ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce FAQs

ECCnet Phase 2

What is ECCnet Phase 2 - eCommerce?

ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce is an initiative developed at the request of industry, and supported by major retailers and industry associations in the Canadian grocery sector. It is based on supporting consumer behaviour around shopping, researching and buying online.

Based on consumers' response to shopping, researching and buying online, this initiative will ensure that every product (in the identified product categories) will be ready to meet eCommerce business requirements with high-quality, standardized photographs and access to all on-pack information including ingredients, nutrition information, allergens, warnings, usage instruction and more—all helping customers to make informed decisions before purchasing online.

This initiative uses the same principles as ECCnet when it was founded in 2001 to meet industry supply chain requirements. Manufacturers are able to save time and money by loading their information once and delivering the standardized data to their trading partners (one to many). The added value of the ability to perpetually update and cleanse the data and images has consistently brought value to this industry for more than 12 years.

What product categories are considered "in-scope" for ECCnet Phase 2?

The initial product categories for ECCnet Phase 2 for both private label and national brands were:

- Food and natural foods
- Pet
- Baby
- Cleaning, household, paper
- Health and beauty aids
- Cosmetics
- Pharmacy (over the counter)
- Alcohol

In October 2016, the initiative expanded to include the following additional product categories.

- Cards
- Floral
- Fresh meat, deli, bakery, produce
- Small appliances
- General merchandise products
- Pet care

Why has it been initiated?

Consumer behaviour is increasingly moving into online spaces. The latest data shows that there are 40,000 Google searches per second, 3.5 billion per day and 1.2 trillion per year (Source: Google, 2015). Industry is facing mass shifts in how consumers research, compare and shop for products and product information.

In other countries, the grocery sector is increasingly active on online platforms with online supermarkets and retailers increasing in sophistication and service. Canadian industry is working to set a solid foundation to meet current needs and the capability to build for future developments in online retail to remain competitive and relevant to their consumers.

In order to successfully engage the consumer, sell more products and build new business opportunities, retailers and manufacturers need to ensure that their products being offered are being appropriately showcased with the right images and the right data to drive the sale. This initiative bridges the gap between what consumers see online and what they would see in-store.

The issue industry faces today is a lack of consistency when it comes to the images available and the on-pack data to support business needs.

An opportunity exists to streamline both the process for delivering images/data between trading partners and consistency in the data/images that are required. Proprietary requirements increase costs, require extra staff and reduce efficiencies. GS1 Canada was approached to develop a standardized framework for the exchange of eCommerce image and data bundles to meet the needs of industry.

Capturing high-quality standardized images and associated on-pack data for all products through one process enables trading partners to promote products professionally and consistently, improving consumer confidence and safety and maintain brand integrity.

Which associations and retailers are supporting the initiative?

This initiative's implementation is supported by:

- the Grocery Manufacturers Collaborative (GMC)
- Retail Council of Canada (RCC)
- Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC)
- Consumer Health Products (CHP)
- Canadian Cosmetics, Toiletries and Fragrance Associations (CCTFA)

It is also supported by major Canadian retailers including:

- Federated Co-Operatives
- Loblaws
- Longo's
- Lowe's
- Metro
- Overwaitea
- Safeway
- Shoppers Drug Mart
- Sobeys
- Walmart

Who is GS1 Canada?

GS1 Canada is a member of GS1, the world's leading supply chain standards organization. As a neutral, not–for–profit organization, GS1 Canada enables its more than 20,000 subscribers— organizations of all sizes from over 20 sectors across Canada—to enhance their efficiency and cost effectiveness by adopting electronic supply chain best practices. Learn more at www.gs1ca.org.

GS1 Canada has been identified by industry to develop and implement a solution to support this business process requirement for Canada.

Why is GS1 Canada involved?

GS1 Canada was approached by the grocery sector to pioneer and implement this initiative through our Grocery Board and Board of Governors, which are composed of prominent leaders in Canadian grocery.

GS1 Canada has a pedigree in establishing standards that are non-partisan and can be applied across a wide range of business processes.

