GS1 Product Video Standard

Describes best practices and options for creating and sharing videos for products or product group families

Release 1.0, Ratified, May 2024

Document Summary

Document Item	Current Value
Document Name	GS1 Product Video Standard
Document Date	May 2024
Document Version	1.0
Document Issue	
Document Status	Ratified
Document Description	Describes best practices and options for creating and sharing videos for products or product group families

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Log of Changes

Release	Date of Change	Changed By	Summary of Change
1.0	May 2024	M.Achir, D.Benson, E.Braz, D.Buckley, J.Gladu, T.Ihalainen, S.Nelson & P.Thibaudet	WR 23-193, initial draft prepared by the IDEAs SMG sub-team and motioned to Community Review by the IDEAs SMG on 4 March 2024

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1 Introduction

Product videos have become an important element in building a successful brand for both food and non-food. They are effective in social media strategies and offers brands of any size a competitive edge and an opportunity to reach new audiences. Product videos can contain product details, show the product being used, announce a new product, provide brand range information, and much more.

Brand owners are increasingly sharing videos, in addition to images and other digital assets, with retailer and marketplaces to better position their products with end consumers. These videos, which may focus on a single product, a range of products or even an entire brand, are specifically created with the intent to be accessible on websites or platforms serving multiple countries.

For these business reasons, a standardised format and a standardised structure for product videos is required to help reduce costs and complexity for both video content providers, video content recipients and improve the product experience of the end consumer.

Important: This GS1 standard only covers brand endorsed video content. Any video, which directly or indirectly references one or more products without the brand owner explicit endorsement is considered out of scope.

1.1 What is a product video

A product video is a multimedia presentation designed to showcase and promote products. It typically combines visual, auditory, and often textual elements to provide potential customers with a comprehensive understanding of the product's features, benefits, and value proposition. Product videos serve as a powerful marketing and informational tool, enhancing the consumer's perception of the product, thereby encouraging purchasing decisions.

Short animations can be considered as a video when shared in the video format.

Note: Interactive content, such as seen in video games, are out of scope for this standard.

1.2 Product family videos

Within the GS1 system, individual products are identified with a Global Trade Item Number (GTIN). For the purposes of this standard, a single product video relates to a single GTIN.

A product family video differs from a single product video in that it promotes two or more related products (GTINs) from the same brand owner.

1.3 Brand videos

A brand video typically relates to all products (multiple GTINs) provided by a single supplier.

In such cases, more than one video may be required and SHOULD be differentiated with the GTIN based naming.

2 Technical recommendations

2.1 Aspect ratio optimisation

Aspect Ratios vary based on the intended use and platform of the video. Certain formats are better optimised for use with one business case over another. Most of the use cases for video content, be it commerce, social media, animation, brand marketing or influencer content is viewed on either mobile platforms such as handheld devices or static platforms such as PCs.

Below are some of the suggested aspect ratios available by business case, and guidance for the best choices.

2.1.1 Mobile platform aspect ratio

Mobile platforms cover a number of business cases. However, some of the most common uses are online commerce and social media. The best aspect ratio for covering all the most typical mobile platform applications is square aspect ratio (1:1). Much of the content used with smart devices is optimised around this screen size. Likewise, it provides a stable platform no matter which direction the user is holding their device. As such, video creators should consider square aspect ratio as a first choice when developing videos for mobile platforms.

Other options may make more sense for your business case if you are producing short video content exclusively for social media or for influencer platforms. In that case one of the options incorporating more screen area may be preferred.

- Videos optimised for mobile device platforms should use:
    - **Square aspect ratio** (1:1)
- Videos optimised for mobile device platforms may also use:
    - **Full vertical/Portrait aspect ratio** (9:16)
    - **Social aspect ratio** (4:5)

2.1.2 Static platform aspect ratios

Static platforms have a bit more flexibility in deployment and application. Likewise, as they have had a longer deployment life, they are often cover a wider range of business cases and creator needs. The aspect ratio of static device deployment is therefore also more wide-ranging. There are several common video aspect ratios for static device deployment.

- Videos optimised for static platforms may use the following aspect ratios:
    - **Landscape aspect ratio** (16:9)
    - **Full Screen aspect ratio** (4:3)

2.1.3 Other aspect ratios

Optionally other aspect ratios may be used. However, using obscure or unusual aspect ratios can lead to compatibility issues and impact deployment. Likewise, it will be unlikely that platforms will be optimised for them. However:

- Videos may be deployed in other aspect ratios at the discretion of the creator of the video.
- Creators may want to consult downstream business partners for technical considerations.

