John is in the computing laboratory. The telephone rings with the internal call ring. John answers the telephone.

"Good morning, this is Edith. Is John there please?"

"Good morning Edith, this is John."

"John, do you know anything about GS1-128 barcodes please?"

"Well, I have heard of them, but I do not have any detailed knowledge at present."

"Ah. Could you possibly read up about it please and advise me if it is possible to encode a localizable sentence in specifically that type of barcode and if it is possible then how it could be done."

"Yes certainly."

"I know that it is not possible to say how long it will take but if you could let me know how far you have progressed later today then that would be very helpful."

"Right, I'll have a look."


Edith's Office.

John has arrived.

"Hello John, come in, have a seat."

"Thank you. …. I've looked up GS1-128 barcodes and started to read about them. There is a lot of information. I have not read it all but I have been able to work out a way to encode a localizable sentence in a GS1-128 barcode."

"Excellent."

"There are Application Identifiers defined, they are mostly for products and services for things like date of manufacture, batch number, expiry date, that sort of thing. Yet there are some Application Identifiers for private use within an organization, namely Application Identifiers 91 through to 99 and there is one Application Identifier for use between organizations that agree to some common usage of that Application Identifier, namely Application Identifier 90.

So I suggest that we can use Application Identifier 97 for tests and maybe for use within an organization.

Within the data field for that Application Identifier I suggest that we use a format of two colon characters followed by the code number of the localizable sentence followed by a colon character and a semicolon character. It would all be done within the basic 7-bit character set of the GS1-128 barcode system, just using ordinary digits for the code numbers."

"Why do you suggest using the colons and the semicolon?" asks Edith gently.

"That would mean that there is some low level security against accidentally reading a barcode that some other organization has produced if that organization happens to be using Application Identifier 97 for a purpose of its own. Also it would be compatible with a form of markup bubble that we have been trying for embedding a localizable sentence into plain text."

"Thank you." says Edith, "Do you have any ideas how we could proceed?"

"Well if we were to publish our .... my .... our, thinking, just publish informally at present, then a person who reads our document would at least know our thinking on the matter. If he or she then chooses to use that method, or if he or she chooses to do something different knowing that his or her own approach will not conflict with our approach, then he or she will be making an informed decision in relation to what we are suggesting."

"Yes .... that seems like a good idea. Please proceed with doing that."

"Thank you."