Without a standardized, non-proprietary industry solution, manufacturers would have to work with each of their trading partners separately to deliver one-off solutions for photographing their products and providing data, adhering to a different set of standards every time. This process would require a significant investment of time and money.

With GS1 Canada, the process is done only once; the same images and data bundles can be shared with each trading partner while eliminating concerns of inaccurate information in the hands of consumers or potential brand risk from crowd sourced information.

Why would I want to be involved?

Both manufacturers and retailers want to sell more products as consumers increasingly move into online retail. This initiative benefits everyone by improving the customer experience online. Increasing customers' confidence that they know what they are getting when buying goods online will lead to increased sales opportunities.

Why are up-to-date images needed?

Successful commerce for online platforms depends on customers feeling that the product they see on a retailer's website is the same product they would see in-store. A product image increases the likelihood of purchase by 67 per cent (Source: MDG Advertising, 2012).

However, if customers see products that are out-of-date, discontinued, or with packaging they know is no longer used, they are not only less likely to buy your product, they are less likely to buy from that online store.

Products with missing data or information that the customer knows is incorrect are also a deterrent to sales.

There are also potential legal implications if the product represented online does not match what the consumer receives.

Who needs to participate?

Manufacturers and brand owners are required to participate if they sell any products in the identified product categories (above) to any of the major grocery retailers in Canada, or intend to in the future.

Who is eligible to participate?

To participate, manufacturers and brand owners will need to be subscribers to GS1 Canada.

Participants will also need to subscribe to The Vault, an ECCnet Service – eCommerce Content. This service allows manufacturers to view, download and certify their images and product data. It

is also used to ensure that manufacturers can provide trading partners and consumers with accurate and complete brand owner-authorized product data and images.

Manufacturers and brand owners will receive an invitation to subscribe to The Vault – eCommerce as soon as their products are ready to be certified.

What if I am not a GS1 Canada subscriber?

You will need to become a GS1 Canada subscriber to participate. You can find information on how to do so on the GS1 Canada website.

If you are not a GS1 Canada subscriber and sell only a small number of products, you may be eligible for one of GS1 Canada's Small Business Bundles which group together core GS1 Canada services required by your trading partners at an affordable price.

I am a subscriber but do not currently sell to the major retailers. Do I need to participate?

It is recommended that you participate if you intend to sell your products in the retail grocery sector in Canada now or at any stage in the future.

What is the timeline for this project?

The timeline for individual manufacturers and brand owners will differ as GS1 Canada works with manufacturers on product appointment windows.

We will continue to work directly with you to build a schedule that meets the needs of your organization and your trading partners.

The time between products arriving at GS1 Canada Images and images being released to manufacturers and retailers will vary depending on the overall volume. Every effort is being made to streamline this process. This is why it is important that manufacturers agree to a product submission window with GS1 Canada.

When will retailers use my images and data in their eCommerce sites?

GS1 Canada is currently working with each retailer to finalize their delivery method for this service.

Retailers will begin to have access to images and product data from The Vault – eCommerce in Q3, 2016. Each retailer has an urgency around getting this information from their vendors as quickly as possible in order to feed their eCommerce initiatives.

When did The Vault – eCommerce Content launch?
Manufacturers and brand owners first received invitations to subscribe to The Vault – eCommerce Content in July, 2016.

The Vault – eCommerce Content has been launched on a rolling basis. New products are added daily and manufacturers are invited to subscribe once their products are ready to be certified.

How many products will be in The Vault – eCommerce Content?

As many as are needed to meet manufacturer, brand owner and retailer needs.

The target number of products to be added to The Vault – eCommerce Content is 65,000 for 2016 with a further 65,000 added in 2017 for a total of 130,000 products.

Identify

What products do I need to submit?

You will need to submit all products in the identified product categories above that you sell to grocery retailers in Canada.

How do I know which of my products I need to send in?

You are required to send in all of the products in the identified categories that are listed with your retailers. Any deviations to this should be discussed and approved by your trading partners.

Please notify GS1 Canada of any exceptions and we will record and track so if requested by retailers we do not shop for products that are not required.