For videos that do not use one of the classic aspect ratios listed above, or for two or more identical videos that only differ by aspect ratios, it is strongly recommended to use the optional naming convention to indicate the exact aspect ratio as described in section 3.1.1

2.2 File resolution

These values represent recommended bit rates for video encoding to ensure good quality at each resolution.

For example, when referring to video bitrate, a higher bitrate may be chosen for high-definition or 4K video to maintain clarity and detail, while a lower bitrate may be appropriate for smaller screens or situations with limited bandwidth.

Table 2-1: Quality (Highest Resolution / Lowest Resolution)

Resolution	Bit Rate (kbps)
Standard Definition (SD)	1,000
High Definition (HD 720p)	2,500

Resolution	Bit Rate (kbps)
Full HD (1080p)	5,000
4K/Ultra HD	10,000

- Note that these are general guidelines and the actual bit rate chosen may depend on factors such as the complexity of your video content, the compression efficiency of the codec you choose, and the specific requirements of the platform or device on which the video will be displayed.

2.3   File format

In video files, containers store audio, video, subtitles, and metadata, forming the video format. Codecs encode and decode multimedia data like audio and video.

When creating a video, the video codec compresses the visuals, the audio codec does the same for sound, and both are synced and placed in a media container, shaping the final file format.

- The preferred format is MPEG-4 Part 14 (MP4) which is supported by a wide range of platforms and devices, MP4 contains audio, video, images, and text. It excels in delivering high-quality video while keeping file sizes compact.

2.4   File size

Warning: Although there is no maximum file size specified in this standard, as a general guideline, many online platforms recommend keeping video files under 1 GB. This helps balance reasonable quality with efficient streaming and download times.

2.5   Video length

The intent of the video will determine the length. For example, a detailed instruction on how to construct a flat-packed product may be several minutes, while a promotional video may be several seconds.

These values provide a guide to expected file sizes for videos of various resolutions and lengths encoded in MP4 format using the H.264 codec.

Note that these are general guidelines and actual file sizes may vary depending on factors such as content complexity and compression efficiency.

Table 2-2: Example for a 1-minute videos (MP4, H.264)

Resolution	Bit Rate (kbps)	File Size Range
Standard Definition (SD)	1,000	9.5 MB - 19 MB
High Definition (HD 720p)	2,500	23.5 MB - 47 MB
Full HD (1080p)	5,000	47 MB - 94 MB
4K/Ultra HD	10,000	94 MB - 188 MB

Table 2-3: Example for a 3-minute videos (MP4, H.264)

Resolution	Bit Rate (kbps)	File Size Range
Standard Definition (SD)	1,000	28 MB - 56 MB
High Definition (HD 720p)	2,500	70.5 MB - 141 MB
Full HD (1080p)	5,000	141 MB - 281 MB
4K/Ultra HD	10,000	281 MB - 563 MB

2.6 Thumbnail image associated with a video

Often when a video appears on a website, it is associated with a still image that the user will click to play. The video provider SHOULD provide a thumbnail image associated with the video. Such thumbnail images should:

- Use the same aspect ratio as the video itself.

- Use the same naming convention as the video itself.

- Be provided in the same way as the video itself.

If no thumbnail is provided, the implementor can use a frame of their own choice from the video.

3 Identification, file naming and metadata

3.1 Storage

Principle the video is stored once. Metadata is used to share/search the relevant information based on attributes:

- Brand

- Category

- Type-of-video

- Associated GTINs

- Start date

- End date

- …

3.1.1 File naming

The filename (or file name) is used to uniquely identify the video stored in a file system.

The filename focuses on the base name of the file excluding the file format/extension. File format/extensions should only be added by the software generating or modifying the file to minimise the chances of rendering the file unreadable.

Positions 1-21 are mandatory for all the video types.

Mandatory

Position	1-14	15	16	17	18-19	20	21
Data	GTIN	Under score	Document Type	Under score	Video Type	Under score	Aspect Ratio
Value	(n14)	_	V – Video	_	AW – Awareness	_	S – Square
					BR – Brand range		L – Landscape
					ED – Educational/Instructional		P – Portrait
					PL – Product Launch		
					PR – Promotion		
					RE – Recipe		
					SO – Sourcing/traceability		
					SU – Sustainability		
					TE – Testimonial/Reviews		

Optional

Position	22	23-25	26	27+		
Data	Under score	Serialisation	Under score	Language	Under score	Aspect Ratio Scale
Value	_	s(n2)	_	(a2) or (a2-A2)	_	0101 – Square (1:1)
						0916 – Full Vertical (9:16)
						0405 – Social (4:5)
						1609 – Landscape (16:9)
						0403 – Full Screen (4:3)

