Empowering Shoppers through Smart Consumer App

How the 'Smart Consumer' mobile app is helping brands and manufacturers to now connect directly with thousands of consumers across the country as never before.

While standing in the breakfast food aisle of the supermarket she shops at, Nitisha, a 40-year old mother, is contemplating which cereals are best for her two children and the different ways they can be made for them to enjoy the meals. The information on the product packs is however not enough to help her make these decisions. She then notices on the product pack that consumers are being directed to download the 'Smart Consumer' mobile app and scan the barcode on the product pack to get additional information she is looking for.

She downloads the same and scans the product barcode using "890" prefix number through her smartphone. She now gets digitally a whole lot more information on the cereals related to recipes, allergens, etc, which enables her to also check the validity of certification given to the manufacturing unit by

FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India). Since this data is provided directly by food manufacturers/ brand owners, she can correlate with the information appearing on the product label and be assured that there is no mismatch.

This app enables her to do much more. If her children enjoy the cereals and how they are made, she can give an instant feedback to the manufacturer/ brand owner. Or perhaps even request/ suggest for new flavors, etc. If, however, she is not happy with the product, she can give an instant feedback in this instance as well through the 'Smart Consumer' mobile app.

Manufacturers/ brand owners are looking for consumer feedback/ insights on their products, which help them better understand consumer needs and bring out new products that meet the growing and ever changing consumer demands. Through the 'Smart Consumer' mobile app, they can now connect directly with thousands of consumers across the country as never before.

WHAT'S SMART CONSUMER MOBILE APP?

The Smart Consumer mobile app is developed by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India – powered by GS1's DataKart – which empowers consumers with digital product information on a product's name, date of manufacture, MRP, net content, along with the manufacturer's details and consumer care details. Consumers can also use the app to verify the company/ product information given on the label and to connect with brands.

The app is also designed for faster settlement of grievances. Recently, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) made it mandatory to publish FSSAI licence numbers along with other product attributes for all food products to the Smart Consumer mobile app. This guideline will ensure that whatever products sold are not expired, maintain the quality and nutritional facts as stated by the brand owner and are certified by FSSAI.
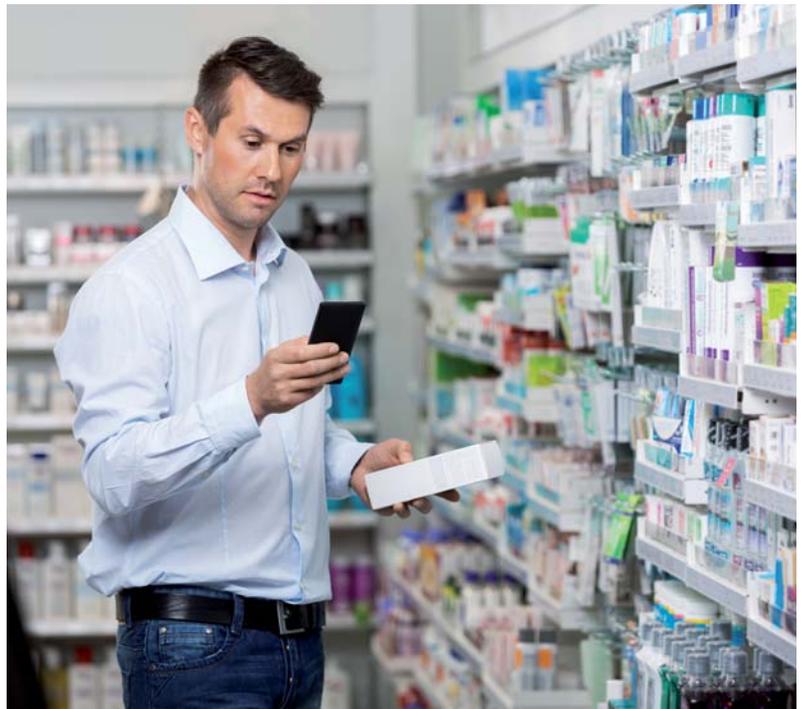
With new food products being introduced each month, it becomes important for manufacturers to reach out to consumers to promote their new products through added information, which cannot be printed due to the limitation of space on product pack labels. The same becomes possible through the 'Smart Consumer' app, which draws information on retailed products from 'DataKart', a GS1 India's national repository.

GS1 India's DataKart is the national repository of information on retailed products in India. It enables SMEs in particular to distribute information about their products with multiple retailers and online marketplaces at one go. SMEs can also reach out to thousands of kirana stores across the country through PoS (Point-of-Sale) solution providers who supply PoS hardware and software, pre-loaded with product information sourced from DataKart.

All major retail chains in India and leading online marketplaces are increasingly turning to DataKart as a single source of trusted, up-to-date and complete information on retailed products. The platform currently hosts information on over 7.5 million retailed products in India across product categories, which include food, FMCG, apparel, general merchandise, personal care, consumer electronics, home/kitchen appliances, etc. **PG**

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The write-up is courtesy GS1 India, a Standards body with founder members comprising Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, FIEO, IMC, APEDA, Spices Board, IIP and BIS.