



## 2.2.4 Books

When identifying books and paperbacks a company may identify them in the same manner as any other retail trade item. However the recommended option is to use the International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

The ISBN is a number that uniquely identifies books and book-like products including all printed books, pamphlets, microfiche publications, and other specialised printed forms of publications published internationally. Each ISBN identifies a unique edition of a publication, from one specific publisher.

The GS1 Prefixes 978 and 979 have been allocated to the ISBN Agency who then allocate ISBNs using these prefixes. An ISBN must never be re-used, even if issued in error.

From 1 January 2007 the ISBN changed from ten digits to thirteen digits; this thirteen-digit ISBN can be encoded into an EAN-13 Bar Code. To obtain an ISBN or find out what to do with existing ten-digit ISBNs, contact the Australian ISBN Agency (details below):

In Australia an ISBN can be obtained from:

The ISBN Agency  
Thorpe-Bowker  
Level One, 607 St Kilda Road  
Melbourne Vic 3004  
Phone (03) 8517-8333  
Fax (03) 8517-8399  
Email: [yoursay@thorpe.com.au](mailto:yoursay@thorpe.com.au)  
Web: [www.thorpe.com.au/isbn/](http://www.thorpe.com.au/isbn/)

**Note:** ISBNs shall not be allocated to non-book products even if the products are related to a book (e.g., teddy bears, coffee mugs, t-shirts, etc. related to a book launch). Such non-book products shall be identified and bar coded in the same manner as any other trade item.

As stated above, there are two different options for identifying book products:

### Option 1: Use the Thirteen-Digit ISBN as Allocated

This is the recommended option and is only available if you have been allocated a thirteen-digit ISBN by the ISBN Agency. If you have previously been issued with a ten digit ISBN, contact the ISBN Agency so that it can be converted to a thirteen digit ISBN. The thirteen-digit ISBN can be encoded into an EAN-13 Bar Code as described in chapter 9, section 9.2.1 EAN-13 Symbol Specifications on page 195.

### Option 2: Allocate a Unique GTIN-13

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



## Add-On Symbols

Some publishers may wish to communicate information which is additional to the title in a bar code in order to meet their internal requirements. For example, publishers may wish to include an edition variant (i.e. unchanged reprint or price increase) which is not distinguished by the GTIN. The GS1 System provides an additional two- or five-digit symbol, called an Add-On Symbol, which can be used on the item just to the right of main bar code.

Add-On Symbols involve the following constraints:

- The Add-On Symbol should not contain information that should rightly be looked up using the item's GTIN-13

- The reading of the Add-On Symbol by the retailers' Point-of-Sale system is optional

- The use of the Add-On Symbol is the responsibility of each publisher

A two-digit or five-digit Add-On Symbol encodes more information about a particular publication of the printed item but is not required for the identification of the title itself. The data encoded in the Add-On Symbol consists of numeric data of any structure and meaning. It is the publisher's responsibility to define the numbering scheme.

The figure below shows the format of a two-digit Add-On Symbol

Supplementary Information	
n <sub>1</sub>	n <sub>2</sub>

The figure below shows the format of a five-digit Add-On Symbol

Supplementary Information				
n <sub>1</sub>	n <sub>2</sub>	n <sub>3</sub>	n <sub>4</sub>	n <sub>5</sub>

## Numbering Non-Retail Book Items

Our advice to publishers is that they need to be a member of GS1 Australia in order to number their non-retail items. For details on numbering structures for non-retail items see "Non-Retail - Fixed Measure" on page 39.