`<GTIN>_V_PL_L_s01_EN`

Mandatory Fields

| 1 | 2 | 3 | ... | | | | | | | | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |

■ GTIN   ■ Underscore   ■ Document Type   ■ Video Type   ■ Aspect Ratio
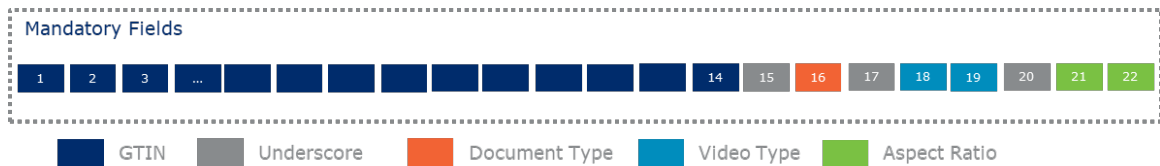
Note: The serialisation field enables the differentiation between videos for the same product and with the same video type and aspect ratio but varying in content. For instance, two videos aimed at a product, both sharing the same video type (e.g., product launch) and aspect ratio (e.g., landscape) but differ in terms of content or duration.

3.1.2   Metadata

When utilising product video metadata to improve data retrieval and connections, consider the following recommendations. Ensure that the metadata includes elements for comparison and exploration, facilitating the finding and matching of the product video with its relevant data.

It is crucial to incorporate key details that contribute to comprehensive data enrichment. Metadata may include information such as product specifications, timestamps, and contextual tags. By integrating these details into the metadata, suppliers empower users to navigate and associate product videos with precision.

Methods for adding Metadata:

■ **Embedding Metadata in Video Files:** Video suppliers can embed metadata directly into the video file using standardised tags editors such as MP4 tags editors or XMP for various media formats. This ensures that essential information is attached to the video file.

■ **Utilising Content Management Systems (CMS):** Video suppliers can leverage CMS platforms to input and manage metadata for their video content. These systems often provide user-friendly interfaces for adding details such as titles, descriptions, and tags.

■ **API Integration:** For large-scale video distribution, suppliers can explore API integrations with platforms or streaming services. This allows for the seamless transfer of metadata along with the video, enhancing consistency and accessibility.

By following these practices, video suppliers can significantly improve the discoverability and value of their product videos, ensuring a more organised and user-friendly metadata ecosystem.

Table 3-1 Metadata relevant for product videos: definitions and values

Metadata	Definition	Value example	Recommended or Optional
Aspect Ratio Scale	The numeric representation of the video's aspect ratio (width to height)	0101	Optional
Brand Name	The Brand Name of the product in the video.	GS1	Recommended
Category	A group of related products or services with common characteristics and purposes.	Product Video Standard	Optional
Copyright	Intellectual property protection that grants exclusive rights to creators and authors of original works.	Copyright © 2024 GS1	Optional
Create Date	The date when the video was created (MM/YY).	01/25	Recommended
Description	A short description of the product video.	How to store and share product videos	Optional
Expiration Date	After this time, the video is not be shown (MM/YY).	12/27	Recommended
GTIN	Global Trade Item Number (n14).	09520123456740	Recommended **Note** more than one GTIN may be used with a comma separator
Legal Owner	Owner of the digital file.	GS1	Optional
Length	The time the video takes to play	Minutes and seconds	Recommended
Product URL	URL link to additional information (i.e., Detail page of the digital file).	https://www.gs1.org/standards/product-image-standards-and-guidelines	Optional
Subtitles	The text-based translations or transcriptions of the spoken dialogue or audio content in a video.	FR (French)	Recommended
Valid From Date	Earliest date from when the video can be used or may be shown (MM/YY).	01/23	Recommended
Version	A version number is assigned for each product video, starting with value 1.	2.1	Recommended

3.2   Brand owner endorsed video types

A brand endorsed video is any media that the brand owner is actively promoting allowing brand owners to leverage different production sources to effectively convey their message and connect with their target audience. It can include videos developed and produced by:

■ **Produced In-House** - Developed and produced by the brand owner own team or production department, rather than outsourcing the production to external parties.

■ **Outsourced to a Third-Party Content Provider** - Developed through collaboration with a third-party content providers who are contracted by the brand owner.

■ **Brand-Approved Influencers or Celebrity Endorsers** – Developed by influencers or celebrities who have been officially endorsed by the brand owner to represent and promote their products or services.

