

4 Steps to Evaluating Your eCommerce Shipping Workflow

A Self- Diagnostic Checklist



Freestyle Solutions

How is your eCommerce shipping workflow working for you?

Find out in 4 simple steps...

Order fulfillment has never been more important. The Freestyle self-diagnostic checklist gives you an easy way to determine if your shipping workflow is as effective and efficient as possible.

In just 4 easy steps, you can evaluate what's working in your shipping workflow and what needs improvement.



Step 1

ASK: *Are your shipping process integrated?*

Disjointed, fragmented systems will disrupt shipping success. From order creation to shipment set up & rate calculation, from picking & packing to tracking, manual information entry or re-entry, make sure your process isn't bogged down.

- **Checkpoint:** In your current system, how many of these activities require separate manual management:
 - Order processing
 - Optimal rate calculation & carrier selection
 - Warehouse operations: pick tickets, packing control
 - Shipping label/packing slip generation
 - Linking the tracking number back to the order

>> Integrate within a single, seamless order management system (OMS) to avoid potential workflow disruptors.



Step 2

ASK: *Are shipping rates in check?*

Calculating shipping rates in separate systems means more likelihood for delay & error. Leaving your order system to re-enter information into a shipping app & calculate rates, then re-re-entering the shipping cost into your order system means: *workflow segmentation problem*.

- **Checkpoint:** Do you have an integrated order management solution to calculate shipping rates immediately, automatically update your orders – & potentially your call center customers – in real time, with no risk of error?
- **Checkpoint:** Can your system do *rate shopping*, automatically finding the lowest cost shipping method & carrier for every order, taking into account any delivery time guarantees (E.g.: 2-day shipping)? Can you create custom carriers & rates & zones to automatically generate rates?
- **Checkpoint:** Competitive offers for free shipping now make cost a key factor, but when shopping carts do their own shipping charge calculations, you may lose the ability to offer the best shipping cost.

>> *Based on distance & weight, an integrated system will calculate shipping costs & allow you to enter a markup on a per-box/per-item basis, a promotional discount & more.*

>> *Integrated systems with a shipping service feature ensure you get the best deals, on every shipment.*

>> *An integrated OMS allows you to easily and quickly match the price customers pay against actual carrier charges to better-understand the impact shipping cost has on your profitability.*



Step 3

ASK: Are you picking & packing productively?

Whether you operate a warehouse with separate crews of pickers & packers, or everything is done in one place with the same crew, it's all about the ability to access the right products for each order & group them correctly for packing & shipping.

- **Checkpoint:** Do you have the flexibility to execute a hybrid of batch & individual picking & packing?
- **Checkpoint:** Can your system generate barcoded pick tickets so packers can use scanners to bring up orders onscreen? (This simple step assures every shipment is correct & accurate).
- **Checkpoint:** Does your system offer a packer workstation with automatic connection to scales, so weighing is quick & accurate?
- **Checkpoint:** Can your system offer options like partial & advanced fill so you can send remaining items when inventory is received?

>> If you decide to batch process (pick items in bulk as a single step & then pack them) you need an integrated, sophisticated OMS to avoid the potential for costly errors. When you batch print pick tickets & shipping labels & marry them to large herds of orders & items, errors are virtually inevitable.

****TOP TIP: Watch for the upcoming release of M.O.M. Version 11, with a new module with flexible batch choices that save preferences. You'll no longer need to run individual batches by carrier, geo area, service type & more!*

Stay tuned to learn more about M.O.M. Version 11's release in early 2020!



Step 4

ASK: *Do your outbound shipments automatically tie back to orders?*

With an integrated OMS, everything matches: SKU numbers, order IDs, rates & tracking numbers. Nothing has to be entered twice or transferred manually from one system to another. No delays. No human errors.

- **Checkpoint:** When a shipping label is requested, does it automatically notify the carrier about the order, so no shipping manifests are necessary. Drivers should be able to simply scan packages at pick up & leave. The merchant only gets charged for what actually ships.
- **Checkpoint:** How much do you spend on *expedited shipping*? Does your commitment to customer satisfaction despite delays & errors caused by high volume & a fragmented manual workflow lead to excessive spending on expedited shipping? How much could you save here?

>> Integrated order management systems can generate packing slips & shipping labels automatically with a matching order reference number & tracking code in place.

□ The Takeaway

Can upgrading your OMS improve your shipping workflow?

Convolutd workflows may already be costing you money & causing customer satisfaction challenges. Even worse, fragmented & manual workflows simply can't scale. And here is something else that's certain: *when volume rises to a certain level, it always forces a change in process.* By now you already know that integrating eCommerce shipping processes can save you time, reduce manual data entry errors & get packages out faster...





Freestyle's M.O.M.

Industry-leading software that can up your shipping game

**So we have one
final question: *is
your
eCommerce
shipping
workflow as
effective &
efficient as it
should be?***

Reach out to Freestyle today to learn more about how our industry-leading software M.O.M. can optimize your shipping workflow. Save time, save money with Freestyle.

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