

Improving a Direct Response Fulfillment Operation that Had Gone to the Dogs

Top Dog Direct is a leading “as seen on TV” company that finds, develops and launches new products. When its B2C fulfillment company went out of business, the company leaned on its B2B distribution partner to take on consumer-direct fulfillment. It did not go well.



Among the problems during the pandemic:

- A lack of reporting meant Top Dog had little visibility to real-time inventory and backorders
- Order backlogs increased delivery time from days to weeks, leading to customer complaints via the support line and social media
- Poor systems integration forced manual processing of orders that took hours to release

The problems were magnified since the already fast-growing company was seeing a huge surge in business due to the pandemic. “At one point, we had 3,000 customer emails awaiting a response,” says Top Dog CFO, Karen Hoefer. “The only way we could handle it was by pulling in temporary staff and people from other departments. We knew we needed a B2C-focused fulfillment partner that understood our direct response business model, and Staci fit the bill.”

Keys to Success

- **Visibility.** Staci’s reporting tools provide a real-time view of inventory, backorders and returns – critical data that informs Top Dog’s marketing decisions. “If inventory is getting low on an item, I can shift promotion to another product,” says Top Dog CMO, Steve Silbiger.
- **Delivery speed.** Orders immediately download to the Staci system and are shipped, often the same day. Top Dog’s confidence in Staci led it to move away from FBA to process the company’s Amazon orders, a decision that has significantly increased margin for this channel.
- **Parcel savings.** Immediate and substantial savings came from shipping under Staci’s favorable parcel contracts, which are negotiated based on the 3PL’s aggregate shipping spend.
- **Flexible processes and systems.** “We often change out product configurations,” says Silbiger. “Staci easily adapts its packaging process when this happens.”
- **Post-sales customer service.** Staci’s call center now handles all post-sales customer service inquiries via phone, email and social media.

“Before Staci, I would regularly spend 4 hours a day dealing with warehouse and customer service issues,” says Hoefer.

Results

- \$2-per-package reduction in shipping charges, equating to \$10,000 in monthly savings
- 75% error-rate reduction
- 50% reduction in customer calls and emails

“Our business is about growth, for ourselves and our entrepreneur clients,” says Hoefer. “Now that we have a reliable, direct-response fulfillment partner behind us, we have confidence that our back-end solution can handle any level of future growth.”

