

Updated Number System Character 6 & 7 Announcement!

UPDATE

In February, we distributed the first bulletin announcing the upcoming assignment of number system characters 6 and 7 to UPC manufacturer ID numbers. Since that time, the rate of Uniform Code Council membership growth has increased. We now estimate that use of the new blocks of manufacturer ID numbers will begin in the **December, 1989/January, 1990 timeframe**. Therefore, retailers and manufacturers must review their scanner decode logic and internal system capabilities sooner than originally indicated.

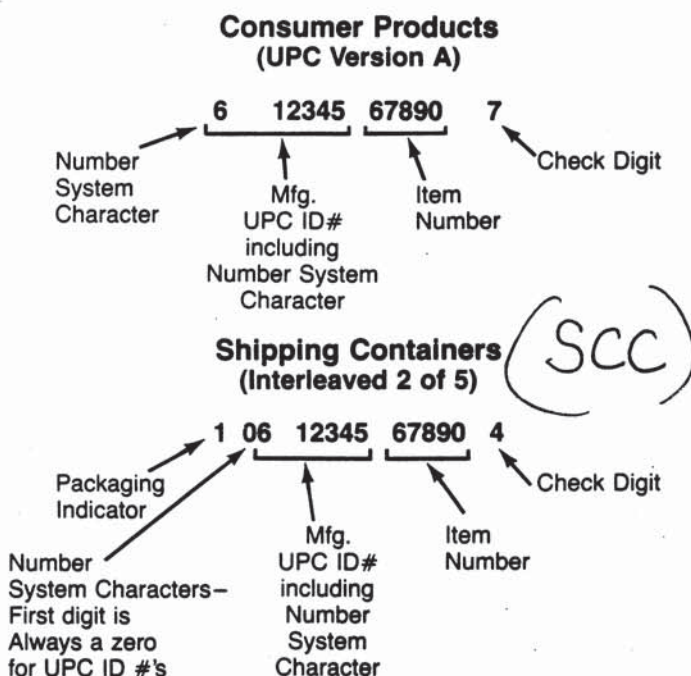
The remainder of this bulletin explains the expansion into the new number system characters and reviews code structure and issues. Bulletin #2 is similar to UPC Bulletin #1 issued in February of 1989, but has some text clarifications and an updated timetable for scanner and system modifications.

Note that number system characters 6 and 7 are only applicable in UPC Version A (12 digits). The zero-suppressible Version E is only applicable in number system character 0.

Note also that the 14-digit shipping container code referenced in the CODE STRUCTURE section uses the Interleaved 2 of 5 (ITF) symbology for its scannable barcode rather than the UPC symbol.

CODE STRUCTURE

The UPC system uses an eleven digit numeric code to uniquely identify individual products. For items packed together in shipping containers, the UPC code is expanded to thirteen digits. One additional digit is added to both codes to allow for a validity checking system. The total code lengths of twelve and fourteen digits respectively are formatted as shown below.



THE NUMBER SYSTEM CHARACTER

The numeric prefix of the manufacturer identification number is commonly referred to as the number system character. There are currently ten number system characters available for assignment by the UCC, 0 through 9. Each number system character used for manufacturer identification is coupled with 100,000 five digit ID numbers from 00000 to 99999. Assignment of different number system characters to each block of five digit ID numbers ensures uniqueness of ID numbers. Some number system characters are used for other purposes. The 10 available blocks of number system characters have been allocated as follows:

Number System Character	Application
0	92,000 manufacturer ID numbers 8,000 locally assigned numbers
1	Reserved
2	Random Weight consumer packages
3	Drug product identification
4	In store marking without format
5	UPC coupon code
6	100,000 manufacturer ID numbers (12/89 or 1/90)
7	100,000 manufacturer ID numbers (12/89 or 1/90)
8	Reserved
9	Reserved

As shown above, opening the number system character 6 and 7 blocks of manufacturer ID numbers will supply nearly 200,000 ID's which were previously reserved for use when needed. A small quantity of number system 6 and 7 numbers have been issued to industrial manufacturers for non-retail applications.

TWO ISSUES TO CONSIDER

There are two situations which retailers may have to deal with before they attempt to scan symbols encoding number system characters 6 or 7. The first is when the scanner being used is one of some early models where the scanner manufacturer disabled its capability to read the "unused" number system codes to improve its abilities to perform other functions. To be able to decode and process symbols encoding manufacturer ID numbers starting with a six or a seven, these scanners must be reenabled. The scanner makers are aware of this situation, having been notified by the UCC some two years ago of the need to begin to use the full decode capacities of these machines. Enablement can be completed in the field. Retailers who suspect they have one of these early model installations should contact their scanner vendor at once to arrange for the necessary service to be completed prior to December 1, 1989.

The second condition which could cause a problem is one in which the retailer (or a wholesaler providing host support) has built

Please note: For information regarding the Shipping Container Code (SCC), please contact the UCC:

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