

## **Submission to CoOL Taskforce**

The labelling task force is just focusing on a solution to one “problem”, but consumers want more information in general, and there is not enough room on a label. Indeed there are many labels on the shelf already that are so cluttered, and font sizes are so small as to be almost unreadable, especially by those with less than perfect eyesight. We believe that a digital solution is by far the best long term solution and is most able to supply a future proof solution to ongoing and future demands on label area – IF DONE PROPERLY.

The current problem is that consumers have to go to each company’s website to get more information on a particular product; hence the task force’s feedback that consumers don’t want a technical solution. A long term solution would involve a single website (eg FSANZ or one set up for the purpose). Better still, the consumer would have an app on their smart phone that they point to the bar code (or similar) on the product and it brings up the required information from the FSANZ website. The information could be similar to, or based on, the AFGC PIF. Manufacturers are acquainted with and know PIFs already, so the concept would be familiar. Anyone could use it for whatever purpose: consumers in the store, retailers wanting product information, distributors who also want a PIF... For older or other consumers who are averse to owning smart phones a scanner device similar to those currently available in stores like BigW, Kmart etc could be installed on site.

The capacity to deliver information would be limited only by the demand of the consumer and the manufacturer’s ability/desire to provide – every single country of origin could be listed and in whatever format the consumer wants, or even multiple formats so as to satisfy all manner of consumers, seasonal variations, exhaustive nutritional panels (if that is what the consumer or manufacturer wished), changes in raw materials, anything consumers &/or the authorities required... and could be done live by the manufacturer. It could be always up to date, and in the event of consumer demand, could deliver information over and above legislative requirements. There would be less need to change label graphics every time there was a legal requirement to include further information.

The key to making it work successfully is that it needs to be easy to use, and that is where the current company website solution misses the mark – you need to first find the company’s web address in order to look up the product.

In reference to the questions posed by the taskforce to manufacturers, we believe such a technical solution would solve virtually all of these. It may take time to set it up, but it should provide a long term solution and provide relief from the continual pressure on the label.

This could also provide a template for other industries for quite different products: car industry, building, medical... Consumers are demanding more information and an easy access to it. We believe this is the future and government energy and tax payer’s dollars

should go in this direction and not to short term solutions that solve one issue but come back again down the track when the next demand is made.

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