

# Why GTIN on construction products?

## Background

Three years ago, on the twelfth of April 2018, the GTIN Group made a demand that the GS1 GTIN should be the common standard for trade item identification and that all manufacturers and suppliers should use it on all construction products.

The purpose of the decision was that construction products should always have a unique item number, which can be used for digital information and physical labeling. This enables traceability throughout the construction process and during the entire life cycle of a building.

By enabling traceability with the industry-wide decision, joint responsibility is taken for a more efficient and smarter construction industry as well as a more sustainable construction community.

### What is GTIN?

A GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) is the number found, for example, beneath the barcode on almost all grocery products. It is an identification standard from GS1, a kind of standardized item number. The advantage of a GTIN compared to other item numbers is that it is guaranteed to be globally unique, ie each GTIN only appears on a specific product from a specific supplier. In this way, a GTIN can act as the product identity that securely identifies a specific item. Note that a GTIN here identifies an item, such as a certain model of MDF board, not a certain individual in the bundle of identical MDF boards.

Swedish GS1 User Group Construction was formed. The purpose of the group is to develop, maintain and impact GS1 standards and processes for the construction industry, both at a national and an international level.

The GTIN group consists of Swedish nationwide construction contractors, interest groups in the construction trade, building material manufacturers and other stakeholders.

## What did we do?

In a subgroup of the GS1 User Group Construction, a draft set of rules for how GTIN is to be used in the construction industry has been developed.

A prerequisite for GTIN to meet the identified need to track products throughout the construction process, and during the entire life cycle of a building, is that the rules take into account the needs of all potential actors. Therefore, the following actors / steps were first identified: manufacturing, distribution, logistics warehouse, reseller, end customer, construction site logistics, installation, operation, maintenance, repair, dismantling, reuse and recycling. Subsequently, the working group proceeded from the general and industry-independent rules for GTIN and validated / updated them based on the needs of the construction industry and the identified actors' perspectives on the various steps in the life cycle.

## The result

The end result is a draft set of rules for how GTIN should be used and when a new GTIN should be assigned. These rules were adopted unanimously in March 2021 by GS1 User Group Construction, which includes those behind the original requirement but also several other actors in the construction industry. Thanks to this, there is now a basis for GTIN to be relevant throughout a product's entire life cycle.

## More information

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Putting GTIN on products: <https://gs1.se/en/guides/how-to-guides/how-to-create-gtin-step-by-step/>