I sell food products that could be considered bakery, meat or deli items depending on the store. Do I send them in or not?

Yes, the success of this initiative to date has been so great that we are now expanding to new product categories.

As of October, 2016, bakery, meat are deli items that are fresh, sold loose, in bulk, or with variable weights are in-scope.

I sell frozen products. Are these in-scope and can GS1 Canada Images handle them?

Yes, frozen products in the applicable categories are considered to be in-scope.

GS1 Canada Images receives refrigerated frozen products from manufacturers on an ongoing basis and has facilities on-site to keep products cold.

Frozen products do present a challenge when accurately recording dimensions and weights. To achieve accurate readings, you will need to send two samples of each frozen product.

I have products that have variants like colours and flavours but are otherwise identical. Do I need to ship them all?

If you sell variations of a product where there is no change to the weight or dimensions of the product packaging (e.g. frozen dinners with different meals inside), and no clear windows where a consumer could see the product inside, you can send in two full samples of one of these variants and the flat packaging for each of the other variants in this product range.

In order to ship 1-2 samples for image capture, I would have to purchase an entire case. Is there any way to help me keep the cost down?

In many instances, the most cost effective thing to do is to ship the entire case to GS1 Canada and request it be returned to you after content capture is complete. You can request this by noting it on the Product Submission Form. You can also request the case be returned to a separate address from the one it was sent from.

Another option would be for GS1 Canada to shop the products if this becomes more cost effective for you. Be aware that GS1 Canada would charge the standard imaging and data capture price for the relevant bundle, the cost of obtaining the products itself and potentially an administrative fee. You should to talk to GS1 Canada about this option.

Do I have to schedule a time to submit my products for imaging?

Yes, scheduling products enables us to deliver a quicker turnaround time that meets your needs.

To schedule an appointment, please contact scheduling@gs1ca.org

I have GTINs for discontinued products. What about them?
You do not need to send in discontinued products. Please advise GS1 Canada of any GTINs for discontinued products. You should also ensure that they are properly managed in your product registry.

I have upcoming products where the final packaging artwork is not ready yet. What can I do with these?

As part of your standard product development cycle, any products where final details are still being determined can "pre-register" with GS1 Canada Images to hold their spot.

Pre-registered products let GS1 Canada Images know that the product is coming and there is no need to shop it. Manufacturers then have a 120-day window to submit the final product for image and data capture.

For the ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce initiative, you can book your products in with a longer lead-in in some instances. Talk to your account manager or email scheduling@gs1ca.org to discuss when you would like to book your products.

I manufacture private label goods for a retailer. Do I still need to submit my products?

Yes. Since retailers want to be able to showcase all of the products they sell on eCommerce platforms, private label goods are included. If in doubt, have a discussion directly with your trading partners to confirm expectations, costing and timing.

Please refer to the Product Submission Form for private label pricing for the Retail Trading Partner Bundles.

Manufacturers of private labels goods will not be required to certify their images or data.

I have seasonal products that I do not have in stock right now. What do I do about them?

These products should be sent in as soon as they become available. Please notify GS1 Canada and we will record your information on timing.

Are promotional products in-scope for this initiative?

Each retailer will have their own strategy on how they plan to manage seasonal and promotional products. You will need to work with your trading partners to come to an agreement on how to manage promotional and seasonal products.

This is not a GS1 decision but please let us know the outcome so we can track your products appropriately.

Capture

How do I submit my products?

You will need to arrange an appointment time to send in your products.

Please contact scheduling@gs1ca.org to schedule an appointment to ship your products.
You will need to send a sample of each product to GS1 Canada Images in Montreal along with the Product Submission Form.

Some products have packages that are soft and likely to become creased in transit. It is recommended that you also submit a flat, empty version of any packaging to ensure that all packaging information can be captured cleanly.

Will the GS1 Canada Images Product Submission Form be updated for this project?

Yes, we are launching a new automated product submission form for physical products.

