BIC SAN & GLN TASK & FINISH WORKING GROUP MEETING - Minutes
Conference Call
Tuesday 24th March 2015, 2pm

Present
Gareth Bradley, Hachette
Diana Dalasini, Nielsen
Katy Gibson, BIC
Simon Edwards, BIC Consultant
Karina Luke, BIC
Peter Morley, Publishing Technology
John Purcell, Bowker US

Apologies
Alaina-Marie Bassett, BIC
Noah Genner, Booknet Canada
Simon Parker, Batch
Barry Richardson, Nielsen
Len Vlahos, BISG

1. Welcoming John Purcell of Bowker US to the Group and Apologies
SE welcomed the Group to the call, particularly John Purcell of Bowker US who was new to the Group, and delivered the apologies. It was also confirmed that Adam Miles of Pearson would be attending all conference calls of this Group in future.

2. Review minutes and follow up on actions from last meeting

   - Other Group Members
     It was noted that AB had been in contact with Matthew Hogg who had suggested GXS and Freeway as possible future Group members. The Group agreed that Freeway could be represented on the Group and, if so, Atlas, who are BIC Members, as well. As customers of Group members, it was felt that it was not appropriate for GXS to be invited to attend the Group.
     **ACTION:** AB to contact MH for contact details for Freeway.
     **ACTION:** PM to send KG contact information for Atlas.

   - Following up on previous actions
     KL noted that pricing would also be included to the deliverables of this Project and that she would be in touch with Booknet Canada to discuss the points raised in the previous meeting. SE thanked DD for circulating the database of SAN numbers and bookshops to the Group. BR was not present on the call but the Group noted his action to look into how SANs are used in Germany would be carried over.
     **ACTION:** (Carried Over) KL to discuss the use of SANs with Booknet Canada
     **ACTION:** (Carried Over) KL to add pricing to the deliverables of the Project Briefing Document.
     **ACTION:** (Carried Over) BR to chase contacts in Germany to establish how SANs used in Germany.
The Group discussed that the UK currently uses both SANs and GLNs. JP, of Bowker US, noted that, as far as he was aware, only SANs are used in the US. The Group noted that there were different rules in existence for SANs and GLNs and that this was a critical issue when dealing with these codes.

DD raised the issue that it is possible to alter the address of SANs but not GLNs; any alteration of the address of GLNs will infringe the GLN rules and thus the number can no longer be called a GLN. DD circulated a spreadsheet of SAN numbers prior to the meeting but the Group noted that there was no such database of GLNs in existence; only their prefixes. PM had noted the value of this spreadsheet as he matched the SAN numbers against the VISTA database and found that out of 40,000 customers there were 150 with mismatching postcodes which had outdated SANs. SE noted that there had been issues with duplications of SAN numbers in the past and that this had caused confusion. It was noted that SAN/GLN numbers are often mapped to account numbers at distributors without check digit validation.

**ACTION:** GB to establish what form of information it is that fails in the mailbox validation of data when EANs are sent for testing.

3. **Deliverables of the SAN/GLN Review**

   - **3.1 Put together a Project Plan**
     SE noted that he has written a draft vision document which tries to go beyond the current areas of concern and describe a future situation when an ideal SAN/GLN solution has been developed. What would this look like? SE will circulate this document for feedback. The idea is to get the whole group to agree what a successful project for SAN/GLN might look like ignoring all the problems with getting there. Feedback from the group is vital to making this work. If members of the group have other objectives then we need to understand these.

     **ACTION:** SE circulated the draft vision document to the group at the end of the meeting and has already had positive feedback from one member of the group. Please can **ALL** members of the group read the document and comment. It’s OK to disagree!

   - **3.2 Produce a report covering the following:**

     - **3.2.1 Liaison with Bowker to ensure an international solution**
       Due to the US use of SAN and the UK use of both the SAN and GLN, this Group will liaise with Bowker US to establish an international standard. SE noted this collaboration was vital to establish a centralised and harmonised standard to avoid confusion across the industry and solve current discrepancies. JP informed the Group that currently the SAN system has been effective in the US; customers are allocated a SAN created by Bowker and are charged for this service. Customers can change their address by letting Bowker know via e-mail and Bowker will consequently make this change for free.
3.2.2 Detail a new set of rules for SANs which incorporates user requirements
The Group discussed that a new set of rules following feedback from looking at the differences in SAN/GLN standards will lead to less confusion and a more efficient system.

