

Immediate Release

GS1 Hong Kong plans to launch the first-ever one-stop product quality information portal supported by four major testing and certification bodies

New portal will extend the use of barcode and enable the public and businesses to access product information and testing reports easily online

Hong Kong – March 11, 2009 – GS1 Hong Kong today announced an initiative to launch a one-stop product quality information portal in collaboration with four major product testing and certification bodies in Hong Kong; namely CMA Testing, Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency, Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre and SGS Hong Kong. The groundbreaking portal will offer local businesses and consumers quick, one-stop access to critical product quality-related information.

Recent incidents such as melamine-contaminated milk and the current children's cold medicine scare have raised product safety concerns among Hong Kong consumers to an even higher level. With frequent product recalls and increasing cases of counterfeit goods, the public is becoming desperate for accurate and easily available information on product quality.

GS1 Hong Kong, the only organization authorized to issue and govern international BarCode numbers in Hong Kong, is dedicated to supporting visibility, quality and safety for goods along the supply chain through GS1 keys. Since its introduction in 1970s, the GS1 BarCode has become the world's most widely-adopted sales tool with at least five billion barcodes read on all sorts of goods at retailers all over the world everyday.

With the aim of fully exploiting the value of Barcodes beyond point-of-sale scanning for the benefit of the business and community, GS1 Hong Kong has initiated the new product information portal. BarcodePlus is backed by GS1's barcode numbers and the support of major testing and certification bodies.

Acting as "a window to product quality and safety", BarcodePlus will provide a new kind of online experience, giving anyone access to critical product quality-related information by simply entering the barcode number printed on a product. Information covering everything from a product's shelf life, country of origin, ingredients and packaging, through to images, certifications and testing reports will be just a few mouse clicks away.

At a ceremony to mark the signing of an MOU for BarcodePlus between GS1 Hong Kong and the four testing and certification bodies, Anna Lin, Chief Executive of GS1 Hong Kong said: "Working closely with renowned product testing and certification organizations is vital for the success of this initiative. We need to ensure that any product quality related information is accurate and reliable. We are pleased to have obtained the dedicated support of these four trusted partners in the development of the product quality information portal, making the portal more credible and broadly-represented."

"The portal is expected to offer ample benefits to businesses and consumers through a shared product-quality information database which is comprehensive and well-organized. In addition to providing consumers with a reliable source of information, the new portal will also support various business needs such as product data management, regulation compliance, and brand protection" said Lin.

Scheduled to go live later this year, the one-stop information portal will be built on the organization's existing database which carries over one million product records. More items will be added as the portal grows.

“As professionalism, quality and customer commitment are the core values of CMA Testing, we are delighted to share our expertise on consumer goods testing and to provide comprehensive and useful information to consumers. Transparency of product information is an effective way to gain consumer confidence, in this way the ‘BarcodePlus Portal’ provides an excellent platform for information sharing with an innovative and user friendly approach. We believe this cooperation will enhance our ability to support our clients to meet consumers’ requirements.”

Mr. Dominic Lam, Deputy Executive Director, CMA Industrial Development Foundation Limited (CMA Testing)

“BarcodePlus is an innovative service that creates a new product quality information platform. It enables buyers and consumers to check information pertaining to the source and quality of products as well as management system certification online with the consent of the organizations supplying the products. The new service can enhance product information flow and visibility.”

Dr. Michael Lam, Executive Director, Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency

“I am most delighted with our current cooperation with BarcodePlus. Based on this agreement, we are able to create a useful platform allowing consumers and the manufacturing industry better access to all kinds of information in connection with product testing and safety certification. I have no doubt this will serve to improve product quality, thus resulting in a safer and happier environment for our community.”

Dr. Richard Fung, the Chief Executive, Hong Kong Standards and Testing Centre and Hong Kong Safety Institute

“SGS Hong Kong is honoured to be one of the GS1 Hong Kong partners to jointly support the BarcodePlus to enhance the credibility of consumer products in Hong Kong. The general public is now getting more and more concerned about product safety. The establishment of BarcodePlus provides an easy-and-quick channel for consumers to trace the quality of a product, which greatly uplifts the transparency of product safety in the consumer market. Meanwhile, BarcodePlus also boosts suppliers’ ability to implement stricter quality requirements over their products and adopt internationally-recognized management systems in a variety of workflows, in order to stay competitive in the marketplace. All these measures are progressively improving Hong Kong as a quality and safety concerned centre. SGS fully supports this campaign because it is our belief that quality and safety can sustain the quality of human lives. Being the world’s leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company, SGS is committed to the sustainable development of business, people and society, with our aim being to make the world an even better place in the future.”

Mr. Spencer Yeung, Executive Director, SGS Hong Kong Ltd

About GS1 Hong Kong

Founded in 1989, GS1 Hong Kong is a not-for-profit industry support organization. It is committed to enhancing Hong Kong enterprises' competitiveness through the provision of global supply chain standards, best practices and enabling technologies. As GS1's local chapter, GS1 Hong Kong is the only organization that is authorized to issue and administer GS1 identification numbers in Hong Kong. Standards and solutions offered include bar coding services, B2B e-commerce services, Global Data Synchronization (GDS) and Electronic Product Code™ / Radio Frequency Identification (EPC/RFID). The organization also hosts a wide range of training courses to facilitate knowledge transfer for SCM principles, e-business strategies, global standards and the implementation of enabling technologies. The GS1 community has over one million corporate members spanning 155 countries and economies and more than 20 industries around the world. For more information about GS1 Hong Kong, please visit: www.gs1hk.org.

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