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## Join us in taking a major forward step towards the National Mobile Coupon!

### SOME BACKGROUND

For many years now, couponing has played a very important role in the marketing plans of businesses in Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. This form of special offers is all the more important against the current background in which prices and margins are under pressure.

Moreover, in a world where every single aspect of the lives of consumers is becoming increasingly digitalized and where the smartphone is taking up an increasingly more central role in everyday life, it is now simply inconceivable to have discount coupons only in their current paper form.

Which is why, over the course of the first semester of 2023, several business meetings were held with the market players to define and put in place new rules for couponing campaigns and intended to **create a framework** for the development and introduction of a national mobile coupon standard.

### TWO MAJOR MARKET PLAYERS JOIN FORCES

Over the past 45 years, **GS1 Belgilux**'s mission has been to provide the market with solutions that allow efficient processing by the retail industry's cash registers and to deliver standardized quality data.

As part of its operational marketing activities, **HighCo DATA Benelux** has been serving as a **clearing house** for the entire Belgo-Luxembourg market for close to 40 years, handling the processing and reimbursement of the discount vouchers offered by retailers and manufacturers.

In pursuing their respective missions, our two companies have decided to step up their longstanding working relationship to come up with an efficient solution for the market which not only protects but also modernizes couponing and the clearing process as a whole.

### MY COUPON MANAGER & ELECTRONIC CLEARING

The **My Coupon Manager** solution has been around for over 5 years. It is used by some retailers as a tool to automatically check coupons at shops' cash registers.

My Coupon Manager is built around a database that contains all the important data relating to the coupons in a standardized manner. As such, My Coupon Manager is used as a data source by the promotional tool management integrated into the cash register systems of the retailers. In other words, it is My Coupon Manager that enables retailers to check the compliance of the coupons handed in at their cash registers with the eligibility requirements as defined by the coupon issuers.

For the past 15 years, HighCo DATA Benelux has been offering the Belgo-Luxembourg market a 100% paperless clearing service based on the transaction data which directly derives from the cash register systems of the retail industry. This 100% digital clearing process, which was dubbed ECDT (Electronic Coupon Data Transfer) allows HighCo DATA Benelux to provide the coupon issuer brands and the retailers alike with swifter-paced and more efficient processing.

The combination of enhanced screening at the shops' cash registers and the possibility of managing reimbursements on a 100% paperless basis is an indispensable requirement for the future **national mobile coupon**.

Which is why it is vital that the market uptake of these two concepts is expedited to speed up the roll-out of a national mobile coupon standard.

In spite of both companies' efforts, we are made to find that these solutions have not yet sufficiently broadly been embraced by the Belgo-Luxembourg retail industry.

There are two main reasons for this: **the quality and the quantity of data currently provided by the issuers, which need to be instantly processed by the retail sector's cash register systems.**

The way things stand, too many data and poor-quality data quality are seen to spoil the My Coupon Manager solution, thereby blocking its wide-scale roll-out and the implementation of My Coupon Manager by new retailers.

## NEW COUPONING RULES

Against this background, in the spring of 2023 GS1 Belgilux invited the various market players to get together as part of a series of meetings to find suitable ways to accelerate the integration of My Coupon Manager and the adoption of electronic clearing by Belgian and Luxembourg retailers.

These workshops brought together over 40 sector companies, brands and retailers combined, around the nucleus made up of GS1 Belgilux and HighCo DATA Benelux.

The conclusions of the working group underscored the fact that it is perfectly realistic to have a **very substantial positive impact on the quality as well as on the quantity of the data** supplied to the retailers by establishing a few simple and flexible rules.

