



Advanced Distribution Partners

**In a Global Economy:
Staying Competitive in the Multi-Channel
Distribution Industry Through Effective Use of
Best Practices**



OVERVIEW

In the current global economic environment, multi-channel distribution companies are performing an even more critical role as middlemen helping both manufacturers and retail customers effectively manage all the operational activities within their supply chain.

Globalization also creates a competitive environment in which customers have more choices on where to buy their products. Product pricing is ever more competitive forcing distributors to reduce operational costs to retain profitable margins. In addition, distributors must be creative in finding other value added services to offer to stay a step ahead of the pack.

Multi-channel distribution operations are becoming more complex, with ever-changing customer requirements, global and electronic marketplaces, multiple distribution channels, and compliance initiatives adding to the perennial challenges of delivering accurately and on time. Successfully meeting these challenges in ways that provide competitive advantage requires tight synchronization of business processes throughout the supply chain and across the entire enterprise.

True distribution effectiveness means streamlined processes and timely access to the information necessary for moving goods at maximum speeds. Operational efficiency is the key to increasing inventory turns, improving order fulfillment rates, reducing cycle time, and eliminating chargebacks.

This paper addresses business and technical decision-makers facing these issues for ambitious companies in which product distribution and transportation play key roles in daily operations and profitability.

Selecting the Right Solution for Multi-Channel Distribution Challenges

A comprehensive, fully-integrated business solution will help forward thinking companies balance the demands of extended supply chains and move product more efficiently to increase sales, improve fill rates, and decrease costs.

The Advanced Distribution solution can be most beneficial to organizations that seek to improve current distribution operations or to manage new initiatives for the following:

- Capacity
- Transportation optimization
- Delivery service improvement
- Regulatory Compliance
- Global expansion
- Trading partner collaboration

In selecting the right solution for your operations, distributors should be looking for the following benefits to realize a greater ROI:

- Improve order fulfillment and accuracy
- Eliminate inefficient processes and excess inventory
- Enhance workload balancing and planning
- Enable compliance with industry standards
- Reduce transportation costs

Strategies and tools for selecting optimal product placement enable you to increase efficiency, shorten order fulfillment cycles, and eliminate user error. By balancing workloads, setting performance targets, and deploying resources, companies can achieve maximum work force productivity. Tracking all warehouse activities, sharing key performance indicators, and measuring against baseline standards help ensure a company's operations are performing at full potential. v



What to Look for in a Complete Advanced Distribution System

New distribution channels continue to grow, while existing channels are expanding with new approaches such as global sourcing, cross-sell capabilities, and third-party logistics. Distributors are also faced with greater competition and higher customer service expectations. Distribution companies have to implement more advanced management solutions to cope with these changes.

To stay competitive, distributors need to deploy powerful, adaptable solutions that give them the tools they need to manage every aspect of their business, from order entry and procurement to sophisticated inventory and shipment management. These integrated solutions can be deployed quickly and inexpensively, without complicated customization or drawn-out implementation projects, to achieve the following:

- Automate critical business processes from order capture to inventory replenishment and reduce wasteful activities
- Deliver real-time business intelligence and alerts on the status of the business to management and customers
- Enable customer self-service through Web portals
- Improve supply chain and inventory management
- Provide easy, real-time visibility into inventory, sales, purchasing and financial information across multiple locations
- Accurately track shipping and delivery of parts by integrating Automatic Data Capture (ADC) functionality with enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- Maintain accurate real-time inventory data and optimize layout, picking methods, and movement
- Ensure accurate and on-time delivery with powerful customer/supplier integration, planning tools, and company-wide inventory visibility
- Respond rapidly to unique customer demands such as specific packaging and shipping requirements with customer management
- Manage customer interactions across multiple communication channels
- Manage customer hierarchies, customer notes, customer documents, advanced pricing and advanced discounting in one tool
- Utilize multiple barcode management.
- Easily define transport orders and invoice transport purchase orders
- Automate cross-docking to control your vendor managed inventory
- Diarize sales orders, quotations and customer details
- Manage catalogs, marketing initiatives, kits and special items
- Track competitors' items and pricing for demand forecasting



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Choosing a platform to meet the above objectives is one of the most important decisions that an organization can make. Companies need to ensure that they have a solid foundation on which to build their business and one that is flexible enough to adapt as the business changes and grows.

Some of the features that an integrated Advanced Distribution system must provide to help an organization implement best practices are:

- Sales Orders Processing
 - Flexible and Comprehensive Pricing
 - Quote to Order Conversion
 - Distribution Workflow
 - Real Time Inventory Availability
 - Product Allocations
 - Sales Order to Purchase Order Linkage
 - Multi-Currency
 - Powerful Reporting Tools.
- Inventory Control
 - Multiple Costing Methods
 - Unit of Measure Schedules
 - Multiple Locations
 - Bin Control
 - Batch Control
 - Serial Number Control
 - Real Time Inventory Visibility
 - Multiple Inventory Statuses
 - Complete Audit Trails For Inventory Transactions
 - Purchase Order Commitment For Cash Planning
 - Purchase Order to Sales Order Linkage

In addition to the above, the Advanced Distribution solution addresses the following key areas, to help achieve success with traceability, transparency, and efficiency.

Supply Chain Management

- Utilize real-time product availability and delivery time
- Automate cross-docking and drop-shipping notices
- Manage vendor contracts, bonuses, rebates, calendars and backorders

Order Management

- Fast order entry for call centers
- Website and point of sale integration
- Detect duplicate contact and customer entries

Inventory Management

- Reduce errors with multiple barcodes and scanners
- Optimize layout, picking methods and movement processes
- Use critical forecasting to plan for future needs

Order Fulfillment

- Efficiently manage carrier services and transport orders
- Create packaging proposals according to transport points
- Automate invoicing transport purchase orders

Customer Management

- Manage advanced pricing and discounting
- Facilitate implementation of promotions and coupons
- Integrate multiple barcodes into one platform

Business Intelligence and Analysis

- Manage advanced pricing and discounting
- Facilitate implementation of promotions and coupons
- Integrate multiple barcodes into one platform



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Companies must respond to industry pressures and complexities with a strong focus on the consumer, so equip your business with a robust and flexible solution from Advanced Distribution Partners. Our software will meet the needs of your business along with the ever increasing customer demands and ever changing industry requirements.

ABOUT ADVANCED DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

The Advanced Distribution Partners support multi-channel distributors and retailers by offering industry expertise and sophisticated software solutions to help streamline processes, improve customer service and better manage the supply chain. As a powerful group of dedicated professionals, we are able to offer the distribution industry something different – results. We provide top of the line software solutions, coupled with a deep understanding of multi-channel distribution to deliver valuable business transformations.



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