

Suppliers and GPOs

Prati-Donaduzzi invests in GS1 standards for traceability of medicines in Brazilian healthcare

For nearly 25 years, Prati-Donaduzzi has built its reputation on a foundation of producing quality medicines, respect for its employees and a commitment to ethical business practices. In 2014, the pharmaceutical manufacturer started using GS1 identifiers encoded in GS1 DataMatrix barcodes to identify its pharmaceutical drugs at the single-dose level. As a result, Prati-Donaduzzi has realised the value of fractionable medications, enabling traceability throughout the healthcare supply chain, increasing efficiencies within its own operations and for its healthcare providers, and improving the care and safety for patients.

By Walter Batista



Focusing on safety

Prati-Donaduzzi is well-known as a leading drug manufacturer, focusing on generic brand medications as the largest supplier for healthcare providers in Brazil. The company is constantly investing in infrastructure, professional training, research and development, and innovation in order to expand its product line. In 2016, Prati-Donaduzzi was recognised by Infraero, a national public company, for logistics efficiency and received the “Automation Award” from GS1 Brazil.

While Prati-Donaduzzi recognises the needs of its customers, the company is also focused on improving safety practices for patients. In 2014, Prati-Donaduzzi started to use GS1 standards in support of its customers—private and public hospitals—and the RDC 80/06 regulation that governs the manufacture and trade of fractionable or single-dose medications.

“On July 2014, we received a complaint from the Hospital de Clínicas’ pharmacy (HC UNICAMP) about the Amoxicillin 500mg tablet,” recalls

Walter Batista, Prati-Donaduzzi’s Commercial Director. “The pharmacists showed us how they were having difficulties in unitising our blister packs since the tablets were diagonally placed. Furthermore, they had to repackage and rework all of our medications, adding time and costs to their operations.”

Addressing customer needs

In the following month, Prati-Donaduzzi received a request to visit Alemão Oswaldo Cruz Hospital in São Paulo to discuss fractionables. Once again, Prati-Donaduzzi met with pharmacists who demonstrated the need for single-dose medicines and how this would enable the traceability of each unit of medicine.

“We got to know more about the GS1 DataMatrix barcode used by the hospital and other large hospitals throughout Brazil,” says Batista. “We requested help to assess the possible implementation of GS1 standards, including the DataMatrix barcode. Our next step was a visit

to Dr. Nilson Mata at Israelita Albert Einstein Hospital, which led us to the experts at GS1 Brazil.”

With support from the company’s senior management, Prati-Donaduzzi launched the use of GS1 standards for single-dose identification and labelling. Prati Donaduzzi’s Group packaging company, Centralpack, performed several tests and studies.

“On September 2014, just three months after being approached by HC UNICAMP, we attained our GS1 certification to use DataMatrix barcodes on the blister packs for the anti-inflammatory drug, Diclofenac Sodium,” says Batista. “We were the first national pharmaceutical company to implement the GS1 DataMatrix barcode in aluminum blister packs for solid oral drugs in single doses.”

Importance of single-dose identification

Today, Prati-Donaduzzi identifies each single dose of its medicines by using GS1 standards—specifically the GS1 Global Trade Item Number® (GTIN®), batch/lot number and expiry date, encoded in the GS1 DataMatrix barcode.

“We believe that unique identification at the item and single-dose levels is extremely important since pharmaceutical drugs can seriously impact patients if there is an administration error,” explains Batista. “In addition, if we include individual identification in all of our medications, we can improve the efficiencies of recalls (if ever needed) and provide personalised customer service.”

Prati-Donaduzzi is also leading the way by sharing its experiences and the need for traceability with others in the Brazilian healthcare industry. The company hosted a breakfast at ANAHP (National Association of Private Hospitals) in São Paulo to discuss the issue, “Fractioning and Traceability in Hospitals.”

“All of São Paulo’s private hospitals attended with about 110 healthcare professionals in attendance,” says Batista. “After the event, we extended our discussions about the standardisation of single-dose identification to public hospitals and agencies.”

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Walter Batista, Commercial Director, Prati-Donaduzzi

Growing with traceability

Prati-Donaduzzi has always understood the importance of being aligned with the most modern management practices and technology—and especially their impact on customer satisfaction.

“We have made and will continue to make substantial investments in these areas by aiming to continuously improve our performance,” says Batista. “By implementing GS1 standards, it has helped us realise greater efficiencies in our operations and especially improved safety practices—something that is clearly recognised by our partners and customers.”

“We understand productivity benefits are experienced gradually,” continues Batista. “However, we also understand that increased productivity gains are forthcoming with increased safety controls, which has become more effective over time.”

Prati-Donaduzzi also points out the growing requirement in Brazilian’s healthcare market for traceability enabled by the DataMatrix barcode. “Our overall financial results have been very positive,” says Batista. “Recognised as a pioneer, we have been able to enter new markets more easily (such as private hospitals) since we are able to track our medicines at every point in the supply chain—from their arrival in the hospital’s warehouse, in its pharmacy, in nursing stations, and ultimately, in the administration of medications to patients. Using standards has helped us reduce administration errors as well as increase control of our inventory.”

Public and private hospitals are also benefiting from Prati-Donaduzzi’s implementation of single-dose identification. “The use of the GS1 DataMatrix barcode has helped our hospitals save costs by approximately 30 to 42 percent since they no longer need to perform unitisation,” says Batista.

“We need to be constantly evolving to meet our customers’ needs,” concludes Batista. “Using technology and standards helps us differentiate our company in a highly competitive global marketplace. Our customers realise that we have a choice, and we choose to leverage GS1 standards for the benefit of all.”

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Walter Batista, Commercial Director, Prati-Donaduzzi

About the Author



Walter Batista is the Commercial Director at Prati-Donaduzzi. Mr. Batista graduated with a law degree from Universidade Estadual de Goiás (UEG) and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) degree in Strategic Management and Marketing from Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV). He completed the

Executive Development Program (PDE) conducted by Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) and an MBA in Strategic Pharmaceutical Management from Fundação Instituto de Administração (FIA). Mr. Batista has been active in the pharmaceutical industry since 2004 and at Prati-Donaduzzi since 2008.

About Prati-Donaduzzi

In the late 1980s, Pharmacists Luiz and Carmen Donaduzzi started a pharmaceutical manufacturing plant in Recife, Brazil. By 1993, the company had relocated to the city of Toledo, along with their partners, Celso Prati and Arno Donaduzzi, and with support from the municipal and state governments. Nowadays, Prati-Donaduzzi is well-known as a leading drug manufacturer, focusing on generic brand medications as the largest supplier for public agencies in Brazil.

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