

5 Steps to Creating Profitable Online Fulfilment for Home and General Merchandise Retailers



To deliver an efficient, sustainable omni-fulfilment operation requires home and general merchandise retailers to ensure optimisation across 5 key steps.

1. Right inventory, in the right location



Intelligent item and order forecasting

Buy in store, buy online for home delivery, click-and-collect, lockers... customers want choice over product fulfilment. And this requires assortments and inventory to be carefully managed to ensure that there is requisite stock to meet each request.



Omni-merchandise, assortment and price planning

Stores need to be laid out optimally for both customers and pickers, inventory needs to be intelligently distributed across stores, fulfilment hubs and dark stores. The need for intelligent omni-demand forecasting capabilities is critical.



Understand demand location



Real-time availability information

2. Enhancing the shopper experience



Flexible delivery options

Your website is a key part of delivering the optimum customer experience, building relationships through transparent and intuitive communication. What items are available where, based on real-time tracking?



Higher availability

Can they have complete control over delivery timings? What delivery options do I have? Can I get my order in the most sustainable manner? Personalisation is the order of the day, and that relationship tone is set via first point of contact: a retailer's website.

3. Flexible fulfilment



Right level of inventory

The distribution network of the future is a mix of warehouses, micro-fulfilment sites, dark stores and a reimagined store footprint. Inventory maybe held with third parties, sold through marketplaces or drop-shipped.



Connected network

To manage this, there must be visibility over inventory, labour and transport capacity limits. Fast delivery is indeed a trend, but not for everyone. Retailers must be flexible to speed, cost and convenience concerns across a flexible agile fulfilment network.



Smart, efficient operations



4. Intelligent order orchestration

With a flexible fulfilment network, order optimisation is key to ensure efficiencies, across costs, labour and inventory.

Transportation costs are not the only important factor; understanding stock levels, labour shortages, delivery capacities and more can help optimise real-time orders. Decisions need to be dynamic, and quick. And they can only be done so with a connected suite of technologies that can see the entire picture in the blink of an eye.

5. Efficient execution



Pick and despatch order, with last mile integration

All efforts and investments into demand forecasting, flexible distribution networks or intelligent order management will be wasted unless the last mile is effective.



Efficient labour management & scheduling

Effective picking is an imperative, optimisation of fleets and drivers, guided by efficient routing is critical, and visibility of order status is paramount to provide clear communication with the customer.



Order visibility and tracking

We're entering a 'commerce everywhere' era, calling for seamless omni-channel structures and end-to-end accountability.

Blue Yonder's intelligent, real-time technologies connect the entire supply chain and inform instant, agile decisions from the first step to the last mile.

