



Multi carrier network broadens delivery offering

MetaPack

With the first store opening in 1981, JD Sports Plc have gone on to secure their place as the leading retailer of fashionable branded and own brand sports and casual wear in the UK. Now boasting 400 stores nationwide, including Bank Fashion and the recent acquisition of getthelabel.com they have no intention of losing this race.

The Challenge

JD Sports operate a self-built, bespoke warehouse management system. This system was fully integrated to a single parcel carrier and provided a sufficient level of facilities to enable B2C (Business to Consumer) fulfillment for the various ecommerce operations.

Although the carrier integration met the basic needs for the ecommerce businesses, the single carrier configuration was restrictive and offered limited flexibility and redundancy. If for example the carrier experienced some problems and was unable to provide a fulfillment service then it would have been difficult to switch to an alternative carrier in a timely manner and as a result their customer service promise would have been at risk.

With the online business growing at a rapidly continuous rate, JD Sports wanted to remain as the market leader and offer their customers the range of delivery options they knew they wanted as well as entering into the European market. Neither was possible with the current despatch process in place.

Taking into consideration the time, money and resource to integrate a large retailer into a bespoke carrier management system, decisions to change carriers could not be taken lightly or executed quickly, and their already stretched IT department didn't have the resource available to integrate a multi-carrier platform. JD Sports knew they needed a cost effective, scalable solution. Based on this and the above restrictions, a decision was made to put the carrier business out to tender.

The Solution

JD Sports were introduced to MetaPack through The Pentland Group, who own 57% of JD Sports and have been successfully using MetaPack for a number of years.

Impressed with MetaPack's established multi-carrier network, JD Sports immediately saw how this would provide a wider range of delivery options which would benefit both them

“MetaPack has provided us with a competitive advantage; it gave us the freedom to base our carrier decision on service as well as price. We're now able to increase our delivery offering, ship internationally at a competitive rate and in turn raise our customer service offering”

Paul Maxwell

Ecommerce
Technology Manager

and their customers. The flexible carrier management tools provided by MetaPack allow JD Sports to allocate goods to preferred carriers and services, switching as necessary. This ensures they are never in a position where they can't ship and can provide carriers with relevant traffic to maximise service levels. JD Sports are now in a better position to send their goods more cost effectively, dependant on the consignment characteristics.

International deliveries are now possible. Using MetaPack's functionality all necessary documentation is pre-populated with all the relevant information and saves any manual intervention. Paul Maxwell, Ecommerce Technology Manager acknowledges the importance of this: "international services were a real incentive for us as we couldn't offer them before".

The IT department welcomed the integration to MetaPack as it would save time and resource in the long term. "It was a relief to them knowing they would only have to do this once" explains Maxwell, adding "developing a 'middleware' program enabled us to interface via the MetaPack API and fully integrate MetaPack with our bespoke in-house WMS system. Our system can now allocate deliveries via pre-defined criteria and we are able to manage the allocation rules simply and efficiently via the MetaPack console".