As a result, the joint and concerted decision was adopted to establish new rules which are set to take effect from **1 January 2024.**

These new rules are detailed below:

1. **Limitation of the number of eligible products associated with a coupon:**

We have found an unduly high number of cases where the full range of GTINs was associated with the coupons, causing the cash register system of retailers to be saturated. Because of this, it has been decided to limit the number of GTINs associated with a couponing action to a **maximum of 100 GTINs per promotional campaign.**

2. **Use of My Product Manager as the sole source for the link between the GCN and the GTIN:**

As the **Global Trade item Number** (GTIN) is the link between My Coupon Manager and the cash register systems of the retailers, it is important that the link is created using GTINs known by the retailers. For this reason, it has been decided to use GS1 Belgilux's My Product Manager as the sole source of data to establish the link between the GCN and the product's GTIN. Which is why we would ask you to always make your GTIN available in GS1 Belgilux's My Product Manager and to publish them for the Belgo-Luxembourg market or for HighCo DATA Benelux. GS1 Belgilux is at your beck and call to answer any questions you may have on this matter.

3. **Limitation of the period of validity:**

To limit the length of time during which the coupon is present in My Coupon Manager's data repositories, it has been decided that the validity period of a couponing campaign is not allowed to be longer than 12 months, and even comes with the recommendation to limit the period of validity to 6 months.

4. **Limitation of the period during which retailers can return vouchers:**

The way things stand, a voucher remains active in HighCo DATA Benelux's database for an 8-month period after the validity period for consumers has ended. This 8-month period is broken down into 6 months during which the shops can send in their vouchers, and another 2 months (maximum) to handle the clearing. In joint consultation with the market players, it has been decided to shorten this 8-month period to 3 months. This new 3-month period will be broken down into 1 month during which the shops can send in their vouchers and 2 months (maximum) to handle the clearing.

5. **Limitation of the type of special offer:**

We have found an unduly high number of errors in the types of special offers used. Which is why it has been decided to limit this to two in order to facilitate the integration by the retailers and the processing of the vouchers and coupons in the cash register systems:

- a. S1 - Discount coupon to be tendered when purchasing one or several product(s)
- b. S4 - Coupon for one free product.

We are confident that these new rules will make it easier for retailers to adopt My Coupon Manager as a tool for checking coupons at their tills.

### IN A NUTSHELL

#### Starting from 01/01/2024:

- A discount coupon (GCN) **will no longer be able to be linked to more than 100 products** (GTIN).
- **My Product Manager** becomes the **sole source to manage the link between the GCN and the GTIN**.
- A coupon **will no longer be allowed to have a validity period of more than 12 months**.
- **The shops** will have just **1 month to send in their vouchers** to HighCo DATA Benelux to be checked and to obtain reimbursement.
- There will be **just 2 types of special offers** for a couponing campaign:
  - **Promo type S1**: Discount coupon to be tendered when purchasing one or several products.
  - **Promo type S4**: Coupon for one free product.

### THE NATIONAL MOBILE COUPON

#### When will we see a 100% digital coupon?

A question that is on everybody's lips, with the market increasingly demanding a digital solution for its couponing campaigns.

The integration of My Coupon Manager and the adoption of electronic clearing are two very important steps to be achieved ahead of the implementation of a national mobile coupon standard. A national mobile coupon imperatively demands automated checking and paperless processing.

Which is why **we are counting on the support of all market players** as part of this process in observance of these new rules.

We are confident that we are closer than we have ever been to the impending launch of the national mobile coupon and we know the various market players are ready for this new challenge.


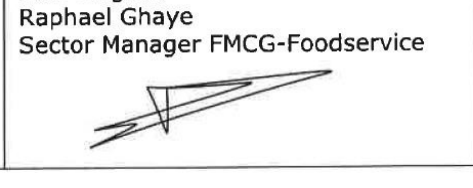

All that is left is for us to jointly take on the challenge and to turn this project into a real success together.

### MORE INFORMATION

To share more detailed information and to answer any questions you may have on these new rules, HighCo DATA Benelux and GS1 Belgilux are jointly organizing an informative webinar on 09/20/2023 at 11:00am. Please feel free to already sign up for this webinar using the link below:

[I wish to sign up ->](#)

Thank you for your support. We remain entirely available to answer any questions you may have.

<p>GS1 Belgilux Jan Somers CEO</p> 	<p>GS1 Belgilux Raphael Ghaye Sector Manager FMCG-Foodservice</p> 	<p>HighCo DATA Benelux Laurence Lanckriet General Manager</p> 
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