Once you receive your invite to register for The Vault, the Product Submission Form will be accessible through your myGS1 account. This easy-to-use process eliminates paper submissions and gives subscribers increased visibility to their GS1 Canada Images service requests.

Does GS1 Canada Images use optical character recognition (OCR) when capturing on-pack data?

No. OCR technology is not leveraged in this process. Many manufacturers have noted that accuracy for this technology can be unreliable.

GS1 Canada has accurate marketing and planogram images for my products; do I need to have everything photographed again?

Images will not need to be taken for planogram and marketing purposes if products currently in the GS1 Canada Images database are up to date.

Put simply, when GS1 Canada Images receives your product, they will compare it with what is currently in their system. If the marketing and planograms images are already up-to-date, they will only take the photographs needed for eCommerce purposes.

ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce ensures that the right images go with the right data before they are accessed by retailers or consumers. This approach reduces the brand risk that would occur if images and data were garnered from multiple sources.

I already have digitized versions of my on-pack data. Can I just send those to GS1 Canada?

This kind of submission is known as an e-Submission and is only acceptable for ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce under certain circumstances.

Any product being submitted through an e-Submission must already have its product weight and dimensions on file with GS1 Canada Images as this is an integral part of the data collected during the data capture process. Planogram and marketing images must also already be on file.

For e-Submissions to be accepted, the images must meet strict guidelines and include views of all sides of the packaging where written content is visible.

You should coordinate with your account manager or via images@gs1ca.org to see if an e-Submission option will work for you.

E-Submissions cost the same as the usual ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce due to the need to do incremental work and verify that submitted photographs and data meet the established guidelines. E-Submissions do become economically attractive, however, because of the savings on shipping and samples to GS1 Canada Images.

I have already been through a process like this with other online retailers. Why do I have to do this again?

This is exactly the problem that this initiative is designed to address. ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce will support manufacturers by stopping individual proprietary requirements of different retailers and instead deliver *one* solution that meets all their needs.

ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce works on the same principles as the initial ECCnet Registry for supply chain data. Manufacturers and brand owners upload their data once and then are able to share it with all of their trading partners. Without a standardized industry ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce solution, manufacturers would have to build new processes and data/image streams for every single trading partner you work with.

How much will this cost me?

The total pricing of this service will vary for each subscriber. Pricing will vary depending on a vendor's current GS1 Subscription, annual revenue and amount of products they will be imaging. You should talk with your account manager to help determine your total price for this service.

Each product will be photographed under one of GS1 Canada's affordable data and image bundles.

If the product already has marketing and planograms images captured in the GS1 Canada database, it will be photographed and digitized using the Retail Trading Partner eCommerce Bundle, which focuses on images and on-pack data for use on eCommerce platforms.

If the product does not have marketing and planograms images or requires updates to those images, it will be photographed using the Retail Trading Partner Services Bundle, which captures these images as well as eCommerce images and on-pack data.

Because The Vault – eCommerce Content is different and supports different data requirements to Item Certification Nutrition, manufacturers of food products will need to sign up for both services.

There is an annual subscription fee for The Vault - eCommerce Content certification service. However, if you were a subscriber to Item Certification – Nutrition on September 1, 2015, you will receive a Vault – eCommerce Content annual subscription for free until May, 2018.

If you are not a GS1 Canada subscriber and sell only a small number of products, you may be eligible for one of GS1 Canada's Small Business Bundles which group together core GS1 Canada services required by your trading partners at a very attractive cost.

Is there a cost to access the eCommerce certification service?

Yes, a subscription is required to access The Vault – eCommerce Content, which is used to certify images and data collected through ECCnet Phase 2.

Access to this service comes as an annual subscription. Manufacturers with total annual revenues of less than CAD$5 million will pay $250 per annum for this service. Manufacturers with total annual revenues of CAD$5 million or above will pay $1,000 per annum for this service.

If you were a subscriber to the Item Certification – Nutrition before September 1, 2015 you will receive access to The Vault - eCommerce until May, 2018 at no additional cost.

