

## UPC SYSTEM

Product numbering and bar coding in the USA and Canada are administrated by GS1 US and GS1 Canada. The numbering system is called Universal Product Code (UPC) in those countries.

On retail items UPC numbers are 12 digits long and GS1 numbers (still known by their old name, EAN) are 13 digits long. On cartons and pallets there are no differences between UPC and EAN.

All Canadian and US retailers can scan both UPC and EAN numbers. This is not always known among importers and company employees in the USA because UPC is so widely used in their environments and they use the term "UPC" for any retail bar code.

If your North American partner has any doubts about the acceptability of EAN numbers and bar codes on your products advise them to consult Teresa Truscelli of GS1 US by email: [TTruscelli@gs1us.org](mailto:TTruscelli@gs1us.org) She will be able to advise them that EAN-13 is in fact usable throughout the American retail sector.