GB noted that the SAN procedures for the US (e-mailed to the Group prior to the meeting) were a good starting point for discussions to establish any points of discrepancy in the standards. SE noted that BIC’s 2012 document on SANs would also prove a valuable starting point. The Group discussed that these documents can be compared to determine divergent points in the SAN standards.

**ACTION:** SE to produce and circulate to the group document outlining the similarities and differences in rules by end of April 2015 and the Group to have their feedback ready for the next meeting.

3.2.3 Resolve any discrepancies between GLN rules and SAN rules
The Group noted that there are issues with differing rules between SANs and GLNs. The problem arises where under SAN rules you can change the address but with GLNs you cannot. DD noted that if the SAN address is changed, the corresponding GLN will no longer be valid as it is no longer compliant with the GLN standard thus cannot be a GLN. SE asked how perhaps if the two systems are merged to use the SAN and a GLN prefix then could this problem be surpassed but DD noted that this would not obey the rules for the GLN and thus would not constitute a GLN. DD noted that contact details such as telephone numbers can be changed but re-emphasised that addresses cannot under GLN rules. The Group discussed the inefficiency here as in reality this may send delivery drivers to incorrect locations, which would prove costly for organisations.

The Group discussed that a merging of the terms could be possible if the code is given a different name and the Group agreed that this may be possible. KL noted that the main aim of this Group was to agree an industry standard, consult other parties and ensure that it is a standard that the industry is happy to comply with; if renaming the codes is necessary for this purpose then the Group should be prepared to consider this as a solution. A disregard of present standards surrounding GLNs is not appropriate.

3.2.4 Recommend a way forward with regards to GS1
The Group discussed that it would be useful to look at the contract between BIC and GS1 to establish on what terms BIC has paid for the prefix from GS1. KL noted that BIC had recently paid its subscription to GS1 and has certified access to an online account to allocate numbers. BIC has paid for the prefix to cover bookshops rather than chains. The Group discussed that it would be useful to know the content of the contract that provides BIC with this prefix to determine whether this number is copyrighted and on what other terms this license is granted.

**ACTION:** (Carried Over) KL to find BIC – GS1 agreement for the purposes of this Group’s discussions.
3.2.5 Review the pricing and costs of SANs and look at pricing options

Pricing for SANs will be added to the deliverables of the Group. The Group discussed that the rules were of central importance but the pricing of SANs and GLNs as commodities is also key to the Group’s discussions as to what exactly an organisation receives when they purchase a SAN and a GLN. The Group discussed that the commercial element of cost in providing the SAN may deter organisations from purchasing new numbers and thus lead to bad practice and inefficiency. The Group noted that discussions on pricing strategies must be practical and compromise between commercial interests and the need for wide adoption of good practice surrounding SANs.

3.2.6 Look at customer benefits and how these could be enhanced

Benefits will include a more efficient system, as outlined above, with a view to overcoming the problematic or failed deliveries due to inaccurate location information. GB noted the facility of Nielsen’s searchable database as a model here.

SE noted that it would be helpful to produce a tool that would notify and communicate the address and contact details of all new SAN purchases. This information could be supplied to potential trading partners. JP noted that Bowker US has a searchable database but there are not many organisations with a licence to view the data. Otherwise organisations must contact Bowker directly to request SAN information. JP noted that Bowker was looking at making this database more publicly available. The Group agreed that an up to date searchable index of SANs would be valuable to the book industry. DD, however, noted that previous data must not be lost following an address change and a model database would have to reflect this. SE noted that such a database should include a full set of contact details as well. DD noted that Nielsen’s database was public and the Group enquired whether Nielsen had data tracking activity on the database and online SAN enquiry. PM noted that he uses Nielsen’s database if a customer has received an unrecognised SAN or GLN.

SE further noted that currently there is a random allocation of codes that could benefit from a more logical approach. DD noted that an online facility to purchase SANs which would trigger an update of a database would prove an efficient system to tackle the current problems. DD further noted that there are embedded reasons why some codes cannot be used but listing these would prove a very large task that would require a high level of accuracy but that would only need completing once.

**ACTION**: DD to establish whether Nielsen is aware of activity on its online SAN database.

*Post-Meeting Update: DD noted that there is a counter on the database so Nielsen are aware of how many times this database has been accessed, but there are no specific activity reports, such as details of searches made.*
3.3 Outline marketing plan (brief for TEC Committee) for acceptance, promotion and take up of recommendations
This will be discussed once the Group have discussed the discrepancies in the standards and established the format of their recommendations.

4. A.O.B.
The Group did not have any other business to discuss.

5. Date of next meeting
The next meeting will be held Thursday 14th May 2015.