



Executive Q&A

with Annemarie Vaupel, Vice President Marketing Hormel Foodservice, 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 customer/consumer experience or helped with achieving strategic objectives identified by your organization?

A. As more purchasing takes place in an on-line format, our participation in the GS1 US initiative and its various workgroups has been key in our ability to “show up” properly with pertinent information points to enable purchasing/sales growth to take place outside of a traditional sales call. Learning what our customer and distributor partners are working on and requiring has helped us manage or expedite projects to meet those requirements.

Q. What quantifiable benefits have you seen as a result of leveraging GS1 Standards into your operations?

A. First, we’ve seen an increase in score cards. Second is the standardization of the digital asset management data of our products. This standardization ensures our products and brands are represented properly. Additionally, the consistency in the data we publish helps our customers make purchasing decisions.

Q. What are some key efforts within your company related to product data management, data quality, and rich product information that directly impact the consumer experience? How have consumers responded?

A. Product images are one of the most important requirements. With over 70% of our customers’ orders being placed online via distributors’ ordering platforms, and with manufacturer websites being the second most used tool for product research, we needed to ensure our products were represented similarly on those sites as they are on our website. Leveraging the tools, we use for the Global Data Synchronization Network™ (GDSN®) publications helped us complete initiatives on our own website, including an image carousel and additional product/marketing data.

Q. What current industry opportunities do you feel could be served by the adoption and use of unique identifiers such as the The Global Trade Item Number® (GTIN®) or Global Location Number (GLN)?

A. I believe the adoption of unique identifiers would assist operators with efficient decision making. Without standards, additional effort is required to ensure all the proper information is available prior to and after a purchasing decision.

Q. What kinds of information do consumers demand the most? Ingredients, allergen disclosures, sourcing information, proof of claims like gluten-free or organic. How has the demand for this level of detailed information impacted your business approach?

A. Ingredients have always been important, as well as allergens. Claims have become much more important as people are more informed about sustainability and a wider variety of dietary restrictions/ lifestyles. It has shown the importance behind being able to publish these product claims not only because people want them, but because they search for those terms or claims.

Q. How does enhanced traceability help you as a manufacturer protect your brand and mitigate risk?

A. We have really strong processes in place around traceability and feel confident consumers are able to trust our brand messages around nutrition and sustainability. We all benefit when we can hold the entire industry accountable for the same level of traceability. It levels the playing field and drives enhanced safety within the food supply.