3.2.1 Video types

In the rapidly changing landscape of digital media, the need for a diverse range of video types becomes evident as each video type serves a specific purpose. Whether the goal is to provide education, create a promotional video or create brand recognition, having a range of video types is crucial to ensure that there is a clear and standardised way to store and share the different types of videos.

Table 3-2 Product video types

Video Type	Abbreviation	Description
Awareness	AW	Designed to introduce or increase awareness about an existing product. Unlike traditional product launch videos, awareness videos focus on building brand recognition and educating consumers about the product benefits.
Brand range	BR	Provide an in-depth look at a brand, its history, products, and services. It offers a comprehensive view of what the brand stands for and what products offers. This type of video is often used to give potential customers a deeper understanding of the brand's offerings and differentiate it from competitors.
Educational/Instructional	ED	Designed to provide customers with a deeper understanding of the product, its features, benefits, and how to use it effectively. This video type includes instructional videos (how-to) and tutorial videos to guide customers through specific tasks or actions related to the product or to demonstrate the product functionalities and features.
Product launch	PL	Used to introduce a new product to the market to generate interest among potential customers. These videos serve to build anticipation and excitement around a new product before it's released.
Promotional	PR	Designed to promote a product(s) which often focus on highlighting its key features, benefits, and value proposition. These are short and engaging videos used for advertising and promotions, often on social media.
Recipe	RE	Provide visual instructions for preparing a specific dish or meal. Recipe videos are an effective way to engage and educate consumers, sharing culinary techniques, ingredients, and the step-by-step process of making a particular recipe.
Sourcing/traceability	SO	Used to highlight a product journey from its origin to its final form, emphasizing the transparency and ethical practices involved in sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution. These videos typically showcase the responsible and traceable supply chain behind the product, reassuring consumers of its quality, sustainability, and adherence to ethical standards.
Sustainability	SU	Content focus on promoting and raising awareness about sustainability-related initiatives and typically to highlight efforts to minimise environmental impacts, renewable energy, recycling, waste reduction, eco-friendly products, support social responsibility, and sustainable practices.
Testimonial/Reviews	TE	Used to provide insights, feedback, and recommendations about a product. These videos can be made by Influencers/celebrities or industry experts providing detailed insights, critiques, and expert opinions about the product.

4 Product video sharing

Once a product video has been created, it can be shared with all, or selected, partners. The main methodologies for sharing product videos are URLs which are provided to trading partners directly or via GDSN:

■ A URL which allows the video file to be downloaded and then reused on a retailer or e-tailer's website. This appears to be the favoured option for large retailers or marketplaces.

■ A URL to a video hosting website which allows the video to be played directly.

4.1 Download URL

Allow users to directly download videos for offline viewing. This is particularly useful for users who want to share videos in environments with limited internet connectivity. This is the default method, for example, when using the Global Data Synchronisation Network. In this case, the URL SHALL point to a download file.

4.2 Viewable URL

4.2.1 Shareable links

Create unique shareable links for each product video and these links directly via email, messaging apps or any other communication channel. It is a URL that links to a viewable version of the video (e.g., YouTube).

4.2.2 Social media integration

Integrates social media sharing options within the platform. Users can share product videos on their profiles, amplifying indirect visibility among their connections. It is a URL that links to a viewable version of the video (e.g., Instagram).

4.2.3 Collaboration features

Provides collaboration features for indirect sharing within groups or teams. Users can create collaborative spaces where teams can access and share product videos, fostering indirect distribution within specific communities.

5 Sustainability aspects, informative

The sustainability of all aspects of human activities is increasingly important. As it pertains to product videos, the following considerations might be helpful.

5.1 How the video is made

Videos can be made with a simple smartphone app or using a full film crew with multiple days of filming and editing. But whatever the product method, simply thinking about and prioritising the sustainability aspects can significantly reduce the overall carbon footprint. Consider:

■ Using the minimal inputs for the maximum results.

■ Keeping the megabyte size to a minimum by:

  ☐ Keeping the size of images contained to a minimum. The quality is often driven more by the where the video is viewed rather than the quality of the input.

  ☐ Using mono instead of stereo sound.

■ Etc.

5.2 How the video is broadcast

A key consideration, even when planning to make the video, is having a clear understanding of how the video will be broadcast. Optimising for viewing on mobile devices, for example reduce the bandwidth requirements and therefore the overall carbon footprint.

5.3 Store, share & use only where relevant

Consider having a store once, share everywhere model rather than creating multiple copies of the video files. Other considerations are:

- Establishing a start and end broadcast period.
- Storing the video on a shared URL for viewing by all.
- Etc.