



GS1 GDSN success story

Top Greek yogurt brand sees GS1 GDSN as a key part of their digital transformation



For almost a century now, Greek dairy manufacturer FAGE Greece S.A. has been producing yogurt and other dairy products. Today, this pioneering company is recognised globally for the quality of their products. For many consumers, their brand name is synonymous with Greek yogurt.

Digitalising to stay competitive

Over their long history, FAGE (pronounced: “FA-YEH!”) has adjusted and adapted their business strategy many times to meet the needs of the day. In the past decade, for example, the manufacturer has made changes to keep up with customer demand, meet the new expectations of their vast European sales network, maintain their successful presence in established markets and expand to new ones.

Among the main challenges FAGE has faced recently: new local regulations and market-specific specifications; demands for a high-quality digital presence of their products; and expectations from business partners for digital product listings and digitised supply chain processes.

FAGE understood the importance and potential impact of this increasing trend toward digitalisation. They knew that they had to take action—and fast—because failing to do so would lead to delayed or missed sales opportunities resulting in an unacceptably negative impact on revenues and profits.

Perhaps just as important: Since FAGE had always ranked product quality as their top priority, they felt that product data was part of their overall product quality. They have always had cutting-edge manufacturing operations, and they wanted equally excellent supply chain processes.

FAGE (pronounced: “FA-YEH!”) was one of the first companies in Greece to join the GS1 Global Data Synchronisation Network (GS1 GDSN) through HellaSync, the GS1 GDSN-certified data pool provided by GS1 Association Greece.

In short



Company: FAGE Greece S.A.

Type: Dairy manufacturer

Market: Greece and all of Europe

Sector: Fresh foods/CPG & Grocery



GS1 GDSN-Certified Data Pool: HellaSync by GS1 Association Greece

This is why, in 2013, FAGE set out to find the top data content management solutions available in the market and select the best and most useful one.

“Until 2013, like so many companies, we sent our product listings to business partners through Excel files,” says Epameinondas Klapsis, a 25-year veteran of FAGE, today Labelling & Product Specification Supervisor in the R&D Department. “But in 2014, we were one of the first companies in Greece to join the GS1 Global Data Synchronisation Network through HellaSync, the GDSN-certified data pool provided by GS1 Association Greece.”

Why GS1 GDSN

FAGE chose the GS1 Global Data Synchronisation Network (GS1 GDSN) after understanding the advantages offered by its standardised “subscription-publication-confirmation” mechanisms and because GS1 GDSN could manage a significant number of product attributes for each of their products. FAGE had also heard several customers across Europe speak highly of GS1 GDSN.

FAGE had also been for many years an active member company of GS1 through its local Member Association, GS1 Association Greece, and they were always very satisfied with the advice and services GS1 had provided to them. This made their choice even easier.



Though it varies product by product and market by market, on average FAGE qualifies about 100 attributes for each product they add to the GS1 GDSN.

Onboarding

To begin exchanging data through HellaSync, FAGE set up an internal team and worked collaboratively with HellaSync's project management team to get everyone fully trained on using the platform and to properly map the product attributes in their ERP software with GS1 GDSN attributes.

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Today, more than 90% of their SKUs—about 350 products—are listed in GS1 GDSN with full trade item hierarchies; they are exchanged with business partners in Greece and more than a dozen other countries.

A range of benefits

Having GS1 GDSN as their single source of product master data has provided FAGE with a range of benefits.

One of the clearest improvements was seen in FAGE's overall efficiency and speed. Using the Network has allowed FAGE to deliver product data to their customers much faster: In fact, they can now do that in just 20% of the time that they needed before. The company has also seen their internal operations and processes become faster and smoother, since every department benefits from the fact that they have one unique data repository managed by an expert team of properly trained colleagues in their R&D Department.

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“GS1 GDSN has given us one single place and one standardised mechanism to list our products and record data about them,” says Klapsis. “This really helps us maintain a high-quality profile not only as a top brand but also as an organisation that responds strategically and proactively to a fast-changing market.”

FAGE is also using GS1 GDSN as part of their plan to fully digitise their content. Klapsis says that FAGE is proud that they have one of the most well-known Greek products in the world—but adds that they are equally proud that by using the HellaSync data pool and GS1 GDSN, FAGE is representing Greece in this new digital era.

“FAGE products are among the world’s best in terms of quality, and now we have a high-quality way to be available digitally to our customers and our consumers,” says Klapsis. “This will let us build new kinds of partnerships and collaborations.”

In fact, GS1 GDSN has already allowed FAGE to penetrate new customers in Europe, as their product listings already met the high-quality digitised expectations of these customers: “The HellaSync data pool and the GS1 Association Greece HellaSync Project Management team have helped us better manage our products, which in turn increased our sales in new countries and with demanding customers,” says Klapsis.

Using GS1 GDSN has already allowed FAGE to penetrate new accounts.

Looking forward

GS1 Association Greece and FAGE continue to collaborate quite often, in support of the dairy company’s strategy to penetrate new target markets and enhance their product content.

For example, FAGE are continuously updating the digital content of their product listings to meet customer demands, and they plan to integrate HellaSync in their ERP systems as well.

FAGE intends to start adding to their GS1 GDSN listings information about packaging recyclability and sustainability.

FAGE also intends to start adding information about packaging recyclability and sustainability to their GS1 GDSN listings. The company is very aware of the growing sustainability requirements deriving from legislative action—and their customers increasingly demand this sort of information, too.

Leading the way in their market

FAGE is a leader in supporting GS1 GDSN adoption in Greece: 100% of their Greek market portfolio is available to HellaSync data recipients in Greece, and Klapsis and his colleagues are always willing to help new retailers test their processes as they start exchanging data through the Network. Furthermore, they are the first Greek company that made available nutritional and quality information through GS1 GDSN for the local recipients.

“It is deeply embedded in FAGE’s Greek roots and culture to support innovation and adopt new ways of optimising our brands and supply chain operations,” notes Klapsis. “This attitude has kept us a dairy industry market leader for decades now and made us one of the world’s most recognisable yogurt brands. Being an early adopter and long-term supporter of the GS1 Global Data Synchronisation Network is just another example of this mindset.”



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Epameinondas Klapsis
Labelling & Product Specification Supervisor, R&D
FAGE Greece S.A.

When product content is accessible and accurate, your business wins

Interested in GS1 GDSN? Get in touch with one of its data pools ►

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