
SEARS HOLDINGS

Sears Holdings Corporation Data Synchronization Initiative

Frequently Asked Questions for SHC Suppliers

Version 18
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REVISION HISTORY

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May 12, 2009	2	Minor edits & document formatting enhancements	C. Macias, V. Anand
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May 16, 2011	15	Updated 1WorldSync description and SHC exemptions. Removed questions that are no longer applicable.	V. Frosch
June 27, 2011	16	Updated information on exploding assortments	V. Frosch
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1 INTRODUCTION

This document is a compilation of questions, and their associated answers, relative to the Sears Holdings Corporation (SHC) Data Synchronization initiative. This initiative is being rolled out to all Sears and Kmart suppliers with Target Market = U.S. items. It pertains to suppliers in all categories, with the exception of only Softline category suppliers such as apparel and suppliers that utilize ELC Worksheets, requiring an import contract to be created.

2 GENERAL DATA SYNCHRONIZATION QUESTIONS

- **Q: What is Data Synchronization?**

- A: Data synchronization is the electronic transfer of standardized **product** and **location** information between trading partners and the continuous synchronization of that data over time. When this data is exchanged via a central global repository - GS1 Global Registry™, it is referred to as Global Data Synchronization.

Product information includes:

- Item attributes controlled by the supplier, e.g., Global Trade Item Number (GTIN), Size, Weight, Height, Brand, UPC code

Location information includes:

- Global Location Number (GLN) – Locations involved in trade such as company headquarters, billing departments, and ship-to addresses

- **Q: What is the Global Data Synchronization Network® (GDSN®)?**

- A: The GDSN is an automated, standards-based global environment that enables secure and continuous data synchronization. This allows all trading partners to have consistent item data in their systems at the same time, ensuring that all parties in the supply chain are working with the same data. The GDSN helps to save time and money for all organizations by eliminating steps to correct inaccurate data.
- A: The GDSN enables the GS1 Global Registry and a network of interoperable, certified data pools that enable data synchronization per GS1 System standards.

- **Q: What are the benefits of synchronizing data through the GDSN?**

- A: There are several benefits, including:
 - Allows real-time item maintenance for specific fields
 - Provides accurate, standards based, synchronized data that reduces inefficiencies in the supply chain
 - Ensures dimensions are correct and stored at the each, case, warehouse pack, and pallet levels

- **Q: What is a data pool? What is a GDSN-certified data pool?**

- A: An entity that provides its customers data synchronization services and a single point of entry to the Global Data Synchronization Network (GDSN) is called a data pool.
- A: Data pools must be certified per GS1 System standards to operate within the GDSN. Data pools interoperate with the GS1 Global Registry and each other. Example: 1WorldSync Data Pool.

Note: 1WorldSync is wholly owned subsidiary of GS1 US, the not-for-profit standards organization for the United States.

- **Q: Where can I find a list of GDSN-certified data pools?**

- A: The GS1 website has a list of GDSN-certified data pools with contact information. You can find the list here <http://www.gs1.org/productssolutions/gdsn/>

- **Q: What is a company prefix?**

- A: A company prefix is a globally unique number assigned to companies by GS1 Member Organizations (GS1 US in the United States) to create the identification numbers of the GS1 System. It is comprised of a GS1 Prefix and a Company Number.

- **Q: What is a GLN?**

- A: GLN is an acronym for "Global Location Number" and refers to the globally unique GS1 System identification number for legal entities, functional entities, and physical locations. A GLN is comprised of 13 digits that together represent a GS1 Company Prefix, Location Reference, and 'check digit'. Supply side trading partner locations generally include corporate headquarters, regional offices, warehouses, plants, and distribution centers. Demand side trading partner locations generally include corporate headquarters, divisional offices, stores, and distribution centers.
- **Note:** The SHC US GLN is 0633815000004. This GLN includes Kmart.

- **Q: What a GTIN?**

- A: GTIN is an acronym for "Global Trade Item Number" and refers to the globally unique GS1 System identification number for products and services. A GTIN may be 8, 12, 13, or 14 digits in length, represented as GTIN-8, GTIN-12, GTIN-13, and GTIN-14, respectively.

