



2.2.5 Serial Publications

The ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) is an eight-digit unique code for the identification of serial publications.

A serial is a publication made up of a number of parts issued in sequence and linked by a common title. Usually each part bears an issue number and/or date. Serials are intended to continue indefinitely, and include periodicals (e.g. Business Review Weekly), newspapers, newsletters, annual reports, yearbooks, directories, and journals.

Monographs in series are also a type of serial. These are books which have their own title as well as a collective or series title (e.g. Working Paper). Normally all books in the series will be issued by the same publisher in a uniform style and usually in a numerical sequence. The series title of the monographic series is eligible for an ISSN.

Serials can be published in printed form, or in a range of alternative formats including microfiche, microfilm, CD-ROM, and online. Serials in all formats are eligible for the allocation of an ISSN.

The ISSN system is in use throughout the world for numbering periodical publications. An agreement between GS1 Global Office and the International Centre for the Registration of Serial Publications (which administers ISSNs) allows the coordination of both systems.

In Australia an ISSN application form is available by request or online from:

Australian ISSN Agency
National Library of Australia
Canberra ACT 2600
Phone: (02) 6262-1213
Fax: (02) 6273-4492
Email: issn@nla.gov.au
Web: <http://www.nla.gov.au/services/issn.html>

There are two options for allocating a GTIN to a serial publication, both of which are represented in an EAN-13 Bar Code.

For more information on the EAN-13 Bar Code refer to chapter 9, section 9.2.1 EAN-13 Symbol Specifications on page 195

Option 1: Allocate a Unique GTIN-13

For this option, please refer to "GTIN-13" on page 25. Using this method it is recommended that the ISSN be printed above the EAN-13 Bar Code.



Option 2: Convert the ISSN into a GTIN-13

The second option for numbering serial items is to convert the ISSN into a GTIN-13.

GS1 Prefix	ISSN (Without the Check Digit)	Variant	Check Digit
977	$n_4 n_5 n_6 n_7 n_8 n_9 n_{10}$	$n_{11} n_{12}$	n_{13}

TABLE 9 Structure of a GTIN-13 formed using the ISSN

The GS1 Prefix 977 is assigned for the encoding of the ISSN in a GTIN-13 format.

The ISSN without the Check Digit is the next seven digits. It is also recommended that the full ISSN be printed above the bar code.

The Variant (previously known as Sequence Variant) may be used to identify variants of the same title for issues with a different price, or to identify different issues of a daily issue within one week. Normal titles take the value 00.

The Check Digit is mathematically calculated to ensure that the whole number is correct. Correct calculation is essential for successful scanning of the bar code.

A Check Digit Calculator Program which will automatically calculate the Check Digit can be obtained from the GS1 Australia web site at www.gs1au.org

For instruction on manually calculating the Check Digit please refer to "Manual Check Digit Calculation" on page 56.

For either method of calculating the Check Digit use the GTIN-13 option.



Figure 9 EAN-13 Bar Code Formed Using the ISSN



Variant Overview

When there is no need to distinguish between different issues, fill the variant position in the GTIN that has been formed using your ISSN with 00.

When it is essential to distinguish between two successive issues of periodicals, and you use Option 2 to identify periodicals, scanning at title level is too imprecise. The variant caters for these situations while retaining the same ISSN. While a variant changes between different issues of a publication, the ISSN always remains the same.

For regular price changes use variant 01 for the initial cover price when the periodical first uses a bar code. Increase the variant by one for each regular price change.

Recalculate the Check Digit each time the Variant value changes.

For special issues use variant 99 the first time you sell a special issue with a different cover price from the preceding or following issue. If the situation occurs annually, you can re-use the same GTIN-13 every year.

For all other circumstances, or if you choose to apply a new variant for annually occurring special issues, decrease the variant by one, for example, 98, 97, 96, and so on.

Recalculate the check digit each time the variant value changes.

Titles published daily or more than once a week are considered separate items. They require a different variant for each separate issue. While each Monday issue can carry the same variant as each other Monday issue, it must be different from the variants used for other days of the week.

If the item is published Monday through to Sunday, begin with variant 01 on Monday, then 02 on Tuesday, and so on. International standards treat Monday as the first day of the week.

Re-using variants

Eventually, many price changes will increase the variant number that starts at 01, and many special issues will decrease the variant number that starts at 99. Eventually the two numbers will be the same. To avoid this from happening, restart both variants when the difference is no less than five.

When to Change the GTIN

Change the GTIN for the serial publication for:

A regular cover price change between two successive issues

A special issue, for example a double issue at Christmas, being sold at a different cover price from the previous issue

Titles published more than once a week

If you identify serials using Option1 and you need to identify between two successive issues, allocate a different Item Reference to each issue of the periodical.

If you identify serials using Option 2 and you need to identify between two successive issues, allocate a different variant to each issue.





Two-Digit Add-On Symbol

A two-digit serial number may be encoded in a two-digit Add-On Symbol. Together the GTIN-13 and serial number identify a particular issue of a particular serial publication.

The following number assignment guidelines for the two-digit serial number are recommended:

Dailies (or more generally publications with several issues a week): The publications of each day of the week are considered separate trade items and therefore have different GTINs. A two-digit serial number together with the GTIN-13 establishes the week of the year a particular day belongs to.

Weeklies: Number of the week (01 - 53)

Bi-weeklies: Number of the first week of the respective period (0 - 53)

Monthlies: Number of the month (01 - 12)

Bi-monthlies: Number of the first month of the respective period (01 - 12)

Quarterlies: Number of the first month of the respective period (01 - 12)

Seasonal period: First digit = last digit of the year; Second digit = 1 spring, 2 summer, 3 autumn, 4 winter

Bi-annual period: First digit = last digit of the year; second digit = number of the first season of the respective period

Annuals: First digit = last digit of the year; second digit = 5

Special intervals: Consecutively numbered from 01 to 99

The preferred location for the Add-On Symbol is to the right of the primary bar code

Five-Digit Add-On Symbol

Serial publications can also use a five-digit serial number carried by a five-digit Add-On Symbol that is placed to the right of the main bar code. The reading of the Add-On Symbol at POS is optional. The Add-On Symbol must not be used to encode information that should be identified with the GTIN. The Add-On Symbol provides additional information about a particular publication of a printed item, and it is the publisher's responsibility to define the numbering scheme. When using a five-digit Add-On Symbol, a two-digit Add-On Symbol cannot also be used.

Information that can be encoded in the five-digit Add-On Symbol includes the actual date of issue, in order to differentiate between successive issues.