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**We welcome your feedback at [ItemMDMVIP@kroger.com](mailto:ItemMDMVIP@kroger.com) Please include the word 'newsletter' in your subject line.**

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**Webinar Dates**

Oct 22nd, 1pm-2pm

Oct 22nd, 1pm-2pm

Register [Here](#)

**To Our Valued Suppliers**

**VIP November 3rd Release**

There are several small changes coming with the VIP November release that we wanted to make you aware.

New Attributes:

**Image Source** (Ref #4059) - This identifies the source of which company is hosting/providing the image URL. This will have a valid value list to select from, and only those companies on the valid value list will be considered acceptable sources for image URLs by Kroger (more information on the Supplier Webinars scheduled this week; information in the column to the left). 'To Be Determined', or a similar sentiment will be one of the valid values if the image is not available yet. But an image must be present for the item to be sold on digital platforms and to be ultimately accepted at Kroger. This attribute will be paired with the other image attributes like image facing, URL, etc.

Take the time to gather images and begin loading them in the Vendor Item Portal. While this is an optional field now, we will be making it mandatory by

early next year as we move toward our single source of truth for item data.

**DUNs number** (Ref #4060) - This is where you will enter the Duns and Bradstreet number that matches your organization's number in the Supplier Hub. The DUNs number is found on the Organization Page. This will be a nine digit number entry and will be required for any consumer unit submitted with an item submission reason code. You may have multiple numbers for any given item but we only need one that represents your organization. This can also be filled as a default in the 'My Account' tab.

Coming early next year will be a service call to validate the number in Supplier Hub matches the number provided in Vendor Item Portal.

Validation Changes:

**Marketing Message** - Beginning November 3rd, Marketing Message will be a **REQUIRED** attribute on any item submitted with an item submission reason code. Up until now, it was optional as we hadn't shared the requirements.

Now that we have, we're looking for this field to be populated. As a reminder, here are the expectations for marketing message:

It should be 2-3 sentences long or about 300-400 characters about the product. It should be about the specific item and not about the overall brand and be similar to the long description on the product label. It should exclude the brand website, phone number, and address.

**TI/HI** - Previously, if the TI and HI were left blank, our systems auto-filled the blanks with a value of 1. With the November release, these fields will no longer be auto-filled. We expect that for all items that are sourced through a warehouse (excluding Ship, Fred Meyer Direct, and DSD items) the TI and HI values are filled out for the dispatch unit level on the hierarchy. This information will be used downstream by our Replenishment teams.

**Level of non-GMO claim** - Currently, suppliers can answer 'YES' to Non-GMO Product (Ref #677), and are required to answer a level of non-GMO Claim (Ref #2500). One of the options is 'No Non-GMO Claim',



**Overall, costs are minimized when all partners in the supply chain adhere to the GTIN Management Standard.**

## GTIN Management Standard

The Global Trade Item Number (GTIN) Management Standard is designed to help industry make consistent decisions about the unique identification of trade items in open supply chains.

The following guiding principles should be considered by any brand owner when introducing changes to an existing product and also when developing a GTIN assignment strategy for a new product.

1. Is a consumer and/or trading partner expected to distinguish the changed or new product from previous/current products?
2. Is there a regulatory/liability disclosure requirement to the consumer and/or trading partner?
3. Is there a substantial impact to the supply chain (e.g., how the product is shipped, stored, received)?

At least one of the guiding principles must apply for a GTIN change to be required.

The GTIN Management Standard represents the minimum GTIN changes that industry has decided upon. **Brand owners may change the GTIN as often as they think is appropriate based upon their needs as well as the needs of their consum-**

**ers and trading partners, considering these guiding principles.**

The GTIN Management Standard represents a minimum requirement. Please be advised that there may be regulation(s) in your market area that are more stringent and SHALL be adhered to. All local legal and regulatory requirements supersede the GTIN Management Standard.

Specific rules:

1. **New product introduction**—A "new product" is defined as a product that does not currently exist or has not been available for sale and is an addition to the brand owner's portfolio/is new to the marketplace. Any new product requires the assignment of a new GTIN.
2. **Declared formulation or functionality**—A change to the formulation or functionality that affects the legally-required declared information on the packaging of a product and also where the brand owner expects the consumer or supply chain partner to distinguish the difference requires a new GTIN. Both conditions must be met requiring the assignment of a new GTIN.
3. **Declared net content**—Any change (increase or

decrease), no matter how small, to the legally-required declared net content that is printed on the pack, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

