

MetaPack

Meeting the growing demand with minimal disruption to processes

The Challenge

asos.com is the UK's largest online fashion and beauty store with over 18,000 product lines including their own designs as well as 300 other brands. With 1.8 million registered customers and an average sales growth of 77% over the past five years, they have barely noticed the credit crunch.



With the proliferation of broadband and their fashion conscious target market who tend not to have their income tied up in equity, asos have got it just right to ride the tide of the internet sales boom. However, online shoppers are becoming more demanding and are expecting ever-more for their electronic cash; slicker sites, larger offerings, cheaper prices, easier checkouts and better delivery options. asos have taken this knowledge in hand and enlisted the services of MetaPack to help with the arduous task of the delivery and customer care.

In a recent study it was proven that 90% of shoppers are more likely to shop from an online retailer if they are happy with the delivery of the goods and some of the key reasons for shopping cart abandonment were the dissatisfaction with delivery charges, options or timings. asos, in

the past, have left this mission critical process in the hands of only two carriers; Royal Mail and Interlink. The recent dissolution of Amtrak, has yet again proven the necessity of broadening the number of carriers used. Integrating into carriers can be an expensive and time-consuming task involving capital outlay for each carrier's computer system and a disjointed manual process continuously switching between them.

The Solution

MetaPack solved this problem and more. Owing to the sheer scope of possibility that the MetaPack Delivery Manager allowed for, asos had to introduce a four phase plan in order to allocate time and resources to make full use of its capabilities and provide its customers with the service it required.

They began by improving the standard delivery from 3-5 days to 2-3 and allowing for Saturday delivery with the same cost as next working day by allocating carrier services in advance where possible, to save on overall costs. They then increased the number of orders delivered on day one regardless of the delivery options, increased the next day cut-off time from 4pm and introduced text messaging to keep customers informed.

The third phase was introducing a two tiered international



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delivery service offering an express and immediate service. And the final phase will be to allow for nominated day and time delivery, and same day delivery.

All this was possible by using DM. They increased their carriers from two to four, at little to no disruption, which provided a wider range of available services to choose from. The MetaPack DM system automatically selects which carrier is best for the job according to the specifications of the items packaged and the delivery options selected by asos. Standard label stock provided free of charge by MetaPack is then used to print the relevant label. MetaPack have designed each label to fit the requirements of every carrier perfectly so that a single standard printer can be used.

The visibility of the whole delivery process has also improved drastically, and with asos using the 3PL Unipart, they are able to control who can log in and what information they see. Customer services, for example, are able to view the real-time collated tracking information collected from each of the carriers all in a single reporting format, improving the customer service through a quicker response

and more up to date information. This information can also be automatically fed through to the customer via email or sms which reduces WISMO calls.

Although the DM product is a standard offering, add-ons can be tailored to meet individual needs. ASOS made use of an automatic allocation to a next day service if they had been packed too late in the day, thus keeping their delivery promise and only using the more expensive option as a last resort.

“ Even the best shopping experience can be totally negated by a bad delivery experience. With the Delivery Manager by MetaPack, our delivery options are significantly better.”
Nick Robertson, CEO

“There were so many benefits DM brought to the table that we couldn’t do it all at once. Since the go-live in August we have already experienced benefits to customer services by selecting carriers with appropriate tracking capabilities and providing the tracking codes directly to customers reducing the numbers of customers calling in. With the text updates we have reduced the queries coming into our call centre by half as well as reducing the dissatisfaction of those who do still call in.

Being able to offset the cost of selecting carriers with tracking capabilities with the savings we make in the initial carrier selection also greatly improves the level of customer service we are able to provide enabling us to be more proactive.

We managed the software implementation with minimal disruption in processes and operator feedback was all positive, highlighting the system’s ease of use and quick learning curve. Which with over 500 staff, this was a necessity. ”



Stuart Hill,
Head of Customer Logistics