If you do not wish to subscribe to The Vault – eCommerce Content, your images and data cannot be certified. They will be sent to your trading partners with a "validated" status only. You can always subscribe to this service later and certify your images and data then.

Can I save on shipping costs by just sending you my packaging flat?

In some specific circumstances, yes. For products that come with variants (such as different flavours or colours) that do not affect the size or weight of the packaging, this is an option. It is important that each product is represented by at least one full sample to ensure that vital information like size and weight can be captured.

For such products, you would need to send in two samples of one variation the full product. You could send at least one (ideally two) flat version of the packaging for any other product variants after that.

If there are any clear windows or transparencies on the packaging that enable you to see the product within, you need to send in two samples of each variant.

Can I spread the cost of participating in this initiative out more evenly by scheduling multiple shipments of products?

Yes. You should coordinate with your account manager or by contacting scheduling@gs1ca.org to discuss a shipment schedule that can contain 'waves' of product shipments.

What happens if I have not submitted my products or scheduled my appointment?

Retailers have directed GS1 Canada to shop for any products still unscheduled after the deadline. Shopping for products adds costs to the initiative and, as such, an administrative fee of up to $100 per product will be applied to offset these costs.

What happens if I miss my scheduled delivery date?

If you have already scheduled your products, ensure that you adhere to your scheduled date. Missed dates and product shipment reductions negatively impact production and increase delivery costs. If you miss your scheduled shipment date, GS1 Canada will shop for your product and apply an administrative fee of up to $100 per product to offset these costs.

Will I be notified which of my products will be shopped?

Yes, GS1 Canada will notify you in advance of any missing products that have been requested to be shopped.

Will GS1 Canada be notifying my retailers if I have not sent in my products?

GS1 Canada will respond to request from retailers to provide an update based on the letters they have sent out to manufacturers.

If products have been booked, GS1 Canada can advise retailers their manufacturers and brand owners have responded and that those products do not need to be shopped.

If I have scheduled to have my products imaged, will my products get shopped even if they haven't been sent in yet?

No, your products will not be shopped if you have already scheduled an appointment to have them captured.

If a product is scheduled for capture, but the retailer needs the product earlier, will GS1 contact the manufacturer first in order to avoid the product being shopped?

Yes, GS1 Canada will always contact the manufacturer first. GS1 Canada only shops for a product as a last resort.

Will I get my products back after they have been photographed?

After they have been photographed, food items are donated to food banks. Non-food items will be donated to second hand stores.

If you require your products to be returned, there is a service fee associated with returning products which must be requested and approved prior to the image capture service. Details about this can be found on the Product Submission Form.

Share

Will I have access to my images and data?

Participants in ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce who have subscribed to GS1 Canada's The Vault – eCommerce Content will be able to access their images and on-pack data.

Subscribing to this service also includes being able to download and distribute images, certify product data as correct and top up products with additional information such as marketing romance copy.

What is the difference between validated data and certified data?

Validated and certified are two layers of ensuring data integrity. In the validation process, data goes through a three-step validation process and is verified by a third party (i.e. neither the manufacturer nor the retailer) to check that the data in the system matches the data found on-pack.

Certification is an additional step completed by manufacturers and brand owners. In this process, a manufacturer will look at the validated data, have the ability to add marketing and romance copy and confirm that it is correct.

Certifying data is recommended in all cases. In some areas, certification is mandatory before data can be released to the retailer. This includes any information about nutrition, ingredients and allergens for food products.

For products captured through the ECCnet Phase 2 -eCommerce initiative, manufacturers will be able to certify images and data through The Vault – eCommerce Content. They will be given five days to complete the certification process. After that period, the images and data will be released to retailers with a "validated" status only. Manufacturers can always come back in and certify their images and products and add top up information at a later date. The now-certified images and data updates will then flow to the retailer.

GS1 Canada subscribers who have been invited to register for The Vault – eCommerce Content need to ensure they engage and certify their product(s) in The Vault – eCommerce Content.

When does the five-day rule will come into effect?

As part of The Vault – eCommerce Content launch, the five-day certification rule was temporarily relaxed. This provided manufacturers with the opportunity to adjust their business processes to incorporate certification.