- **Q: Is data synchronization an Information Technology (IT) function? Does it require IT resources?**

- A: Data Synchronization is a business process that uses technology in its implementation. For a successful implementation, it is recommended to have executive sponsorship and technology resources allocated to this program.

- **Q: Is data synchronization just another term for EDI?**
 - A: No. EDI is used in the transmission of many e-business transactions, whereas data synchronization is the electronic transmission of standardized product and location information.
- **Q: Does my sales team need to be involved with data synchronization?**
 - A: Yes, sales people play an important role in the success of this process. For example, for new items to be submitted to a buyer at Sears (and/or Kmart), the sales person would go into SHC's Item Maintenance Application (IMA) to add missing attributes, such as Division, Category, and Order DUNS and then submit the new item information to their buyer.
- **Q: What is the Global Product Classification (GPC) code?**
 - A: A GPC code is an 8-digit number that represents a classification of products. It is a 'flat' classification system based on attributes and values. Global Product Classification is a required element of the global data based on attributes, and values and is a required element of the GDSN.

Note: If you need a list of GPC codes contact your data pool (e.g. 1WorldSync). To request a GPC code to be added to standards, work with your data pool (e.g. 1WorldSync) or your Solution Partner to submit a change request.

3 SEARS HOLDINGS CORPORATION (SHC) DATA SYNCHRONIZATION INITIATIVE

3.1 General SHC Questions

- **Q: Why is SHC implementing data synchronization?**
 - A: SHC is implementing data synchronization to streamline its processes, focusing on improving supply chain efficiencies for SHC and its trading partners. SHC believes data synchronization provides tangible benefits for retailers and suppliers such as:
 - Reduced hand keying for creation of items
 - Increasing market share for early arrival of new items
 - Increasing the efficiency of businesses
 - Building the foundation for electronic collaborative commerce
- **Q: Are all of SHC suppliers required to implement data synchronization via the GDSN?**
 - A: SHC requires all its domestic vendors to complete the new item setup using GDSN or data catalogue.
 - Exemptions – Dotcom supplier shipping direct to customer

- **Q: Does the data synchronization initiative also include Kmart suppliers?**
 - A: Yes. This initiative is being rolled out for both Sears and Kmart suppliers.
- **Q: Is data synchronization being used in other countries for SHC?**
 - A: SHC's current focus is in the U.S.A only, and is determining it's readiness for other countries. At this time only Target Market = U.S. items need to be synchronized.
- **Q: Will Kmart have a different GLN?**
 - A: Publications for Sears and Kmart will be done to the same GLN: **063381500004.**
- **Q: Do Private Label suppliers need to engage in data synchronization?**
 - A: Yes. Private Label suppliers will still obtain GTIN information from SHC and supply the SHC GLN as the Brand Owner for these items.
- **Q: Do third party suppliers need to engage in data synchronization?**
 - A: Yes. Third party suppliers must work with the Information Provider to establish a process for sending the data to Sears via data synchronization.
- **Q: Does Sears want my New item publications before the Sales Call or after the Sears merchant has agreed to carry my product?**
 - A. Sears wants to receive your New item publications after the Sears merchant has agreed to carry the product.
- **Q: I am a Manufacturer/Vendor Representative. How do I get involved in this process?**
 - A. You must contact your manufacturer to discuss how you will be involved in the data synchronization initiative. Your manufacturer must be a GDSN subscriber.

3.2 Data Pools and Solution Partners

- **Q: What is a GDSN-certified data pool?**
 - A: See Section 2.1 of this document for answers to general Data Synchronization questions
- **Q: What/who is 1WorldSync™?**
 - A: 1WorldSync is the largest GDSN-certified data pool and is working closely with SHC to implement its data synchronization initiative. SHC uses the 1WorldSync Data Pool Solution for its GDSN services.

