key national priorities to ensure Australian businesses can access growing international markets.

Maria Palazzolo, Executive Director and CEO, GS1 Australia acknowledged the importance of the digital trade standards roadmap when she said, “Digital systems and supply chain data are critical to industry competitiveness and the health of our economy.” While industry adoption of data standards for identifying products, capturing, and sharing information through supply chains is advancing rapidly, trading across borders remains notoriously complex and dependent on paper.

The ICC report found that “one of the primary barriers to the adoption of paperless processes is a lack of awareness of existing standards for digital trade”. As a result, the toolkit identifies almost 100 currently available standards, frameworks and initiatives to enable global supply chain players to speak a universal language.

The report also notes that “fewer than 1% of trade documents are fully digitised globally – with a typical transaction requiring the exchange of 36 documents and 240 copies in hard-copy”.

For the first time, the international trade community has an overview of available and widely recognised digital trade standards to help facilitate basic data sharing, reporting, due diligence, and compliance requirements.

Palazzolo says, “Our challenge is industry and government awareness of what global data standards are and how they work. Without an understanding of how standards work together, industries and countries are inclined to come up with their own way of doing things. This inevitably adds cost and complexity, reducing competitiveness and limits access to international markets.

“This is an important moment in time. Just over 50 years ago industry came together to align on the issue of product identification that resulted in the creation of barcodes as we know them today. Never before have we witnessed government and industry aligning on the important issue of digital supply chains.”

GS1 is one of many standards bodies working closely with the ICC and WTO to align on and accelerate the understanding and adoption of global data standards for trade.

Genuine interoperability, efficiency and resilience will help global supply chain parties meet the digital demands of cross-border trade. Working together to establish a harmonised, digitalised trade environment.

Learn more about what GS1 and how GS1 standards work <https://bit.ly/3iiiM4o>



ends

About GS1 Australia

GS1 is a neutral, not-for-profit organisation that develops and maintains the most widely used global standards for efficient business communication. It is best known for the barcode, named by the BBC as one of "the 50 things that made the world economy". GS1 standards and services improve supply chain efficiency, traceability, and food safety across physical and digital channels in the food and beverage sector. With local member organisations in 116 countries, two million user companies and six billion transactions every day, GS1 standards create a common language that supports systems and processes in 25 sectors across the globe. For more information visit the GS1 Australia website www.gs1au.org

Media enquiries

Caterina Slade, GS1 Australia. E: Caterina.Slade@gs1au.org