Executive Q&A

With Bob Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, UniPro Foodservice, Inc., and Member of the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative Executive Leadership Committee

Q: How has your participation in the Foodservice GS1 US Standards Initiative helped you improve the consumer experience?

A: As a supporter and committed participant of the initiative from the beginning, UniPro has embraced the opportunity to work on behalf of our distributor members so we can consolidate product data requests from our core manufacturers. This consolidation enables many of our smaller members to have access to information they may not be able to utilize otherwise, and also allows for a streamlined flow of data across our systems. In turn, this broader group now has enhanced product data to communicate more effectively across the supply chain, provide key nutritional data to customers, and drive sales.

Q: What are some key efforts within your company related to product data management, data quality, and completeness that directly impact the consumer experience?

A: We scorecard our vendors in two basic ways to help ensure that we provide complete and accurate product information to our end-users. We audit the records received for completeness of operational, marketing, nutritional, ingredients, and allergen data attributes. When a member distributor has a direct relationship with a supplier, we also audit the supplier-provided data against records that have been published to UniPro via the Global Data Synchronization Network™ (GDSN®). We are also working on including all relevant data attributes in our product master records so that all published data can be made available to our members. These checks and balances ensure our distributor members have access to complete and accurate information leveraging GDSN as the single source of truth.

Q: Consumers are not only focused on transparency—they have also embraced apps, delivery, and other convenience options. How has your company adapted to the faster pace enabled by technology?

A: UniPro has implemented a Master Data Management (MDM) application for the purpose of managing and leveraging quality, consumable data, and making it accessible to our members, and ultimately to consumers. Part of the MDM Charter is to define the expectations members have and managing the data to meet or exceed those expectations. UniPro strives to garner the support of the supplier community by being the conduit to making it easy to share product data, including images, allergens and nutritional with UniPro members. We also share this data on individual products with operators so they can look up key product details such as nutritionals and packaging on our public website and making that information available to their guests and diners.

Q: What specific benefits have you seen as a result of leveraging GS1 Standards in your operations?

A: Being able to assist our member distributors in collaborating with supplier partners in an efficient and effective manner has truly been made possible by a common language provided by GS1 Standards. Building on this foundation, we have been able to elevate product data quality and supplier support to move our business to the next level as it relates to data rationalization and product identification which opens up endless opportunities for growth and efficiencies.