

Press release - GS1 NZ conference

Preview of GS1 NZ "Connecting the Dots" conference, August 2007

"Connecting the Dots" event will focus on the new in supply chain management

Supply chain management continues to develop in technology and in practice, worldwide. New Zealand business people from various sectors will meet again during August to hear about leading-edge developments in this country. They will be attending the third in a series of annual "Connecting the Dots" conferences organised and hosted by GS1 New Zealand in Auckland.

This year's event will be opened by Health Minister Pete Hodgson with an address on moves to introduce automatic data capture and retrieval for improved patient safety in the New Zealand healthcare system. Other speakers will also discuss the application of bar coding and other technologies in the healthcare supply chain, from pharmaceutical and medical supplies manufacturers to the patient bedside.

Radio frequency identification (RFID) will be another central focus of this year's "Connecting the Dots", with international leaders in this area presenting on the recent launch of EPC-IS, a global standard for secure exchange of data between multiple parties in RFID-enabled supply chains. In terms of industry significance, the EPC-IS standard, or Electronic Product Code Information Services, is considered by many to have much more of a transformational impact on the industry than the [2004] release of the UHF Gen2 Passive RFID standard, as it allows for the rapid expansion of visibility among trading partners on the status and movement of goods, services and assets worldwide.

The conference will hear about latest developments from Chris Adcock [President of EPCglobal Inc.], Craig Asher [IBM – USA] and Ian Robertson [EPCglobal Inc., Director of Global Development], all key figures in global RFID driving developments in EPC/RFID, EPC-IS and other global standards of tremendous potential value to businesses worldwide. The benefits include the prevention of counterfeiting, greater border security and comprehensive traceability on food products in domestic and international markets.

Another of the international speakers will put a spotlight on beef traceability, an increasingly critical topic for livestock producing countries like New Zealand. Ian King, Chief Executive of AUS-MEAT Australia, will outline his country's development of beef traceability systems and their importance to maintaining international market confidence.

In New Zealand, the grocery sector has long been at the forefront of consumer goods supply chain management – and “Connecting the Dots” will provide further insights on developments of importance to grocery. These include data synchronisation technology and practice, including the development of international data networks. Prof. Alan Stenger, Chair of Logistics and Supply Chain Management at the University of Auckland Business School, will be among the speakers. The conference will provide a unique forum for discussion of New Zealand company experiences, with several case studies on the application of supply chain technologies here.

The conference will be held at Auckland’s Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre, on 21 and 22 August. Past such events have attracted significant numbers of attendees and GS1 New Zealand expects this to again be the case in 2007. For GS1, this is another key step in its drive to promote awareness and take-up in New Zealand of global standards for identification of goods, services and assets, and in information systems that make supply chain management more efficient and valuable for all participants. “Connecting the Dots” will include workshops for GS1 members to gain greater insight into how EPC/RFID and other technologies can be applied within their businesses. For more information and registration, visit www.gs1nz.org or call Pauline Prince, GS1 New Zealand, on 0800 102 356.