

# Using GS1 2D codes in consumer engagement





# Developing consumer engagement using the GS1 2D code is a step towards versatile opportunities for business development

The global transition from traditional EAN barcodes to using GS1 2D codes is progressing rapidly. At the moment of publication of this guide, there are ongoing 2D pilots in a total of 48 countries, which represents 88.5 percent of the global GDP. There are incentives for promoting the use of the code because it offers many opportunities for developing the entire sector from the perspective of both consumer engagement as well as the supply chain. In order to guarantee the competitiveness of our companies, it is important for Finland to be a part of this development.

From the consumers' perspective, the new two-dimensional barcode by GS1 represents a significant step forward in the accessibility of product information. The GS1 2D code consumer engagement model described in this guide is a step towards the deployment of the code in the Finnish market. The model details how the GS1 2D code can be utilised in communicating about products to consumers. The objective is to facilitate consumers' access to product-related information, instructions and inspiring content while also providing companies a new channel for engaging in dialogue with consumers.

## Phased implementation

Breaking down the steps for implementing the GS1 2D code makes the process easier to organise and carry out in phases. This step-by-step development ensures that companies do not need to make large investments outright in order to deploy 2D codes and that the resources, development and investments can be carried out in a planned manner, guided by the company's own needs. Of all of the ways of using the GS1 2D code, consumer engagement is the easiest to implement because it provides the opportunity to experiment and develop the concept lightly.

## The purpose of the GS1 2D code consumer engagement guide

GS1 Finland's trainings and expert services offer companies the opportunity to develop understanding and skills for efficient use of the GS1 2D code.

- We present use cases in which consumer engagement could be made more effective with the GS1 2D code.
- We give instructions on how the data content must be structured in compliance with the GS1 Digital Link data content standard and which factors should be considered in locating the code on the packaging in order for the code to also work at checkouts in the future.
- We tell guidelines to consider in using the domain included in the code and landing page it leads to as well as on marketing the GS1 2D code.
- We present a roadmap detailing how a company could go about deploying the GS1 2D code from a consumer engagement perspective.



The GS1 2D code refers to a QR code powered by GS1 with data content that complies with the GS1 Digital Link standard.

<https://id.dalgiardino.com/01/09506000134352/10/2435?15=231221>





**After the transition phase one code on the packaging is enough! The GS1 2D code acts as an information carrier in the entire supply chain and can be scanned with a cash register and a smartphone.**



In connection with consumer engagement, GS1 2D code refers to a QR code powered by GS1 with data content according to the GS1 Digital Link standard. The standard code must include the GTIN code and its application identifier. In addition to this, the code can contain other additional information depending on the business need, such as information about the batch, which enables communication at a more detailed level.

The standard GS1 2D code works not only for consumer engagement but also as an identifier for the supply chain and at cash registers. During the transition period, the product must have both an EAN barcode and a GS1 2D code. In order to maintain the efficiency of checkout operations, the GS1 2D code should be placed near the EAN barcode, and the standard provides instructions for this as well. If necessary, the GS1 2D code can also be placed in a place visible to the consumer on the package.

**Consumer engagement using the GS1 2D code**

 <p>Create a GS1 2D code with data content that complies with the GS1 Digital Link standard</p>	 <p>Add the code to the product packaging. An EAN barcode is required during the transition phase. After the transition phase, a GS1 2D code alone is enough.</p>
 <p>When a consumer scans the code they are redirected to the product information online.</p>	 <p>Changes in the pages shown are managed using redirections, which means that the codes on the product packages do not have to be changed.</p>



**Find out more about the topic:**



# Project presentation

The Food Data Finland growth engine program brings together parties from primary production, food industry and retail trade to develop a food chain that makes use of data and GS1 standards. The project introduces a practical aspect to data co-operation in the form of jointly implemented development projects. This way, members of the network can act as pioneers in utilising uniform data in the food chain and be the first to make use of the data created by the co-operation in their business.

In September 2023, GS1 launched a development project in connection with the program regarding the consumer engagement

model of the GS1 2D code. The development project was completed in January 2024, and resulted in a proposal on how companies of the food chain could make use of the GS1 2D code in their consumer engagement. The proposal is based on utilising GS1 standards. In order to draw up the model and survey related needs, GS1 carried out workshops in collaboration with food industry and convenience goods companies. The user guide is based strongly on the consumer perspective, meaning the information needs and desires related to the consumer's purchasing process.

**We would like to thank the following companies for their help during the project**



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