

# GS1 Canada Launches Knowledge Center

Free on-demand online modules and classroom workshops will help Canadian enterprises use RFID technology to enhance their competitiveness.

By Mark Roberti

Jan. 29, 2008—[GS1 Canada](#) has launched a new education initiative, the [GS1 Knowledge Center](#), to educate Canadian businesses—particularly small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs)—about how they can become more competitive by employing technology based on GS1 and Electronic Product Code (EPC) standards that focus on radio frequency identification.

The program includes both on-demand online modules and classroom workshops. The courses are offered with the financial support of the Ontario government and are free to all Canadian companies. The classroom workshops, which will take place through the end of February at GS1 Canada's headquarters in Toronto, began with a special seminar on EPC RFID at [RFID Journal LIVE! Canada 2007](#), in November.

"The focus is on productivity and competitiveness as it relates to supply chain processes," says Joe Zenobio, president of EPCglobal Canada. "There is an emphasis on EPC RFID because these technologies help companies stay competitive, but the courses cover the full suite of GS1 standards."

The RFID courses begin by explaining the fundamentals of RFID, then explore the applications, as well as how to make the transition from bar codes and the business case for deploying EPC technologies. In addition to courses on RFID, the GS1 Knowledge Centre also offers sessions specifically designed for SMEs. These include Organization: Managing People, Skills and Change, which focuses on human resources management.

"The focus is more on what can be done with the standards than explaining the standards themselves," Zenobio says. "There are case studies that explain how manufacturers are using EPC RFID technologies today to become more efficient."

GS1 Canada has provided education for Canadian companies for the past 32 years. The education is relevant for companies of all sizes, but is particularly useful for SMEs because smaller organizations often lack the resources to educate themselves about new technologies, such as RFID.

**RELATED\_ARTICLES** Ontario has a large number of manufacturing companies. Therefore, the courses presented there will focus on that sector. GS1 Canada, however, also hopes to provide seminars with a slightly different focus for other provinces. For instance, Alberta has a large number of oil and gas companies, so classroom workshops in that province would focus on employing GS1 standards in those industries.

"The pilot we did at RFID Journal LIVE! Canada showed that companies see the value of the information we're providing," says Eileen MacDonald, GS1 Canada's executive VP and chief operating officer. "We had more than 90 people turn out for the one-day seminar and stay for the [Wal-Mart](#) keynote and reception. That was very positive when you consider that small business owners often can't spare the time to come to events like these."