- A: A subsidiary of GS1 US, 1WorldSync supports and works with over 50 retailers and 5,000 suppliers (of all sizes). To learn more about 1WorldSync and its services, visit www.1WorldSync.com or call +1 866.280.4013, Option 1.
- **Q: Do I have to sign up with 1WorldSync™?**
 - A: You need to select a GDSN-certified data pool to get started and 1WorldSync is a GDSN-certified data pool. If you are not currently a member of 1WorldSync, we recommend you get started right away by contacting them at +1 866.280.4013, Option 1.
- **Q: How much does implementing data synchronization cost?**
 - A: 1WorldSync, as a not-for-profit neutral organization, operates on a cost-recovery model and fees are calculated based on your company's total annual sales. Visit http://1WorldSync.org/subscription_fees.html for more details.
- **Q: What is a 1WorldSync Solution Partner?**
 - A: A Solution Partner is a company that enables supply chain functions through the provision of products and services. A *1WorldSync Certified Solution Partner* refers to a company that has been certified by 1WorldSync to connect to the 1WorldSync Data Pool. 1WorldSync customers have the option to choose a certified Solution Partner to assist in managing their data synchronization initiative. For a full list of *1WorldSync Certified Solution Partners*, visit <http://www.1sync.org/web/us/partner-community> and search for a Solution Partner that meets your needs.
- **Q: Do I have to use a 1WorldSync Solution Partner?**
 - A: 1WorldSync provides customers with multiple implementation options to successfully synchronize data with SHC. 1WorldSync offers implementation tools for customers and has partnered with some of the largest and most well-known companies in the world, including many that suppliers may already be working with today. A supplier can implement with the solution that best fits their needs and requirements.
- **Q: If I have questions and need help to use the 1WorldSync system – who should I contact?**
 - A: For questions associated with GDSN or SHC's data synchronization initiative please contact 1WorldSync customer support at technicalsupport@1worldsync.com or +1 866.280.4013.

3.3 SHC's Item Maintenance Application (IMA) & Data Synchronization

3.3.1 ADDING DATA THROUGH DATA SYNCHRONIZATION

- **Q: Can I just use IMA to do data synchronization?**

A: No, In order to synchronize your new item data information, it must first be published through 1WorldSync. Once an "ACCEPT" Catalogue Item Confirmation (CIC) message is received, vendors must then log into IMA to add details such as Division, Category, Order DUNS and other IMA required attributes and then submit the item to their SHC merchant.

- **Q: The data I sent through data synchronization doesn't match what is seen in IMA. What should I do?**
 - A: Please contact 1WorldSync customer support at technicalsupport@1worldsync.com or +1 866.280.4013.
- **Q: How do I know if I need to assign a new Universal Product Code (UPC) when I make changes to an existing product?**
 - A: Follow the GS1 Standards GTIN Allocation Rules. For example, if the consumer net content changes, then a new UPC must be assigned. For more information on GTIN Allocation Rules visit www.gs1.org/gtinrules. Contact your data pool for more information.

3.3.2 PUBLISHING DATA TO SHC

- **Q: My SHC buyer says I have to do data synchronization. Where do I start?**
 - A: Please see the Sears Holdings Corporation Implementation Guide for more specific details regarding implementation requirements. Here are the steps to help you get started:

Are you already subscribed to a Catalogue Provider?	Things to Do
No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose your Data Pool. All GDSN Data Pools are listed at: http://www.gs1.org/sites/default/files/docs/gdsn/gdsn_certified_data_pools.pdf • For more information, call 1WorldSync at +1 866.280.4013 • Follow procedure below
Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that you are setup with Sears Holdings. If you have not been previously contacted about setup, submit Data Synchronization Vendor Request Form online at the Data Synchronization tab on IMA Homepage • Work with your Data Pool to get the item information published to Sears Holdings

1. Load items into your Catalogue(Data Pool)
 - Obtain Education/Training from your Data Pool or Solution Partner
 - Review GDSN Package Measurement Standards and GTIN allocation rules
2. Publish only **new** items to Sears Holdings