The five-day rule will become active and will be enforced beginning October 31, 2016.

Once my product data and images have been released after five days, if I have not certified, will my trading partners be informed that the images and data are validated?

Yes, when images and data have been released to your trading partners, it will be flagged as being validated only.

If you later certify your products, the data that subsequently flows to your retailers will now be flagged as certified.

Once validated images and data have been released, can I go back and certify my products?

Yes, you can certify your product images and data at any time.

How long will it take for my images to be viewable?

That will depend on a number of factors including how many products you have, when you send them to GS1 Canada images, when in the process you sent them in and what the volume of products needing to be photographed at GS1 Canada Images is at the time. Initial products are now available in The Vault, with priority given to those who sent their products in first.

After the initial period where ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce is being set up, the process is expected to take between five and ten business days from product submission and manufacturers being able to view the product in The Vault – eCommerce Content. However, the product will be logged as received within 24 hours of receipt.

If I need to certify a large number of products, I will need to plan resources accordingly. Is it possible to receive advanced notification of when my products will be ready to be certified?

GS1 Canada is currently reviewing possible solutions to make this available to subscribers. We will advise as soon as this has been confirmed.

One option would be to ship your products in bundles (e.g. 100 at a time) so that you can manage the certification process internally.

After the initial phases of ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce when the initial round of products has been captured, you should expect your products to be ready to be certified approximately five to ten business days after they were received at GS1 Images.

How do I certify my images and data?

You will be notified of any images ready to be certified when you log in to your account. You will also be sent an email when you have products ready to be certified.

Why should I certify my images and data?

It is in manufacturers' and brand owners' best interest to certify the image and data bundles to ensure consumers are getting the right information and managing brand risk and consumer safety.

Certifying content adds an additional layer of data integrity and ensures that what customers see online is accurate and complete. Manufacturers can certify their content at any time but retailer will have access to content five days after it enter The Vault, whether it is certified or not.

How does GS1 Canada ensure that on-pack data is accurate?

GS1 Canada uses a three-pass validation process to ensure that on-pack data is correct before it is presented to manufacturers or retailers. In addition, manufacturers will have a five-day window to certify that any captured data/image bundles are correct before they are released to retailers.

If manufacturers miss that window, their images and data will be shared with retailers with a "validated" status only. Manufacturers can certify their data later. This updated "certified" status data will then flow to retailers.

How are Item Certification and The Vault – eCommerce Content different from each other?

The two services are both content certification tools but focus on different business outcomes and are likely to be handled by different areas on the retailer side. GS1 Canada is currently working on integrating The Vault – eCommerce Content and Item Certification - Nutrition to deliver seamless integration to manufacturers.

The Vault eCommerce content certification tool focuses specifically on attributes needed for retailers to feature products on eCommerce platforms. It allows subscribers to download and share certified content and top-up certified, on-package data with additional attributes including romance copy to support online sales.

The Item Certification - Nutritional registry provides additional information that is not on pack. This also feeds any nutritional, dietary programs to retailers to enable them to design programs and promotions based around the information consumers are demanding about the products they buy.

I already use Item Certification – Nutrition. Will I have to re-certify my product data?

The product certification tool for ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce focuses on a different set of product attributes to Item Certification – Nutrition. ECCnet Phase 2– eCommerce concentrates on the on-pack attributes that are visible to your customers. Item Certification – Nutrition focuses on all nutrition-related attributes; some, like allergens, may not be included in your on-pack information but still needs to be certified.

If you have signed up to Item Certification – Nutrition before September 1, 2015 you will receive access to The Vault – eCommerce Content until May, 2018 at no additional cost.

You will only need to re-certify your nutritional information if that information has changed or if there is a conflict between the currently certified nutritional information and the information that is found on your products packaging.

When certifying your data using either service, you will have the option of updating the data to ensure it matches. Be aware that, if the data on your packaging is incorrect, it may necessitate you reprinting your packaging.

Can't GS1 Canada just use the information I have already certified in Item Certification – Nutrition?

