

# A QUICK GUIDE TO

# eCommerce Warehousing and Order Fulfillment

Order fulfillment encompasses multiple aspects of your supply chain strategy. Each step in the process needs to operate effectively to ensure orders are fulfilled accurately and on time, every time.

So, what happens behind the scenes after someone places an order, and how can eCommerce brands ensure their backend fulfillment operations run smoothly?

This eCommerce fulfillment guide outlines and defines each step, with industry tips and guidance along the way to ensure your brand stays on track to efficient fulfillment.

# THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS STREAMLINED ORDER FULFILLMENT IS GETTING THE COMPLETE PICTURE

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What does order fulfillment entail?



How does each unique step impact the overall process?



What are common errors or pitfalls that stall fulfillment?

### MANAGING

Once your products arrive at the warehouse, they need to be organized and stored effectively to ensure adequate stock rotation and prevent backorders. In short, inventory management means having the right stock, at the right levels, in the right place, at the right time. However, organization, monitoring, and reporting play a critical role in inventory efficiency.

Your 3PL partner uses a Warehouse Management System (WMS) to organize items by SKU, track inventory levels, and automatically identify which products are most popular with your retailers or DTC buyers.

#### **PROCESSING**

Streamlined order receiving and processing is the key to successful eCommerce fulfillment, but manually copy/pasting orders from your existing systems to a fulfillment software can result in errors and delays. An integrated management system is the best way to keep orders organized and ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

Your 3PL partner integrates their WMS with your systems to automatically process orders as they're placed, then tracks each order from receiving to delivery through an online order management dashboard.

## RECEIVING

Before you can start fulfilling orders, you need inventory. The receiving process refers to accepting incoming inventory and other supplies you may need to complete orders. This seemingly straightforward step can quickly become complicated when you work with multiple vendors simultaneously, and a receiving misstep can significantly slow your fulfillment process.

Your 3PL partner coordinates supply sourcing, vendor communications, and warehouse receiving orders (WROs) to ensure new inventory arrives on time and in line with receiving guidelines.

**SHIPPING** 

Warehousing teams add shipping labels to each carton, box, or mailer at the end of packing, but an efficient delivery strategy begins long before products are sealed and shipped. You need to strike the perfect balance between quick, reliable shipping and affordable carrier services, which can be tough to tackle in-house.

Your 3PL partner leverages carrier partnerships and central warehousing locations to maintain accurate arrival times in line with retailer schedules and customer expectations, plus detailed order tracking to monitor delivery.

# PICKING

As the name suggests, order picking defines the process during which warehouse teams receive picking lists of the items, quantities, and locations of each ordered product, then retrieve or 'pick' each item off the shelf so it can be packed and shipped out to customers. Efficient picking requires accurate inventory management information and well-organized warehouse spaces.

When an order comes through, picking teams will review order details, locate ordered products in the warehouse, and collect each item from its respective location to prepare for assembly and packing.

# **PACKING**

With products in hand, it's time to assemble and label each order. However, you'll need to account for more than simply box or carton size. Adhere to special retailer handling requirements and eCommerce fulfillment best practices to ensure orders are packed appropriately, and be sure your teams use cost-effective materials to get the job done.

Your 3PL partner assembles each order in line with special handling requirements and custom assembly guides to ensure each shipment leaves the warehouse in its ideal state, with configurable solutions for bulk assembly, custom packaging, and more.



At Materialogic, we make complicated eCommerce fulfillment processes simple. We leverage integrated software solutions and decades of industry expertise to help you define highly efficient processes that will delight your customers and your internal stakeholders.

We can manage each aspect of your order fulfillment and warehousing operations, with deep insights into each process and solutions that add value to support your brand — today and well into the future. Reach out to our team of experts today.

GET STARTED



Materialogic offers a range of third-party logistics (3PL) solutions, but we always make your business our top priority. We specialize in eCommerce order fulfillment, retail EDI, and literature collateral distribution for B2B and B2C outsourcing. Because we have multiple facilities, Materialogic can reach 100% of the US population in three days.

Materialogic offers services designed to help brands grow and evolve with ease. We support businesses of all sizes, from startups to Fortune 1000 giants, always ensuring orders reach customers quickly and economically. We take pride in reducing the complexity of supply chain management, giving our customers more time to focus on building their business.