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1. Definition of a GLN

“The GS1 Identification Key used to identify physical locations or legal entities. The key is comprised of a GS1 Company Prefix, Location Reference, and Check Digit”

Global Location Number (GLN) is used to identify locations. This could be a physical location such as a warehouse or a legal entity such as a company or customer or a function that takes place within a legal entity. It can also be used to identify something as specific as a particular shelf in a store.

Being able to identify locations with a unique number is key to many business processes. The GLN is used in electronic messaging between customers and suppliers, where location advice is important. GLN is also used within companies to identify specific locations both electronically in a database or physically where the GLN can be produced in a barcode or GS1 EPC tag.

1.1. Key GLN Attributes

The GLN will identify any location uniquely thus ensuring that it is always identified correctly anywhere in the world. Companies may choose to allocate one GLN for the whole business whilst others may allocate a GLN for every location that they need to identify. This could be a warehouse goods-in door or a hospital bed location in a ward. GLN allows complete flexibility for whatever level location identification is required. As a GS1 Identification Key the GLN will always be unique which allows trading parties to exchange GLN data for location identification with no danger of number duplication.

1.2. Benefits of using a GLN

- Already established within electronic communications
- Allows companies to identify ship to and ship from locations
- Uniquely identifies each location at any level of granularity required
- Essential for accuracy of purchase order, delivery and payments documentation
- Identifies location in data exchange between trading partners as a required component of a GDSN (Global Data Synchronisation Network)
- Is the building block for GS1-EPC applications
- Removes the need for proprietary location numbering systems

1.3. GLN Structure

GLN is a 13 digit number composed of a GS1 Company Prefix, a Location Reference number and a Check Digit.

Global Location Number Structure												
GS1 Company Prefix							Location Reference					Check Digit
N ₁	N ₂	N ₃	N ₄	N ₅	N ₆	N ₇	N ₈	N ₉	N ₁₀	N ₁₁	N ₁₂	N ₁₃

GS1 Company Prefix A globally unique number assigned to a GS1 member company

Location Reference number The number assigned by the member company to the location

Check Digit A modulo-10 number calculated across the preceding digits to ensure data integrity.

Each company can assign GLNs to their own locations. It is the assigning company's responsibility to keep their trading partners informed of numbers allocated and the corresponding data such as address and contact information that is associated with the location.

In some countries a national GLN database is administered by the local GS1 Member Organisation. However, if you have a GS1 Company Prefix then you can allocate your GLN location reference numbers.

Within the GS1 System the GLN and the GTIN (Global Trade Item Number) are two distinct data identifiers. There is no conflict when a GTIN and a GLN have the same digits, the data carrier (electronic data interchange, machine readable symbol, or radio frequency) will distinguish between the two identifiers. For example, when GLNs are used in Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) and electronic communications, the context (Application Identifiers and qualifiers) will prevent any misinterpretation



2. GLN Applications

2.1.1. A GLN may be used identify any location

To identify a physical location


- A company's specific warehouse
- A specific dock with a warehouse
- A specific delivery location
- A put away location in a store or warehouse
- A specific shelf in a store
- An operating theatre
- A storage cabinet

To identify a legal entity

- A whole company
- A division of a company
- A bank

To identify a function within a legal entity

- A buying dept at a retailer
- The invoicing dept at a hospital
- A nurses station
- A hospital ward
- The accounts dept

 **Note:** Using GLN rather than an internal numbering system for locations will give a company significant advantages, avoiding duplication complexity and ensuring numbers are unique when they need to be shared with trading partners.

3. Useful further information

3.1. GS1 Member Organisations

Your local GS1 Member Organisation is the ideal contact for information on the benefits that GLN can deliver to your business. In addition they will be able to provide you with further information on all of GS1 standards. Full details can be found on: <http://www.gs1.org/contact/worldwide.php>

3.1.1. GS1 Global Office

- Further information on all GS1 standards is available on the GS1 Global site: <http://www.gs1.org/>
- The GLN Allocation Rules Where you can find all the details about how GLN can work in your business and when the number should change: <http://www.gs1.org/glnrules/>
- GS1 on line training is available via GS1 Learn is the area where you can learn on-line how GLN and all other areas of the GS1 system work: <http://learn.gs1.org/portal3/index.asp>