For eCommerce purposes, it is essential that the consumer has access to the right image with the right data. If we pull data and images from separate data bases we cannot guarantee that this is the case. This is why we need your live product samples so we can capture the entire package at the same time therefore you can feel confident that your brand and your consumer is not at risk.

While there are some aspects that are similar between Item Certification – Nutrition (NFT) and ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce's (full package) content certification tool, there are too many aspects unique to each service to use one tool in place of the other. These are for different use cases and have different data and image requirements.

GS1 Canada is currently working on integrating Item Certification –Nutrition with The Vault eCommerce Content to deliver seamless integration to manufacturers.

I have additional information that is not included on my packaging that I would want shown on any eCommerce platforms. Can I add this?

During the certification process within The Vault – eCommerce Content, manufacturers will have the opportunity to add romance copy that highlights marketing aspects of their products.

You will need to subscribe to The Vault – eCommerce Content when you receive your invitation.

What will retailers use my images and data for?

Retailers will primarily use your images and data to ensure that they have the right visual representation of your product and the corresponding data (on-pack information) to accompany any product details when featuring it online.

Retailers may also use these images to create visual planograms and to feature your product in marketing promotions including in-store promotion, catalogues and other forms of advertising.

Data will be used to ensure that any information found on product packaging is available to customers, making looking at a product when shopping online very similar to holding the product in–store.

When will retailers be able to access my data and images bundles?

Retailers will receive access to images and product data in Q3, 2016. Timelines for how this information will be integrated into their eCommerce platforms will vary by retailer.

Can I decide which of my product images retailers use?

You can work with the retailers to decide which products will be used in their eCommerce initiatives however the image itself for eCommerce platforms is standardized. The photos used as product shots in online store are standardized by type of product. This helps build customer confidence in the online shopping experience as they begin to know what to expect from the information provided in an online store.

Can I use my images for advertising and marketing?

Yes, once they have been certified you will be able to download and distribute your images for your own use internally or externally.

The Future

What should I do with new products or new packaging?

New products or packaging should be submitted to GS1 Canada Images 12-16 weeks before launch. To make the process easier for future products, it is recommended that submission to GS1 Canada Images be incorporated into your product development cycle.

If I have any packaging updates, will my retailers automatically be notified of the changes?

Yes, the API XML we use is a "push" service. It ensures quality control and tracking of all your product updates.

I have other products not covered by the currently identified key product categories. Will they eventually need to be sent in as well?

The ultimate goal of the grocery retailers is to showcase online all the products they carry within their stores. This initiative is currently driven by industry, their associations and retailers in the Canadian grocery sector. Once we complete the current scope additional categories will be added.

As other sectors become interested, it is possible that the scope will expand to incorporate them.

It is always possible to send in other products ahead of time to prepare.

Are there any user guides or educational programs available?

Yes, comprehensive training and educational resources are available for ECCnet Phase 2 - eCommerce. Once you are invited to register training will be available for The Vault – eCommerce Content. If you require any further training, please contact your account manager at GS1 Canada.

Does each retailer have a primary contact looking after this initiative to be able to communicate priority products?

Yes, this would be the same group of contacts that GS1 Canada and FCPC have been working with since the initial launch of this project in September 2015. Please see the list of contacts below:

i.   Loblaws-Stephanie Wright, board sponsor Shaun Halstead
ii.   Overwaitea-Cindy McLean, board sponsor Mike Olson
iii.   Longo's-Ghouse Shaik-Adam, board sponsor Pat Pessotto
iv.   Metro-Robert Frenette and Alfred Conte, board sponsor Pierre Charron
v.   Sobey's-Derek Dietrich, board sponsor Lillie Cruikshank
vi.   Walmart-Mark Coffey, board sponsor
vii.   Lowe's, Sylvain Prudhome, board sponsor

Who can I contact for more information about ECCnet Phase 2 – eCommerce?

For further information, please contact your GS1 Canada account manager. You can also contact us at 1.800.567.7084 or by email at info@gs1ca.org.