4. **Dimensional or gross weight change**—A change of over 20% to a physical dimension, on any axis, or gross weight, requires assignment of a new GTIN. The Kroger Supply Chain organization may require a stricter standard for Kroger.
5. **Add or remove certification mark**—A change to packaging to add a new, or remove an existing certification mark (e.g., kosher, UL or CE) that has significance to regulatory bodies, trading partners or to the end consumer, requires assignment of a new GTIN.
6. **Primary brand**—The primary brand is the brand most recognizable by the consumer, as determined by the brand owner, and can be expressed as a logo and/or words. A change to the primary brand that appears on the trade item, requires assignment of a new GTIN.
7. **Time critical or promotional product**—A change to a product that is being promoted



## GTIN Management Standard—Continued

(including packaging changes) for a specific event or date, impacting the required handling in the supply chain to ensure the trade item is available for sale during a specified time period, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

8. **Pack/case quantity**—A change to the number of trade items in a case or a change to the quantity of cases in a pre-defined pallet configuration, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

9. **Pre-defined assortment**—A pre-defined assortment is defined as a pack of two or more trade items that are combined and sold together as a single trade item (may also be referred to as a bundle). A change, addition or replacement of one or more trade items included in a pre-defined assortment, requires assignment of a new GTIN.

10. **Price on pack**—Any addition, change or removal of a price marked directly on the product pack-

age (not recommended), requires assignment of a new GTIN.

In most of these instances, a new consumer GTIN is required for the rule ((barring #7 and #8). Whenever a new consumer GTIN is needed, then every level of the hierarchy above the consumer also needs a new GTIN assigned. For #7 and #8,

only the case level and above on the hierarchy needs a new GTIN.

For more information, as well as specific examples for each rule, please click [HERE](#) for the GS1 GTIN Management Standard published on the GS1 website.



## Data Quality Standards

With the addition of the PIM tool that our Data Quality team is using upstream of item setup, there are a few standards that they use when reviewing data. If these are followed by suppliers before items are submitted, there are less items reviewed back to the supplier to be modified.

**Net Content Unit of Measure (UOM) Standards**, which help determine the 'price per' of an item:

- If an item is in ounces, it should be represented in

ounces only up to 32. Once 32 ounces is reached, it should be represented as pounds.

- Most items we expect in OUNCES because that represents the volume of the net content. Grams represent the net weight of an item (which includes packaging), so they are really not desired as a UOM (barring exceptions like OTC drugs).
- Liquid items need to be in **FLUID OUNCES**.

- Foils come in most frequently in ounces, we need **SQUARE FEET**.
- Powdered drink mixes need to be in **RECONSTITUTED OUNCES**.

### Populated Fields

There are several fields that need to be populated on the level of hierarchy intended to be sold to the consumer at Kroger (the KISV). Items may be reviewed back to the supplier to complete these fields on a particular hierarchy level.

- Gluten Free Claim
- Organic Claim
- Non GMO Product
- Ingredient statement (on applicable items)

Make sure that the ingredient statement does not say TBD, See Label, Ask Supplier, or something that does not represent a real ingredient statement. Without a real ingredient statement, the item will be returned to the supplier to be updated with accurate ingredient information.

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**Accurate and complete data, in a timely manner, is our goal!**



**Questions?**

Any questions on this or any other topic in the newsletter, please email the SEG team at [ItemMDMVIP@kroger.com](mailto:ItemMDMVIP@kroger.com) Please include the word 'newsletter' in your subject line.

**How to Corner – Identifying a BULK item in VIP**

What is a Bulk Item? An item must be identified as bulk item if it **has no consumer packaging**. Exceptions: Produce items with a PMA/PLU attached. A bulk item CAN be a fixed weight or random (variable) weight item. Kroger VIP users must:

1. Determine if an item is "bulk"; if YES, then
2. Ensure that all attributes and their proper values are entered as described in the chart.

Kroger users must locate EVERY attribute field on the Item screen then select the required value.

**TIP:** Use the text search feature provided in every browser to quickly find a particular field name. Press Ctrl F on your keyboard to activate this feature.

**NOTE:** All of the attributes in the chart to the right must be populated correctly for Kroger systems to process the item as bulk.

Section Name	Attribute Field Name	Required Value or Instructions
Identifiers and Descriptors	Consumer Unit Item Description	Blank
	Consumer Unit Indicator	NO
	Variable Weight Trade Item	YES or NO
Pricing and Promotional Information	Product is Pre-Priced	NO
Pricing and Promotional Information	UOM of Pre-Priced	Blank
Pricing and Promotional Information	Item is Labeled with Cents off Label	NO
Pricing and Promotional Information	Cents off Quantity	Blank
Pricing and Promotional Information	Cents off Amount	Blank
Nutritional Information	Packaged and Ready for Sale	NO
Diet Types and Nutritional Claims	Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price Non-Consumer Unit	User Selection
Diet Types and Nutritional Claims	Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price Basis Non-Consumer Unit	User Selection
Diet Types and Nutritional Claims	Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price Basis UOM Non-Consumer Unit	User Selection