- **Production GLN: 0633815000004 (for both Sears and Kmart)**
 - 3. Check for Catalogue Item Confirmations (CICs)
 - **ACCEPT CIC:** Item ready for review in IMA (add additional information and submit the item for approval).
 - **REVIEW CIC:** Data discrepancies; vendor action required.
 - **SYNCHRONIZED CIC:** Item is operational and Pos can be placed.
 - **REJECT CIC:** Item was rejected by Sears Holdings or deleted from IMA due to inactivity (after 30 days).
 - 4. Once an "ACCEPT" CIC is received, login to IMA to add additional required information.
 - Be sure to contact your buyer for
 - Division, Category, and Order DUNS
 - Additional fields to be provided
 - For assistance, please call the IMA Helpdesk at **800.931.3141** or email: IMAHelp@searshc.com.
 - 5. Check for Catalogue Item Confirmations (CICs). Going forward, all changes should be made in your data pool (e.g., 1WorldSync) and must also be made directly in IMA.
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- **Q: Where do I start if I am a GDSN subscriber, but 1WorldSync is not my data pool?**
 - A: Follow the steps in Section 3.3.2 above, submitting Data Synchronization Vendor Request Form available on the Data Synchronization tab of the IMA Homepage.
 - **Q: How does SHC Subscribe?**
 - A: SHC subscribes at the supplier GLN level and the U.S. target country market code.
 - **Q: Is data synchronization only for New Items, or should I publish existing items that SHC carries?**
 - A: At this time SHC will only be accepting data on New Item Introductions via the GDSN. In late 2011, SHC will communicate their readiness for receiving publications on existing items.
 - **Q: Should I publish my complex hierarchies (also known as Exploding/Dynamic Assortments?)**
 - A: Yes. For complex hierarchies, SHC is currently accepting DS (display shipper) which is also commonly referred to as mixed case at SHC, via GDSN. You will receive an "ACCEPT" message upon publishing your DS.

MX (mixed module) which is commonly referred to as mixed pallet at SHC, needs to be synchronized by publishing the lower level items. You will receive a "REVIEW" Catalogue Item Confirmation (CIC) letting you know that your EA

(Each) was taken, and that you will need to build the MX directly in IMA. Please see the Sears Holdings Corporation Implementation Guide for more details regarding implementation requirements.

- **Q: Will SHC be able to handle multiple packaging configurations for an item?**
 - A: SHC will be able to synchronize on 2 packaging configurations for an item sent at the same time. On the 3rd configuration, you will receive a "REVIEW" CIC letting you know you need to build additional configurations directly in IMA. Please see the Sears Holdings Corporation Implementation Guide for more details regarding implementation requirements.
- **Q: What should I do if I have published my items but I do not see them in IMA?**
 - A: Check with your data pool (e.g. 1WorldSync) to ensure that your item synchronization was successful to SHC. If you continue to have difficulties please contact 1WorldSync customer support at technicalsupport@1worldsync.com or +1 866.280.4013 for more details.
- **Q: How long does it take for the data to show up in IMA after I have published?**
 - A: Once 1WorldSync has pushed data to SHC (and assuming there is no backlog), you should see your publication in approximately 1 to 4 hours. 1WorldSync pushes data to SHC every hour daily between 9:00 AM US Central Time to 5:00 PM US Central Time.
- **Q: I have successfully submitted my items to the SHC merchant in IMA and have not received a SYNCHRONIZED status from SHC. What are my next steps?**
 - A: If after 1 business week you have not received either a "SYNCHRONIZED" or "REJECT" status on your items, check with your merchant to confirm SHC wants to carry your item.
- **Q: Is SHC checking the "Initial Load" or "New" Publication Types for incoming Catalogue Item Notification (CIN) publications?**
 - A: SHC is now taking Initial Loads publications via GDSN in addition to Updates and New Items. Please see the Sears Holdings Corporation Implementation Guide for more details regarding implementation requirements. Please see the Sears Holdings Corporation Implementation Guide for more details regarding implementation requirements.
- **Q: When can I expect to see the Catalog Item Confirmation (CIC Authorization)?**
 - A: After SHC receives the Catalogue Item Notification (CIN) it is subjected to matching and validation rules. The Catalogue Item Confirmation (CIC) with

- A: At this time, SHC will not be taking in Modifies/Corrections on New items received. Any changes/modifications sent through the data synchronization process must also be made directly in IMA to remain in sync with SHC.

Item maintenance will be rolled out at SHC in November 2011. At that point, modifications made via GDSN will update in IMA.